St. Theresa PTO — How It Works This Year

November 2026

Our PTO exists to bring our families together and to give parents a real way to contribute to the life of the school. This note sets out how it works for the rest of this calendar year, so that everyone knows where to put their energy. A fuller written structure will follow in January.

Who is a member

Every parent and guardian of a St. Theresa student is a member of the PTO. There is nothing to sign and nothing to pay. You are a member because your child is here. Being a member means you are kept informed, you are welcome at every meeting, and you may volunteer or propose an idea at any time.

What the PTO does, and what the school does

The school sets the calendar, the purpose and the shape of school events, and remains responsible for anything involving our premises, our insurance or our students' safety.

The PTO builds community, runs its own events with the school's approval, and provides the volunteer strength that makes the school's events possible.

Where an event belongs to the PTO — see the calendar at the end of this note — the PTO runs it from end to end, and the Principal approves only the date, the budget and any fundraising goal.

Concerns about a class, a teacher or a child are not PTO business. Please bring those to the teacher or to the Principal directly. The PTO is where we build things together.

Roles open now

The school is looking for one person to lead each of these. No experience is needed, and each job can be done in the hours shown. Role-holders are expected to attend all PTO meetings, so that coordination stays clear and straightforward.

Role	What it involves	Roughly
Events Coordinator	One of the Co-Leads. Plans decoration, food orders, communication W/ school and budget with the school. The details are worked out at our meetings.	2–3 hrs/month
Volunteer Coordinator	Keeps the list of who is willing to help with what, and makes sure every event on the calendar has parents on it (2 leaders to organise the event the D-Day + multitask volunteers). Does not run the events personally.	2–3 hrs/month
New Families & Hospitality	Welcoming new families, pairing them with a current family, hosting the welcome potluck or picnic.	2 hrs/month
Secretary	Takes the minutes of our meetings and posts them on the website. Moderates the PTO WhatsApp group.	2 hrs/month
Fundraising & Accounts ?	Works with the Principal on the fundraisers already planned, and keeps the PTO accounts.	2–3 hrs/month

Where a role has no one yet, the school holds it until someone takes it on. These roles stay open all year, so it is never too late.

Lead and Co-Leads

In addition to our current Lead, a Co-Lead will be appointed by the Principal in the spring, chosen from among those who have taken on a role or an event this year. Co-Leads serve two years, starting in alternate years, so that there is always one experienced and one new. A Co-Lead may also hold one of the roles above.

The Co-Leads chair our meetings, keep an eye on the year as a whole so that no event is left without anyone, and look out for parents who might take something on next year. They do not approve events, spending or communications — that stays with the Principal — and they are not in charge of the other role-holders, who each work with the Principal directly on their own area.

How to put yourself forward

For a role or for Co-Lead, email the Principal by Friday, November 20 saying which role or which event interests you, or suggest someone you think would be good. The leads will be appointed before the Christmas Show and announced to everyone. What we are looking for: willingness to work within the school calendar, availability for the hours shown, and support for the school's mission.

Proposing an idea

Anyone may propose an idea at any time, and ideas are discussed at our meetings. For an idea to go ahead it needs four things: an owner (the person who will actually run it), a date, a budget, and a clear purpose — community building, fundraising, or both. No owner, no event: not as a refusal, but because an event with nobody to run it ends up falling on the teachers.

Approval is always weighed against what is already on the calendar, so that neither our families nor our volunteers are asked for more than they can give.

Each May we look back at what we have done, for community as well as for fundraising, and go through a draft calendar for the following year together, so that most of our events are settled once rather than decided one at a time.

Money and fundraising

The PTO raises funds from our own school community. Approaching local businesses, donors, alumni or foundations is done by the school, so that nobody in Somerville is asked twice for the same school.

Every fundraiser says what the money is for before it is raised, and the money goes there. Our fundraisers for the year are named in the calendar, so that every family can see in advance how often they will be asked. We keep them few on purpose. Any new fundraiser needs the Principal's approval before it is announced.

The PTO does not hold its own bank account. The school holds the funds, and the Principal approves spending with the role lead. This is the practice across the archdiocese, and it protects everyone.

Funds are spent in the year they are raised, on what they were raised for. Anything left at the end of the school year goes to the school's financial aid fund, as does anything a fundraiser brings in beyond its stated purpose.

What we buy should still be in use a year later. We would rather spend on something lasting, on an experience for the children, or on helping a family take part in a trip, than on items used once.

Anything bought with PTO funds belongs to the school from the moment it is purchased, and the school stores, maintains and replaces it. Where our families have given something lasting, we are glad to mark it.

Room parents

Room parents are a separate role and stay with the classroom. They work with their child's teacher on class celebrations, a class get-together, welcoming new families in the class, and the teacher's gift. If you would like to be a room parent, speak to your child's teacher.

Room parents also help pass on calls for volunteers to their class, at the Volunteer Coordinator's request. Replies go straight back to the Coordinator, so that the list of who is helping stays in one place.

Meetings

Monthly unless otherwise notified, one hour, open to all members. The Lead gives the date at least one month in advance.

The Lead runs the meeting, which has three parts:

1. A look back at the last event — attendance, community, and what it raised
2. The next event — layout, goals, decoration, food, traditions — and who takes on what
3. Other ideas, to be brought to the Principal