



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Lower School
Parent/Student Handbook
2018-2019

(This is a live document and is subject to change; all parties are notified of changes. This document is available on the website.)

Mr. Patrick J. Magee, M.Ed., President
Ms. Lauren Roberts, M.Ed., Principal
Rev. John Libone, Pastor

Lower School Parent/Student Handbook

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President

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St. Thomas Aquinas School is accredited by the Texas Catholic
Conference Education Department

Summer, 2018

Dear Parent,

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This law requires all schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade, to be inspected to identify any asbestos-containing building materials. The law further requires the development of a Management Plan, based upon the findings of the inspection, which outlines our intent in controlling the potential for exposure to asbestos fibers, if they exist in our school.

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating and fire retarding capabilities. Virtually any building built before the late 1970's contains at least some asbestos in pipe insulation and structural fireproofing.

St. Thomas Aquinas School was inspected in December, 2014. Some asbestos-containing materials remain in locations including floor tiles, and pipe insulation, and are not readily accessible to building occupants or students and are in good condition. The primary concern arises when the materials become friable, begin to deteriorate, or become damaged. The asbestos found in St. Thomas Aquinas School is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that it remains contained and in good condition. We were re-inspected by certified asbestos inspectors and the asbestos materials in our school are in good condition and we will continue to manage them by a trained asbestos manager as required by law.

A copy of our management plan and re-inspection report is on file in the school's administrative office at 3741 Abrams Rd., Dallas, TX 75214. These reports are available for your review any time between business hours on school days.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Magee
President



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MISSION STATEMENT

Mission: To lead each student in the formation of a strong Catholic faith through the balanced pursuit of knowledge, prayer, responsibility, and service.

VISION STATEMENT

Vision: To seek the light and hope of Christ in everything we think, say, and do.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School strives to educate children of parishioners who desire a Catholic education. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School seeks to develop the highest possible level of potential in each child, both as a person and a Christian. The needs of the individual and his or her potential for good will be considered foremost in each decision and policy of the school.

CORE BELIEFS FOR DISCIPLINE

Our Promise to Parents and Students

We believe that every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity of both the adult and the student.

We believe that students should be guided and expected to solve the problems they create without making problems for anyone else.

We believe that misbehavior should be handled with natural consequences instead of punishments whenever possible.

We believe that students should have the opportunity to tell their side of the story when consequences appear to be unfair.

We believe that misbehavior should be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world as opposed to a personal attack on the school or staff.

St. Thomas Aquinas School is a community. We must never lose sight of our need for each other and our desire to place God at the center of our scholarship.

ACADEMICS- LOWER SCHOOL

Angels in Action Awards

Research tells us that specific praise tied to particular effort is most effective in changing behavior in a positive way. We also know that the most significant and lasting learning occurs when connections are made. Angels in Action Awards will be presented at least monthly in the classrooms, allowing for the opportunity to present them in the most meaningful way, where a clear explanation of the basis of the award can be shared with the students. Classroom awards allow students to be recognized frequently and allow the teachers the flexibility of rewarding students at the time and in the way that will mean the most to both the recipient and to those listening. Many of the virtues upon which we base the awards are the life skills and lifelong guidelines we reinforce with the children each day, such as patience, kindness, caring, courage, integrity, cooperation, friendship, truthfulness and trustworthiness. When we tie the recognition to specific behaviors and to skills we reinforce daily, the impact is great.

Angels in Action Awards:

- Will be presented at least monthly in the classroom by the teacher
- Will be tied to the life skills and lifelong guidelines that we teach
- Certificates will be provided by the Principal; the teacher may fill them in at her discretion
- In the presentation of awards, specific behaviors will be cited; whenever possible, they should be tied to what we are teaching the students about Jesus
- Awards can, and should, also be given for students who have made significant improvements in demonstrating a life skills or lifelong guideline
- While parents will not be present in the classroom when certificates are presented, teachers are asked to make parents aware when a child receives an award.

Curriculum

The curriculum of St. Thomas Aquinas School complies with the academic requirements as set forth by the Diocese of Dallas, the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and the Texas Education Agency.

Highly Effective Teaching (HET)

HET is a learning system which has influenced how St. Thomas Aquinas' curriculum is organized and the learning environment in which it is taught. The HET model was developed by Susan Kovalik. It is a way of conceptualizing and implementing a "brain compatible" curriculum and learning environment for students and teachers.

The classroom teacher utilizes the following brain compatible elements which are the basis for the HET model:

- Absence of Threat
- Meaningful Content
- Choices
- Adequate Time
- Enriched Environment
- Collaboration
- Immediate Feedback
- Mastery
- Movement

The teacher models and practices the following “Lifelong Guidelines”:

- Trustworthiness
- Truthfulness
- Active Listening
- No Put Downs
- Personal Best

Guidelines for social behavior which help students to achieve their personal best are called life skills. The students are taught to recognize and practice these skills. The life skills are the focus of the guidance lessons delivered by the LS counselor.

Integrity: To act according to a sense of what’s right and wrong.

Initiative: To do something, of one’s own free will, because it needs to be done.

Flexibility: To be willing to alter plans when necessary.

Perseverance: To keep at it.

Organization: To plan, arrange, and implement in an orderly way; to keep things orderly and ready to use.

Sense of Humor: To laugh and be playful without harming others.

Effort: To do your best.

Common Sense: To use good judgment.

Problem-Solving: To create solutions in difficult situations and everyday problems.

Responsibility: To respond when appropriate; to be accountable for your actions.

Patience: To wait calmly for someone or something.

Friendship: To make and keep a friend through mutual trust and caring.

Curiosity: A desire to investigate and seek understanding of one’s world.

Cooperation: To work together toward a common goal or purpose.

Caring: To feel and show concern for others.

Courage: To act according to one’s belief despite fear of adverse consequences.

Pride: Satisfaction from doing your best.

Resourcefulness: To respond to challenges and opportunities in innovative and creative ways.

Homework (See Addendum 2.1)

Homework is an integral part of the total instructional program at St. Thomas Aquinas. It may be given at all grade levels (K-2).

In the case of illness, a parent may request makeup classwork and homework by calling the school office (469) 341-0911 by 8:30 AM. Assignments will be ready for pick up at 3:00 PM.

Language Screening, Educational/Psychological/Behavioral Evaluations and Services

The school counselor, reading specialist or school diagnostician may screen pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grade students based on a teacher's recommendation. These results are used for assessment and diagnostic purposes to determine the need for special instruction by the reading specialist and to determine if further testing is warranted in order to better meet the instructional needs of the child. Students may be required to undergo further evaluations at the expense of the parents to provide more complete information and to maintain enrollment.

All requests related to outside diagnostic testing or special services (OT, speech, etc.) must be submitted to the Lower School Counselor/Learning Specialist. Please do not provide forms directly to the teachers.

Placement

Placement in any class is the decision of the school administration. Parents are respectfully requested to refrain from making requests for specific teachers.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

All students in grades 1 and 2 receive a progress report each quarter. This report allows students and parents/guardians to be aware of student strengths and weaknesses.

Report cards are issued every nine weeks for 1st and 2nd grade beginning in quarter 1. Four- year-old pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten students receive their first report card at the end of the first semester. Pre-kindergarten students receive two reports: one in the fall, one in the spring. Kindergarten students receive report cards in quarters 2, 3, and 4. Report cards are expected to be reviewed by the student and the parent/guardian.

Promotion and Retention

A student is advanced to the next grade or course if all State of Texas and Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) accreditation requirements have been met.

Students in grades K-2 must be able to demonstrate mastery of current grade-level subject matter in reading, language arts, and mathematics, and have reached a developmental stage of maturity for learning. Summer school, tutoring, retention, or referral to another school may be required.

The final decision for retention and placement is the responsibility of the administration based upon developmental maturity, report card grades, and conferences with teachers and parents/guardians.

Textbooks

Textbooks and consumable workbooks are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. Students are responsible for their upkeep. Students will be held accountable for lost or damaged textbooks; fees will be assessed by the school administration.

ADMISSION/ENROLLMENT

*See Diocesan Addendum

The goal of St. Thomas Aquinas School (STA) is to educate as many children of contributing parishioners who desire to participate in a Catholic education as possible. The administration will make decisions as to the admission of all new students to the school as well as the placement of all new and returning students in grades preschool through eighth grade. The principal and admissions committee reserve the right to conduct preadmissions screenings and evaluations to determine the ability of STA to meet a student's individual needs.

Our admission procedure is as follows:

1. Beginning mid-November, the school will accept applications from new students who wish to apply for preschool and grades K-8 for the subsequent school year. Parents must complete an online application and provide the following:
 - birth certificate
 - baptismal certificate (if Catholic)
 - most recent report card if currently in school
 - any standardized or diagnostic testing completed
 - current immunization record signed by a physician
 - STA does not accommodate provisional enrollments; the school requires all applicants/students to be current on immunizations prior to acceptance/registration/attendance (***students must remain current with immunizations at all times while enrolled at STA***). If for any reason, the student is not current with immunizations, the student will be removed from school.
 - confidential evaluation from the student's current teacher(s) or principal
 - non-refundable application fee

All elements must be received in order for a file to be complete. Admission decisions will not be rendered until a file is complete.

Upon acceptance, a student must complete a school registration form, as well as provide transcripts from previous schools.

1. On announced dates, the school will conduct assessment testing for students applying to grades K-8.
2. An application deadline will be posted. Applications received after midnight of the publicized deadline will be considered late and will not be evaluated until all on-time applications have been processed. The time and date stamp of the online application submission will be utilized to determine timeliness.

We recognize that families of successful students invest in their children. We seek new students in grades preschool through 8th grade who demonstrate they can perform at or above the median level of prospective classmates, and who can contribute to those classes. In cases where enrollment is limited, registrations and applications are prioritized. A prioritized application does not guarantee acceptance.

Preschool

In cases where enrollment is limited for 4 year old preschool, registration will be given priority in the following order:

- I. Contributing Parishioners* are:
 - A. Entering 4 year old preschool siblings of currently enrolled students
 - B. New students of contributing parishioners* entering 4 year old preschool
- II. Non-Contributing Parishioners are:
 - A. Entering 4 year old preschool siblings of currently enrolled students
 - B. New students (not currently enrolled in St. Thomas), entering 4 year old preschool
- III. Non-Parishioners and Non-Catholics are:
 - A. Entering 4 year old preschool siblings of currently enrolled students
 - B. New students (not currently enrolled in St. Thomas), entering 4 year old preschool

Kindergarten

In cases where enrollment is limited for kindergarten, registration will be given priority in the following order:

- I. Contributing Parishioners* are:
 - A. Currently enrolled 4 year old preschool students, in good standing advancing to kindergarten
 - B. Entering kindergarten siblings of currently enrolled students.
 - C. New students entering kindergarten
- II. Non-Contributing Parishioners are:
 - A. Currently enrolled 4 year old preschool students, in good standing advancing to kindergarten
 - B. Entering kindergarten siblings of currently enrolled students.
 - C. New students entering kindergarten
- III. Non-Parishioners and Non-Catholics are:
 - A. Currently enrolled 4 year old preschool students, in good standing advancing to kindergarten
 - B. Entering kindergarten siblings of currently enrolled students.
 - C. New students entering kindergarten

Grades 1-8

In cases where enrollment is limited for grades 1-8, registration will be given priority in the following order:

- I. Current (K-7) Family Registrations are:
 - A. Currently enrolled students in grades K-7, in good standing, advancing to grades 1-8
 - B. Entering grades 1-8 siblings of currently enrolled students in good standing
- II. New (K-7) Family Registrations
 - A. New students of contributing parishioners* entering grades 1-8
 - B. New students of non-contributing parishioners entering grades 1-8.
 - C. New students of non-parishioners and non-Catholics entering grades 1-8

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is intended for the formation in faith and human knowledge of Catholic children of registered, participating member families of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.

Active parishioner status is based on the following criteria:

1. The family members must be registered in St. Thomas Aquinas Parish.

2. The family must have a true commitment to the practice of their Catholic faith and be actively nurturing their children in the Catholic faith, both sacramentally and in their example.
3. The family must support the mission of the Catholic Church and of the Parish both by their participation in weekly Sunday worship (Mass) and by their financial support* of the Parish.

* defined as (*for re-enrolling current families*) contributions to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish on a consistent monthly basis, measured January 1 to December 31 of the most recent, complete calendar year. Current student families seeking re-enrollment and/or application for a new student sibling must contribute a minimum of \$800 to the parish offertory, \$200 to the Annual Gap Drive and \$200 to the Msgr. John T. Gulczynski Endowment Fund. In addition, re-enrolling families must be registered with Faith Direct, the online parish offertory management software.

New families: New families making application must contribute a minimum of \$800 to the parish offertory. In addition, families must be registered with Faith Direct, the online parish offertory management software.

A family may qualify for Parishioner tuition rates based on the following:

1. The new or currently enrolled student must be baptized Catholic and present a Catholic baptismal certificate at the time of application.
 2. Under ordinary circumstances, the family should be qualified for “active parishioner status” as defined above. Exceptions for extraordinary needs are at the discretion of the pastor in consultation with the school principal.
 3. The required volunteer hours must be satisfied during the calendar year of enrollment according to the volunteer policy and requirements.
 - a. Volunteer hour description: A minimum of 20 volunteer hours per household must be given during calendar year 2018 in order to qualify for parishioner tuition status. If you only have a preschool child and no other older siblings enrolled in St. Thomas, you are not required to give volunteer hours. Families with kindergarten children and no older siblings, are required to give a minimum of 7 hours during the fall of the kindergarten year. New families, entering school between August and December of 2017 (grades K-8th) are required to give a minimum of 7 hours between August and December of 2018.
1. Hours: Volunteered time to any organization connected with St. Thomas Aquinas School/Parish during 2018. Examples include: Carnival, last school year's Auction, Parents' Association, Holy Name Society, Altar Society, Mothers' Association, Lector, Eucharistic Minister, School Library, Science Lab, Art Department, Material Moms and Dads, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Athletics, and Booster Club.
 2. Volunteer hours can be recorded in RenWeb within your “family information”.

Contributing parishioners are defined as persons who contribute to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish on a consistent basis as outlined above and who satisfy the volunteer requirements defined in the St. Thomas Aquinas Parent/Student Handbook. (Minimum contribution requirements are determined by the parish office. New families are required to begin their volunteer responsibilities after their child is enrolled.)

Upon determination by the administration that a grade level has more qualified applicants for admission than it has openings, the administration may use any of the additional following criteria for admission:

- Parishioner contribution status
- Sibling status
- Length of time the family has been in good standing
- Extent of participation in parish and/or STA activities, including fulfilling the required hours of volunteer time annually

- Legacy relationships
- Other factors the pastor and administration may deem appropriate

Once a student has received an acceptance letter, has completed the registration process, and continues to be in good standing with the administration, he or she will not be displaced for that academic year. This policy applies to all students, grades preschool through 8. Reregistration for Non-Catholic, Non-Contributing Parishioner and/or Non-Parishioner preschool students is contingent upon availability.

- At application, verification of age must be presented to school officials in the form of an official state birth certificate or other official document suitable for proof of the child's age, e.g., passport.
- A baptismal certificate (if Catholic) must be presented at the time of application.
- Immunization records (with a physician's signature) are to be submitted at the time of application. Upon acceptance, a Health History Form will be submitted. Students will not be admitted to school without an immunization record on file. **All required immunizations must be completed and documentation submitted to STA prior to assessment testing, shadowing, acceptance, registration and entering school.**
 - STA does not accommodate provisional enrollments; the school requires all applicants/students to be current on immunizations prior to acceptance/registration/attendance (***students must remain current with immunizations at all times while enrolled at STA***). If for any reason, the student is not current with immunizations, the student will be removed from school.
- A registration form and application for enrollment must be completed.
- All new students entering St. Thomas Aquinas School in grades 3-8 are accepted on a probationary basis.
- In cases of divorce, separation, or unmarried parents, a copy of any current custody order must be provided by the registering parent to the administrative office.
- Parents who wish to volunteer at St. Thomas Aquinas School are required to participate in the Diocesan Safe Environment Management Program which requires a background check to be on file. Information regarding this may be obtained on the parish website – www.stthomasaquinas.org.

Final decisions on admission are made by the administration based upon parishioner status, academic readiness, space limitations and the availability of an appropriate educational program. All admission decisions are confidential.

Custody Issues

If parents are separated, divorced, or unmarried, the school presumes that both parents have access to their children unless one parent provides legal evidence that he/she has the sole right. If parents cannot agree on custody issues, the school may require parents to make other arrangements for the education of their children. Custody matters must be settled before the school year begins.

***See Diocesan Addendum**

Fees and Tuition

Information regarding the FACTS tuition management program is provided to each family at the time of enrollment.

All tuition fees and incidental billing fees (athletic fees, field trip fees, graduation fees) must be paid through FACTS. Checks for payment of tuition will not be accepted by St. Thomas Aquinas School or Parish offices.

- Each family must have a FACTS account. The FACTS account will be used for payment of tuition and incidental fee charges. Information regarding the FACTS tuition management program is provided to each family after enrollment or re-enrollment.
- Tuition may be paid through FACTS in one, two, ten, or eleven monthly payments. Administration fees will be assessed by FACTS.
- The first tuition payment is due in June or July. Monthly tuition payments must be completed by April of each year.
- Parents may select a monthly payment due date (5th or 20th) in accordance with the tuition program.
- Payments made by credit card or automatic bank draft are processed through FACTS. Credit card convenience fees or bank charges are charged to the user's account by FACTS.
- In addition to bank or credit card fees for declined payments, FACTS will also assess a fee. FACTS will re-attempt to draw the payment on the next FACTS billing date. Example: If a payment was due on the 5th and declined, FACTS will re-attempt to put the payment through on the 20th. If an automatic deduction is refused by the bank due to a lack of a sufficient balance, a fee will be assessed by FACTS in addition to any fees imposed by the bank.
- The tuition rate set at the time of registration continues throughout the school year and does not change if a non-Catholic becomes a Catholic during the year, or if a non-parishioner becomes a parishioner during the year. **Tuition status is determined by the Pastor.**

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available on a limited basis. To qualify, a family must be registered, contributing members of the Parish for at least one year. Financial aid forms and further information are available through FACTS. Applications for financial aid must be renewed each school year and are due the last day of March.

Parental Cooperation

***See Diocesan Addendum**

Parental cooperation is required for continued enrollment. Parents are expected to cooperate in good faith with the implementation and enforcement of all St. Thomas policies and procedures as stated in the handbook and requested by the administration.

Parental behavior or failure to cooperate shall be grounds for removal of any student from the school. Additionally, parents are expected to speak and act in a Christian, positive manner. Disrespectful behavior, vulgar language or verbal abuse may result in a family being required to withdraw their child(ren) from the school, or a family may not be invited to return the following year.

Parent/Teacher Communications

It is imperative that parents not disturb teachers during school hours. If you need to speak with a teacher, an appointment must be made in advance. Contact the teacher via e-mail when necessary.

E-mailing is an appropriate method for communicating simple information between home and school. More serious issues should be dealt with by arranging a conference with the teacher or other appropriate parties.

Principle of Subsidiarity

In keeping with the Catholic Church's principle of subsidiarity, students, parents, guardians, teachers and staff are encouraged to address a situation at the level at which the situation occurs. Persons having a concern with another individual should go directly to that person; problems should be solved at the lowest level whenever possible. If there is a concern with a teacher, the concern needs to be explored with the teacher first. A member of the administration may be involved after the situation has been addressed at the level at which the concern exists. The principal may be involved after all of the other steps have been followed.

Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas is not automatically extended to every student. This privilege is reserved for those students for whom St. Thomas Aquinas has the most appropriate program and whose academic progress and behavior/attitude indicate a willingness to engage cooperatively in spiritual and academic growth. Students may be denied enrollment at any time during the school year if attitude, behavior, academic performance, or parental cooperation becomes negative.

Parental Access of School Records

*See Diocesan Addendum

Withdrawal Procedures

When a student is withdrawn from school, the parent/guardian must notify the school office in writing, and complete the required withdrawal paperwork as soon as possible prior to the actual withdrawal date. Official student records are mailed directly to the new school.

A T H L E T I C S

Facilities Use Policy

For purposes of the following policy, the terms (i) "Athletic Facilities" shall comprise the St. Thomas Aquinas (STA) Lower School gym, the Upper School gym and athletic practice field, (ii) "Parish Organizations" shall mean organizations recognized and supported by St. Thomas Aquinas Parish (e.g. but without limitation, the STA Booster Club, the STA Parents Association, etc.) and (iii) "Permitted Activity(ies)" shall mean the specific activities approved by the Athletic Director in coordination with the rectory in advance in writing, subject to and consistent with strict compliance with this Facility Use Policy. The Athletic Facilities will be available for use only for facility appropriate athletic activity, as determined by the Athletic Director in the exercise of his or her discretion.

ANY USE OF THE ATHLETIC FACILITIES IS AT ALL TIMES SUBJECT TO STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THE STA SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY. ANY VIOLATION OF THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY SHALL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO USE THE ATHLETIC FACILITIES, WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE OR WARNING AND WITHOUT NECESSITY OF FURTHER ACTION BY THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, AND WITHOUT REFUND.

In addition, the cost to repair any damage to the athletic facilities, other than normal wear and tear attributable to the specific permitted activity approved by the athletic director shall be assessed to the individual requesting such use.

ALL PARTICIPANTS IN PERMITTED ACTIVITIES AT THE ATHLETIC FACILITIES MUST AT ALL TIMES DURING THE PERMITTED ACTIVITY BE MEMBERS OF THE ST. THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH.

During the school year, only Dallas Parochial League (DPL) teams and parish approved organizations may utilize the athletic facilities, when available, for permitted activities only.

THE ATHLETIC PRACTICE FIELD IS CLOSED TO USE BY ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS FROM JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 1 DUE TO FIELD MAINTENANCE. THE ATHLETIC GYMNASIUMS ARE SUBJECT TO ROUTINE MAINTENANCE FROM JULY 1 TO AUGUST 1 AND THEREFORE USAGE IS STRICTLY LIMITED.

Booster Club

The Booster Club was founded in 1998 to promote athletics at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. It is comprised of parents, parishioners, coaches and volunteers committed to supporting the Wildcats through fundraising supporting the athletic department and its director and by promoting volunteerism and school spirit. General meetings are held the first Monday of every month during the school year. The Booster Club provides athletic scholarships for two 8th grade boys and two 8th grade girls who will attend a Catholic high school. The Booster Club sponsors an annual golf tournament that raises funds that support athletics at St. Thomas. In recent years, the group has purchased the following items for the gym: championship banners, scoreboard, resurfacing of floor and safety pads for the walls and doorways. The Booster Club has also purchased water cooling systems for the outdoor sports, safety mats for the cheerleaders, and outdoor basketball goals for the parking lot.

Youth Sports Opportunities

There are various opportunities for youth (pre-kindergarten through 4th grade) to participate in sports throughout the community. Following is contact information for various leagues in the area:

Spring Valley Athletic Association (SVAA)

www.svaa.org send e-mail to svaa@airmail.net

972.238.9728

13650 TI Blvd, Suite 209

Dallas, Texas 75243

Dallas East Soccer Association (DESA)

www.dallaseastsoccer.org

972.994.1000

YMCA White Rock

www.ymcawiterock.org

214.328.3849

7305 Gaston Avenue

Dallas, Texas 75214

YMCA Park Cities

www.pcyymca.org

214.526.7293

6000 Preston Road

Dallas, Texas 75205

YMCA Lake Highlands

www.lakehighlandsymca.org

214.221.9622

8920 Stults Road

Dallas, Texas 75243

Youth Sports Participation

In pre-kindergarten through grade 4, coaches and parents will follow the rules established by the association/league in which their team plays and are in no way associated with St. Thomas Aquinas athletics. *Therefore:*

- No teams are to register under the “St. Thomas Aquinas” name.
- The team uniforms may **not** bear the name “St. Thomas Aquinas” or “STA” or any school logo or STA athletic insignia.
- Team practices are coordinated by each association/league and are not conducted at an STA facility.

Youth Sports Division/Formation of Teams

In pre-kindergarten through grade 4, teams will be formed in compliance with the rules and regulations of the association/league in which the team plays. Individuals should contact the various organizations for registration deadlines and other pertinent information.

ATTENDANCE

HOURS:

LOWER SCHOOL:

4-year-old full day – 2nd Grade (LS) school hours – 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

EARLY DISMISSAL: 11:45 AM for 4-year-old – 2nd grade (LS)

UPPER SCHOOL:

3-8 grade school hours – 7:45 AM – 3:16 PM

EARLY DISMISSAL: 12:00 PM for grades 3-8

- Entrance Time: Students are permitted in the building (in the café), under supervision, at 7:15 AM
- Homeroom: HR begins at 7:45 AM
- Tardy: Students are considered tardy at 7:55 AM

School office hours – 7:30 am – 3:30 pm

**The Texas Compulsory Attendance Law requires
each school offers 180 days of instruction.**

Absences

- Parents must notify the office of an absence by 8:30 am.
- **In cases of infectious diseases, or after 5 consecutive days of absence due to illness,** documentation from the child's doctor, and STA's approval, is required in conjunction with his/her return to school. Parents should notify the school and nurse immediately of an extended absence.
- **In case of injuries requiring special accommodations, parents must notify the school nurse, and administration before the student returns to school.**
- A student who is in attendance for at least four hours of a school day is considered present for the day and is not assessed an absence.
- No homework will be given prior to absences for any reasons.
- Students who are absent due to illness **may not** participate in athletic or other extra-curricular activities until they have returned to school.
- **Each student will attend class for a minimum of 90% of the attendance days of a given school year in order to be promoted to the following grade level. Parents of any student missing more than 10% of school sessions will be required to meet with STA administration to request a waiver of the attendance regulation.**
- The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips during these times to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Teachers will not give assignments in anticipation of the vacation.

Release of Students During School Hours

- Students are to remain in class until they are called to the office for release.
- Students will be released to their parent/legal guardian through the school office. Students will not be released to persons other than a custodial parent/guardian unless notification is received either in writing or by telephone from the parent/guardian prior to dismissal. A register is kept requiring a signature, name of child, time of release and time of return.
- Parents should **not** go directly to the classroom to ask for the release of a student. Students **must** be checked out through the office.
- Parents should not ask for their children to be released between 2:40 PM and 3:00 PM unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- Per Diocesan policy (5121.1) verification of medical and dental appointments are required from the medical or dental office. Please submit this written verification to the receptionist upon the student's return to school.

Tardiness

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrivals disrupt class and cause loss of valuable learning time. All students not in their homerooms by 8:00 AM are considered tardy and must report to the front desk with a parent or guardian for a tardy slip.

C A F E T E R I A

Cafeteria service is available to students in grades pre-kindergarten - 2.

- Lunches may be purchased in the cafeteria or brought from home.
- Lunches brought from home may be warmed in a microwave for the student by cafeteria supervisors. **Food to be warmed in the microwave must be brought in a microwave safe container. Do not send food which requires more than one minute to warm.** Please do not send make-it-yourself pizza as they cannot be prepared independently at school.
- **Special arrangements for lunch from outside vendors (e.g., pizza, hamburgers, other fast-food, etc.) for groups of students must be arranged *only with advance permission from the principal and the cafeteria manager.***
- The contract with the cafeteria service does not permit class parties to replace lunch.
- Glass containers and/or cans with pull tabs are not permitted.
- Carbonated drinks of any kind are not permitted.

Parent visits during Lunch

Please do keep in mind that lunchtime is an important time for social skill development with peers. Parents are welcome to enjoy lunch with their children. If you do join your child for lunch, please know that children other than your own will not be able to join you and that you will be seated at a separate table.

C A R P O O L S A F E T Y P R O C E D U R E S

Carpool/Morning Drop-Off

The guidelines for carpool drop-off/pick-up are in place for the safety of the children. Please read and follow all parking and carpool line rules to protect the children at all times.

- **In accordance with state law, St. Thomas Aquinas does not permit drivers to use cell phones in school zones, or in the carpool lines; please adhere to the law for the safety of your children.**

- 4-year-old pre-kindergarten students are dropped off at the Alderson entrance.
- Walking students **MUST be accompanied by an adult from the car to the door.**
- If you are walking your child to the school building, please do not park in the STA lot. Park in the Luby's lot and use sidewalks and the coned off walking areas in the STA lot; do not cross the carpool line.
- Parents are asked to say their good-byes at the door.
- The main carpool line begins at the west entrance of the parking lot next to the soccer field. Enter from Skillman and form a single line in the street alongside the Luby's parking lot.
- Stay in the queue and do not attempt to pass other vehicles.
- Beginning at 7:30 AM an adult will assist the children from the cars and direct them to the cafeteria, playground, or classroom. A teacher is on duty to supervise the children from 7:15 AM. Please do not drop children off earlier than 7:15 AM.
- Do not take your child to the classroom or attempt to have unscheduled time with your child's teacher.

Carpool/Afternoon Pickup

During dismissal, the safety and security of the Lower School children is our paramount concern. These policies and procedures are in place to ensure this safety and security. We appreciate your respectful cooperation and courteous treatment of staff as we enforce these rules.

- Parents will be issued a carpool tag which should be placed on the vehicle dashboard. **Whether you are walking or driving, your child will not be released to anyone without the school-issued carpool tag or notification or approval from parents/guardians.** Without verification or authorization, cars will be directed to wait in a holding area until a parent can be reached.
- If children from multiple families carpool regularly, there must be a blue school-issued tag for each family.
- The school must receive written notice of any alternative carpool arrangements no later than 2:30 PM.
- Children will only be released to parents or the individuals listed on the authorization to release form completed online.

The procedure for the afternoon carpool line is the same as for morning carpool. Be sure your school-issued tag is visible. The children are dismissed from the building based on these tags and will be brought to your car.

- Four-year-old pre-kindergarten is picked up at the Alderson entrance.
- If you are walking your child from the building, please do not park in the STA lot. Park in the Luby's lot, use sidewalks and walk along the fence line in the STA lot; do not cross the carpool line. Show your school-issued carpool tag or ID when picking up your child.

CHILD ABUSE

***See Diocesan Addendum**

Texas has both civil and criminal laws to protect children from abuse and neglect. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, the law requires that you report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) or a law enforcement agency. Child Protective Services (CPS), a division of PRS, is responsible for conducting civil investigations of alleged abuse and neglect that occurred in the child's family or home.

Failure to report suspected child abuse and neglect is against the law. Individuals who make reports in good faith are protected by law from liability, as are those who provide information during a CPS investigation.

To report to PRS, contact the agency's local office, or call the 24-hour toll free **Child Abuse Hotline (800) 252-5400**.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

***See Diocesan Addendum**

Student Conduct

In keeping with the Christian nature of the school, the highest standards of conduct and respect are expected of both students and their parents at all times. Any student who does not abide by the school rules, or whose conduct is such that the learning process or welfare of the other students is adversely affected, is subject to disciplinary consequences.

Most discipline will be handled by the classroom or special area teacher, but any serious or persistent problems will be referred to an administrator. Both teachers and administrator may interview any student regarding discipline problems without prior notice to the parent(s).

St. Thomas Aquinas students are expected to:

- 1) witness Christ to others.
- 2) be respectful of persons in authority and be respectful of the rights of others.
- 3) behave courteously at all times in manner and speech.
- 4) be obedient to the rules of the school.
- 5) follow the dress code.
- 6) respect property of the school and personal property.
- 7) exercise proper care in the use of materials and equipment.
- 8) be reverent in church.

K-2 Discipline

The teachers at St. Thomas Aquinas School have established a set of core beliefs (page **7**) about working with children which govern our interactions with them.

All children are different; effective discipline happens when situations are dealt with as they arise with the focus on enabling the child to grow and learn from his or her actions. Teachers will guide students toward personal responsibility and the decision-making skills they will need to function in the real world. Teachers will attempt to arrange consequences for problem situations in such a way that the child will not be humiliated or demeaned. In cases of repeated misconduct, parents will be contacted. Consequences for serious or repeated misconduct can include but are not limited to: loss of privileges, suspension from school, or school-initiated withdrawal.

Bullying/Harassment

St. Thomas Aquinas School is committed to a policy of non-discrimination within all school programs and activities. Harassment of employees or students is not condoned in a Christian environment and is strictly prohibited at St. Thomas Aquinas School. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. The following activities and behavior constitute harassment, which is prohibited under this policy:

- Requiring an employee to submit to unwelcome advances or conduct as an expressed or implied condition of receipt or maintenance of an employment benefit.
- Requiring a student to submit to unwelcome advances or conduct as an expressed or implied condition for educational benefit.
- Subjecting an employee or student to demeaning stereotypes, innuendo, intimidation, or insult such that an offensive or hostile environment is created.
- An employee subjecting a student to any type of advance, whether or not consensual, or unwelcome advances as expressed or implied condition of receipt or maintenance of an educational benefit.
- Any amorous relationship or activity between a student and employee is prohibited, whether or not consensual.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following behavior:

1. Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted advances, imitations, or comments.
2. Visual contact such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures.
3. Physical contact such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movements, or interfering with work, study or play.
4. Threats and demands to submit to inappropriate requests as a condition of continued employment or grades or other benefits or to avoid some other loss and offers of benefits in return for inappropriate favors.
5. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

Any employee or student who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment shall report the alleged harassment in writing to the school principal. The principal will take whatever actions he/she deems necessary to investigate the complaint, including but not limited to interviewing the accused person, the accusing person, and any witnesses. The principal will render a written decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the procedures set forth above shall not abridge, limit or in any way restrict the Conflict Management/Grievance Procedure for students and employees.

Bullying

It is imperative that every student has a safe environment that is free from fear, either psychological or physical. If we are to ask our children to attain the highest level of educational aspirations and become well rounded individuals within society, we must create a learning environment that will not tolerate any negative connotations towards that goal of the child and our institution. Therefore, in one step to ensure we obtain our collective goal, STA will be implementing a code of conduct and disciplinary procedures specifically regarding bullying.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

- First and foremost, bullying is and always should be considered abuse.
- Bullying involves repeated physical, verbal, non-verbal, emotional, technological (cyber bullying), psychological attacks or intimidation to another person or persons to intentionally hurt the other person, whether that hurt be physical/emotional/psychological.

Discipline for Bully Infractions/Referrals

Depending on the severity of the bullying incident(s), the administration reserves the right to impose the most appropriate consequence, regardless of the number of incidents. All decisions of STA are final.

SOME TYPES OF BULLYING

- Physical
- Verbal/Non-Verbal: name-calling, racial discrimination, taunting, exclusion, etc.
- Cyber Bullying: use of technology to bully
- See Social Networking section
- Intimidation/Threats
- Extortion/Stealing
- Damaging a person's property

Expulsion

***See Diocesan Addendum**

DRESS CODE AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The school uniform helps to identify students as members of the St. Thomas Aquinas School community. The school uniform code is designed to ensure consistency. These standards are based on the values of **neatness, cleanliness, and modesty.**

The intent of the dress code is to keep the students' appearance simple, modest, and free from distraction and competitiveness. The following guidelines are for students:

- Shirts and blouses must be tucked in at all times. (Exception: "vented" blouses sold at the school's contracted vendor).
- Make-up and tinted nail polish are not allowed. Nails may not be artificial, or longer than the tip of the finger.
- Tattoos and body piercing are not permitted.
- Large bows and hair ornaments are not permitted. Small bows, clips, or ribbons in uniform colors only may be worn. No laces, beads, trim or decorations of any kind.
- Hats may not be worn in the school during school hours.
- Any fad clothing, i.e., roller blade shoes, too large or extra wide pants, etc., are not permitted.
- Necklaces, bracelets, charms or other bangles are not to be worn to school. A simple ring, cross or religious medal on a thin, simple, metal chain can be worn. Valuable jewelry or watches should not be worn to school.
- Earrings should be simple. One pair of studded earrings may be worn at a time.
- Boys may not wear earrings.
- Students may not write on hands, legs, arms, clothing, shoes, etc.
- Belt lengths (after buckling) may not exceed 3 inches.
- Hair should be kept clean, neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Hair must be the natural hair color. Hairstyles should be traditional. Boys' hair should be above the collar, ears, and eyes and without sideburns, tails, or sculpturing. Dyed hair, highlights, etc. are not permitted.
- Waistlines on clothes must meet the student's waist.
- Jumpers should touch the floor when the student kneels.
- Shorts should not be shorter than 2" above the knee.
- Sweaters, jackets, sweatshirts may not be tied around the waist or worn tied over the shoulders, except at lunch and recess.

Dress Code Violations

Teachers will notify parents about dress code violations. The administration may call the parents to bring a change of clothing when the administration feels a student is dressed inappropriately, either on a uniform day or a free dress day.

Free Dress Days

Free Dress days will be announced in the school newsletter or by e-mail. Special event days may require specific dress not indicated below.

On free dress days, students may not wear:

- sloppy or torn clothing
- hats inside the school building
- jewelry that does not conform to the uniform rules
- immodest or inappropriate clothing
- t-shirts related to drug culture, music groups, alcohol, drugs, obscene or offensive language or pictures
- shirts that do not cover the midriff when arms are raised
- halter tops or spaghetti straps
- shirts longer than shorts or skirts
- shorts and skirts shorter than 2" above the knee
- Spandex or Lycra.
- flip-flops or shoes with heels higher than 1"
- any St. Thomas athletic uniforms/shorts without specific permission from administration
- other dress deemed inappropriate/offensive by the administration

Scout Uniforms

Scout uniform shorts must be the length of the school uniform shorts.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

PK

Girls

Shirts:

White Peter Pan Blouse (short or long sleeved)
Navy or Red STA Monogrammed Polo Shirt*

Jumper/Skorts/Shorts/Pants:

Double Button Plaid Jumper with Navy Modesty Shorts
Navy Skort and/or Navy Shorts
Navy Pants

Shoes:

Solid colored tennis shoes with Velcro closures
Mary Jane styled shoes with Velcro closures
Note: No light-up shoes

Boys

Shirts:

Solid white collared shirt
Navy or Red STA Monogrammed Polo Shirt*

Pants:

Navy Shorts
Navy Pants

Shoes:

Solid colored tennis shoes with Velcro closures

Note: No light-up shoes

Grades K-2**Girls****Shirts:**

White Polo Shirt (short or long sleeved)

White Peter Pan Blouse (short or long sleeved)

Navy or Red STA Monogrammed Polo Shirt*

Outerwear:

Navy V-Neck Cardigan Sweater with Logo

STA Navy Monogrammed Fleece*

STA Grey Performance Pullover*

Jumper/Skorts/Shorts/Pants:

Double Button Plaid Jumper with Navy Modesty Shorts

Navy Skort

Navy Pleated Pants

Navy Cuffed Shorts with Pleats

Note: Shorts must be longer than fingertips when placed at sides.

Socks /Tights/Leggings:

Black, Navy or White Solid Crew or Knee High Socks

STA Elite Socks*

Solid Black, Navy or White Tights or Leggings

Note: Leggings are worn under skirts and jumpers and must come to ankle and meet socks.

Shoes:

White/Blue Saddle Oxfords - Keds or Classic Style

Note: All shoes must be secured by laces or Velcro - no slip-on or loafers.

Boys**Shirts:**

White Polo Shirt (short or long sleeved)

Navy or Red STA Monogrammed Polo Shirt*

Outerwear:

Navy V-Neck Cardigan Sweater with Logo

Navy STA Monogrammed Fleece*

Grey STA Performance Pullover*

Pants/Shorts:

Navy Pants

Navy Flat Front Shorts

Note: Shorts must be longer than fingertips when placed at sides.

Socks:

Black, Navy or White Solid Crew Socks (small brand logos are permitted)
STA Elite Socks*

Belts:

1st and 2nd grade only - Black or Brown (leather or braided)

Shoes:

Solid black athletic shoes (logos must also be black)

Note: All shoes must be secured by laces or Velcro - no slip-on or loafers

K only – solid black athletic shoes with Velcro closures

* denotes that item is purchased in the STA Spirit Store.

EXTENDED DAY

After-school supervision by classroom teachers ends at 3:30 PM at the Lower School. To ensure student safety, it is mandatory that parents pick up their children at dismissal time or enroll them in the extended day program unless they are participating in a supervised school activity.

- Extended day care is provided for students enrolled in the program from dismissal time until 6:00 PM.
- The monthly extended day fee must be paid regardless of the number of days per month a student attends.
- Students who are not enrolled in the extended day program and are not picked up by 3:30 PM at the Lower School will be escorted to and placed in the extended day program. A fee per student, per day will be assessed.
- Students picked up after 6:00 PM will be assessed a per child late fee.
- Extended Day will not be available on the first day and last day of school and the day school is out for Thanksgiving break and Christmas break.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

***See Diocesan Addendum**

St. Thomas Aquinas School offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Information concerning such programs is distributed to the students through the school office by the various organizations. All activities involving the students acting in the school's name outside of the classroom are under the direct jurisdiction of the principal. Such activities are meaningful and appropriate for the age level involved. The principal has the authority and the responsibility to intervene if the activity is not functioning for the good of the students.

Participation

Extra-Curricular Activity participation at St. Thomas Aquinas is considered a privilege, and participation in any extra-curricular activity is subject to the discretion of St. Thomas Aquinas School. Students' academics and conduct will be monitored by St. Thomas Aquinas' staff, and a student may be removed from participation in such activities at the sole discretion of administration.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an additional tool in the learning process. Parental permission forms allow your child to leave the school and releases the school and teachers from liability in the event of an accident. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic requirements and behavioral expectations or if the proper permission form is not returned. Parents may also be asked to chaperone, if necessary. **To optimize safety, siblings are not allowed to accompany chaperones. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of proper forms.**

Participation

Field trip participation at St. Thomas Aquinas is considered a privilege, and participation is subject to the discretion of St. Thomas Aquinas School. Students' academics and conduct will be monitored by St. Thomas Aquinas' staff, and a student may be removed from participation in such activities at the sole discretion of administration.

Chaperones for field trips must have a current Safe Environment ID Badge from the St. Thomas Aquinas Safe Environment office, and understand that they must supervise students at all times.

All students must return to school for dismissal.

FUND RAISING

Students will have the opportunity to participate in fundraising efforts that benefit our school and other charities. All fund-raising must have prior approval of the principal and be approved on the pre-set calendar and are determined prior to the beginning of the academic year. **Students may not solicit funds for any reasons not pre-approved by the administration.** This includes personal gain gifts and solicitation for organizations not sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas School.

HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Health-Related Restrictions

We ask that the parent/guardian of any child with a health-related restriction please communicate the specific restriction to the classroom teacher and the school nurse. Some common restrictions include no PE due to an injury or no outdoor recess due to respiratory conditions. The Lower School will provide quiet activities for students with restrictions.

Illness

In consideration of your child, classmates and our staff, please keep your child home from school if he/she is ill or not feeling well. Providing rest at home will best comfort your child and facilitate a speedy recovery. Children should be kept at home when they have a bad cold, sinus infection, sore throat, eye infection, unusual skin eruption, swollen glands, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, or suspected communicable disease. **Your child must be free of these symptoms or illnesses for 24 hours prior to returning to school.** Any child exhibiting such symptoms will be sent home. Parents are urged to schedule doctor and dental appointments after school hours. If unable to do so, students are responsible for work missed during this time.

Immunizations

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School follows the Texas Department of Health rules covering immunizations. The Texas Education Code requires students in elementary and secondary school to provide proof of required immunizations. **A current immunization record must be received by the school at application and before your child is formally accepted, registered and enrolled.** For applicants entering K-8th, the record must be received, reviewed, and deemed complete by STA prior to on-site assessment or shadowing.

STA does not accommodate provisional enrollments; the school requires all applicants/students to be current on immunizations prior to acceptance/registration/ attendance (***students must remain current with immunizations at all times while enrolled at STA***). If for any reason, the student is not current with immunizations, the student will be removed from school.

**Please see the next page for
Minimum State Vaccine
Requirements for Texas Children**



2014-2015 Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students Grades K-12

This chart summarizes the vaccine requirements incorporated in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 25 Health Services, Sections 97.61 to 97.72. This chart is not intended as a substitute for consulting the TAC, which has other provisions and details. [Click here for complete TAC language.](#)
 The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is granted authority to set immunization requirements by the Texas Education Code, Chapter 38, Health & Safety, Subchapter A, General Provisions.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

A student shall show acceptable evidence of vaccination prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to a child-care facility or public or private elementary or secondary school in Texas.

Vaccine Required (Attention to notes and footnotes)	Minimum Number of Doses Required by Grade Level				NOTES
	K - 5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th - 12 th	
Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td/Tdap) ¹	5 doses or 4 doses	3 dose primary series and 1 Tdap/Td booster <i>within last 3 years</i>	3 dose primary series and 1 Tdap/Td booster <i>within last 10 years</i>	3 dose primary series and 1 Tdap/Td booster <i>within last 10 years</i>	For K - 6 th grade: 5 doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine; 1 dose must have been received on or after the 4 th birthday. However, 4 doses meet the requirement if the 4 th dose was received on or after the 4 th birthday. For students aged 7 years and older, 3 doses meet the requirement if 1 dose was received on or after the 4 th birthday. For 7 th grade: 1 dose of Tdap is required if at least 5 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine. For 8 th - 12 th grade: 1 dose of Tdap is required when 10 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine. Td is acceptable in place of Tdap if a medical contraindication to pertussis exists.
Polio ¹	4 doses or 3 doses				For K - 12 th grade: 4 doses of polio; 1 dose must be received on or after the 4 th birthday. However, 3 doses meet the requirement if the 3 rd dose was received on or after the 4 th birthday.
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella ^{1,2} (MMR)	2 doses of MMR	1 dose each of rubella and mumps vaccine			The 1 st dose of MMR must be received on or after the 1 st birthday. For K - 5 th grade: 2 doses of MMR are required. For 6 th - 12 th grade: 2 doses of a measles-containing vaccine, and 1 dose each of rubella and mumps vaccine is required.
Hepatitis B ²	3 doses				For students aged 11 - 15 years, 2 doses meet the requirement if adult hepatitis B vaccine (Recombivax [®]) was received. Dosage and type of vaccine must be clearly documented. Two (2) 10 mcg/1.0 ml doses of Recombivax [®] . If Recombivax [®] is not the vaccine received, a 3-dose series is required.
Varicella ^{1,2,3}	2 doses	1 dose	2 doses		The 1 st dose of varicella must be received on or after the 1 st birthday. For K - 5 th and 7 th - 12 th grade: 2 doses are required. For 6 th grade: 1 dose is required. For any student who receives the 1 st dose on or after 13 years of age, 2 doses are required.
Meningococcal	1 dose				For 7 th - 12 th grade: 1 dose required.
Hepatitis A ^{1,2}	2 doses	The 1 st dose of hepatitis A must be received on or after the 1 st birthday.			

¹ Receipt of the dose up to (and including) 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.

² Serologic confirmation of immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, hepatitis A, or varicella or serologic evidence of infection is acceptable in place of vaccine.

³ Previous illness may be documented with a written statement from a physician, school nurse, or the child's parent or guardian containing wording such as: "This is to verify that (name of student) had varicella disease (chickenpox) on or about (date) and does not need varicella vaccine." This written statement will be acceptable in place of any and all varicella vaccine doses required.

Medications

Only medication which is necessary for a child to remain in school will be given by authorized school staff during school hours. These medications must be prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and dispensed by a registered pharmacist. We are unable to give your child “over the counter” medication unless it is prescribed by a licensed physician and labeled by a licensed pharmacist with proper directions. In extenuating circumstances, some non-prescription medication (i.e. Advil/Tylenol) may be distributed by the school nurse/ STA administration with the explicit permission of the guardian(s). In addition, a signed permission form from the parent/legal guardian will need to accompany the medication. Each student’s medication must be in a properly labeled container with the following information:

- ◆ Student’s name
- ◆ Physician/Dentist’s name
- ◆ Date
- ◆ Name of medication
- ◆ Dosage
- ◆ Directions for administration
- ◆ Duration medication is to be given

Please give the written medication permission form and properly labeled medication to the clinic staff. **No exceptions may be made to the medication policy.**

Nurse

The St. Thomas Aquinas Lower School clinic is staffed by a LVN. The clinic is open daily from 7:30 AM through student dismissal at 3:00 PM.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Head lice can spread rapidly. Students found to have head lice must be excluded from school immediately. **The school follows a “nit free” policy for re-admittance to school.**

Student Accident Insurance

All student accidents and injuries on school premises and at school sponsored events should be reported to the School office immediately.

As a part of tuition, STA Catholic School provides each student with student accident insurance. This coverage is secondary when the student has health coverage under another Insurance Plan and primary when not covered under another Plan. This insurance covers accidental injuries to students during school hours and at all school sponsored functions including sports, both on and off campus. This coverage is not health insurance. Insurance claim forms are available in the Office/Nurse/Athletic Director’s office. When an accident occurs, the school will fill out the top portion of the Student Accident Claim Form and provide this to the parent(s). The parent(s) will then complete the remainder of the form and mail it, along with all required attachments, to the insurance carrier directly at the address indicated on the form. All claims under the Student Accident Insurance are handled directly by the insurance carrier with the Parent / Guardian. If there are any issues that arise during the course of the claim, please contact the School Office. Coverage is provided in accordance with the plan documents and specific coverage terms and conditions.

When an accident occurs, the school and the parents should work together to complete and file the appropriate forms. The school will provide the appropriate paperwork for the parent(s) to submit.

***See Diocesan Addendum**

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE

Inclement Weather

School closings or delays in the start of the school day due to inclement weather will be communicated through an automated telephone emergency notification system. In the event of delay or closing, parents/guardians will be contacted via the automated telephone system. Delays or closings will also be posted on the school website – www.staschool.org and in RenWeb – www.renweb.com under announcements.

Severe Weather Dismissal

A “severe weather alert dismissal” will be sent to parents when conditions exist that pose a safety threat to our students who walk or ride bicycles home.

A text message via Parent Alert will be sent.

LIBRARY

Every grade has a specified library time that supplements the formal reading program. The librarian and volunteers strive to aid teachers and students in using the collection. Cooperation, courtesy and concern for library upkeep are the responsibilities of all students. Rules and regulations posted in the library are to be observed. Students are encouraged to obtain library cards from their local public library for additional independent reading and research.

Procedures

- Books may be checked out for one week and may be renewed twice.
- Books must be in-hand in order to be renewed.
- Some reference books are available for overnight checkout.
- Each borrower is personally responsible for the materials checked out in his/her name. Students responsible for lost or severely damaged books will be charged the current replacement cost plus a \$2.00 processing fee. There will be a \$5.00 charge for minor damage or defacing of any library material.
- Students may be denied library privileges if overdue books are not returned as requested by librarian.

LOGOS AND USE POLICY

All logos and images associated with St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School and its associated entities are for the sole use of the school. The logos, insignia and images may not be reproduced, duplicated or altered without express written consent from the school administration. This includes the school logo, athletic logos, Booster Club logo as well as images from the school website. Independent use of any of these logos and images on sports team uniforms, paper goods, clothing, decals, monogrammed or imprinted items, etc. is prohibited.

LOST AND FOUND

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. A lost and found cabinet is maintained in the cafeteria. Unclaimed articles are given to the St. Vincent de Paul Society on a regular basis. Parents and students are expected to put names on the student’s belongings. Expensive items should not be brought to school. Students should bring found articles to the office immediately.

PARENT ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

***See Diocesan Addendum**

PARTIES/GIFTS

Classroom Parties

Three classroom parties per year are permitted: Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day. To assist with the parties, parents will be asked to provide refreshments (or some other support) for one of the three parties during the year. No other funds are to be requested, raised or volunteered.

All parties on a grade level must be coordinated with the classroom teachers and the same party favors, games, etc. must take place among the classes at that level. The result will be a more equitable environment for the parties across grade levels which reflect and enhance the egalitarian attitude implicit in Catholic education. **The contract with the cafeteria service does not permit class parties to replace lunch.**

Non-school Parties

Non-school sponsored party invitations may not be passed out at school unless everyone in the class is invited to the party. A directory is provided at the beginning of the school year, which may be used in obtaining addresses of students in the class if you prefer to mail invitations. **No special gifts (balloon deliveries, flowers, limos, entertainers, etc.) are allowed.** Deliveries of gifts will be held in the school office until dismissal.

PROGRAMS

St. Thomas Aquinas School has an excellent pre-kindergarten through grade eight curriculum, which is further enhanced by the following programs.

- *Take Flight* - A program specifically designed to provide some 1st and 2nd grade students a multi-sensory approach to reading instruction; availability of this service is based on the availability of the Certified Academic Language Therapist for qualifying students.
- Reading Specialist – Availability of this service is guided by a Student Intervention Team consisting of the school counselor and the classroom teacher. A reading specialist is available to meet the needs of students who need additional reinforcement in order to meet grade level goals.

Counselor

The school counselor helps students and their families to overcome dilemmas that may interfere with the educational experience at St. Thomas Aquinas School. The school counselor assists with, but is not limited to: crisis interventions, testing referrals, psychological referrals, individual/group counseling, child safety, drug education, preliminary screening for learning differences and standardized achievement testing.

A comprehensive guidance program is initiated and implemented by the school counselor. Guidance is given to students in order to assist them in making decisions that impact their school life and home life in a positive way.

PUBLICATIONS/COMMUNICATIONS/SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Communications

School information and communication will be sent via email/RenWeb.

- Training courses in RenWeb are available; please contact Admin. Office.

School Directory

St. Thomas Aquinas School publishes a school directory of family information annually, which includes parent and student names, parent employers, parent e-mail address, name or workplace, as well as home, mobile, and work numbers.

This directory is compiled for the personal use of St. Thomas Aquinas families only. It may not be sold or used for mailing lists or solicitation purposes of advertising personal businesses or promoting outside businesses.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR SCHOOL COSTS AND ATTORNEY'S FEES

See the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas School Policies **Handbook Addendum** regarding "Reimbursement for School Costs and Attorney's Fees."

SAFE ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY AND SECURITY

DIOCESAN AND STA'S POLICY HOLDS THAT STA FACILITIES ARE GUN/WEAPON FREE ZONES

TO PROMOTE THE CHURCH'S PREROGATIVE TO MAINTAIN PLACES OF WORSHIP AS GUN-FREE LOCATIONS, THE DIOCESE AND ENTITY FACILITIES FOLLOW THIS POLICY.

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO ALL PERSONS PRESENT AT ANY FACILITY OWNED, LEASED, OR OPERATED BY THE DIOCESE OR ANY ENTITY, OR AT ANY ACTIVITY OR FUNCTION ORGANIZED OR SPONSORED BY THE DIOCESE OR ANY ENTITY, EVEN IF THAT PERSON HOLDS A LICENSE TO CARRY A CONCEALED WEAPON ("CHL").

Report to and Cooperation with Law Enforcement

*See Diocesan Addendum

Blood Borne Pathogens/First Aid Training

All persons working with students who may possibly incur injury must attend a workshop on Blood Borne Pathogens and First Aid Training given on our campus by the school nurse. These procedures will help to ensure the safety of both students and volunteers.

Building Access

After school hours, all requests to enter a classroom area must be cleared through the school office. Cleaning crew/maintenance/construction/etc. personnel are not permitted to open the school/classrooms for anyone (parent(s)/student(s) should not ask them to do so).

- **All visitors, including parents, must:**
 - Sign in at the front desk
 - Visibly display his/her safe environment badge/Visitor Badge
 - Wait in the front lobby for direction
 - Parents/Visitors are not allowed to be in the school unescorted

STA facilities are monitored by security cameras 24 hours a day, and 365 days a year.

Crisis Management

A Crisis Management program is in place at St. Thomas Aquinas School. The principal is the Crisis Coordinator. A team has been trained to respond in various crisis situations. Students are informed of certain components of the crisis plan at the beginning of the school year.

Fire Drills/Evacuation Drills

Fire drills are held in accordance with the City of Dallas Fire Codes and Diocesan policy. Absolute cooperation in abiding by the rules set forth by faculty and staff is expected. Silence, order and speed are of the utmost importance in any emergency evacuation. Faculty/Staff of St. Thomas Aquinas School will give direction to students and visitors in the school buildings.

Playground

- If students need to remain inside during recess, written communication must be on file with the nurse and office.
- No rough playing is tolerated. Students are to play in the areas designated for their class.
- Playground equipment is supplied to the students during recess times. Students are responsible for returning the equipment to their playground supervisor.
- Students may not bring equipment from home unless approved by STA staff.
- Students gather belongings and equipment and line up quietly when requested.

Safe Environment and Criminal History Background Checks

All faculty, staff, volunteers and outside tutors who work directly with the students must have a completed, satisfactory criminal history background check on file.

All persons (employees or volunteers) working with St. Thomas Aquinas students must undergo a security clearance check before the employee/volunteer begins their assignment. Procedures for obtaining a safe environment clearance and ID badge are explained on the church website – www.stthomasaquinas.org.

- **ID badges/Visitor Badges must be worn at all times.**

SCHOOL BUSINESS

No purchases/contractual agreements may be made on behalf of STA.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The administration prepares the calendar each year. Early release dates, grade reporting periods, special meetings, student holidays and other important information are recorded on the calendar each year and can be viewed on RenWeb. The school calendar is subject to change; changes are sent home via RenWeb communications. Early dismissal and in-service days are required for teacher workshops and meetings. Extended Day services will not be available on teacher in-service days, **the first day of school, the last day of school, the day school is out for Thanksgiving break, and the day school is out for Christmas break.**

SUPERVISION

Grades Pre-kindergarten - 2

The school building is open from 7:15 AM to 6:00 PM. Students are not to arrive at school prior to 7:15 AM. Supervision is provided from 7:15 AM to 7:50 AM at no additional charge. As students arrive at school, they are to go immediately to the cafeteria or playground, as directed by classroom teachers, for supervision. Students will be directed to homeroom classes at the appropriate time.

After-school supervision ends at 3:30 PM at the Lower School. Extended day services are available for full day pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade students until 6:00 PM for an additional fee. (See *Extended Day*).

TELEPHONE CALLS/TECHNOLOGY USAGE

- Students are discouraged from using the school phone and will be permitted to do so only if absolutely necessary with the permission of the principal, a teacher, or the school office personnel.
- Communication with students by parents during school hours should be made through the school office. The office staff is available to serve you in an emergency. Please limit your requests for messages to be delivered to your child to emergency situations. Changes in carpool arrangements should be made before the student arrives at school.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Students are prohibited from using cell phones, CD players, I-Pods, or any other electronic devices while on the St. Thomas Aquinas School campus. If a student is found using such a device, it will be confiscated and returned to the parent.

TECHNOLOGY - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

(A separate i-Pad policy is given to 6th, 7th and 8th grade parents and students at the beginning of each school year).

An Acceptable Use Policy is a set of guidelines for the exploration and use of the Internet as a tool for learning. Its purpose is to provide guidance to users of the Internet and should be provided to staff, students, and parents.

St. Thomas Aquinas is proud to offer all students access to our school's computer networks and the Internet. The Internet is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to these network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. **This access is a privilege - not a right.**

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The following are not permitted:

- ◆ The use or possession of USB flash drives.
- ◆ The use of any internet browser other than Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Chrome.
- ◆ The use of any operating system not installed by the staff of the school
- ◆ Willfully damaging computers, software, computer systems, or computer networks.
- ◆ Using the network or Internet to plagiarize or violate copyright laws.
- ◆ Intentionally wasting limited resources.
- ◆ Employing the network for commercial purposes.
- ◆ Use of floppy disks (regardless of source or content) without the permission of the network administrator.
- ◆ Using the network to send or display offensive and/or obscene messages or pictures.
- ◆ Using computers to access materials that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts or advocates violence or discrimination toward other people.
- ◆ Using the network or Internet to harass, insult, or attack others.
- ◆ Downloading software from the Internet without the permission of the network administrator.
- ◆ The use or possession of any computing device not supplied by St Thomas Aquinas School
 - This includes, but is not limited to, any form of a smart watch/device.

e.g., Apple/Google/Pebble/Sony/etc. watches; Google Glass; FitBit/similar devices with text/surf capabilities; any device that can read/send text/surf the internet/take pictures/communicate with other people/other devices; etc.).

Social Networking, Photo Video Release

Social networking sites should be used in a manner in accordance with our school and community values. Networking interaction, while taking place on personal time and not in relation to the school day, impacts the overall harmony of our community.

Parameters must be set for all parents and children when using any technology such as internet sites and cell phones. In addition, parents are responsible for having ongoing discussions about site usage and must monitor their child's internet and cell phone use. It is important that the STA school community realizes the wide reach and possible ramifications some of their exchanges may have. Technology is a way of life; it is vitally important that we practice appropriate use, as well as address potential issues which may arise from impulsive commentary. STA parents are also expected to model appropriate social media behavior. Parents and students should refrain from negative or derogatory commentary about our school, employees, and community in these public forums.

It is also expected that all parents, volunteers, and students using social networking refrain from:

- Photos of children other than their own.
- Defaming the character of any individual within our community.
- Defaming St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Parish and School or the Diocese of Dallas.
- Causing embarrassment to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, any associated organizations or members of the community.
- Harassing any member of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Parish and School community.
- Divulging any personal information about children in the community that would jeopardize their safety or well-being in any way.

Creation of grade level, homeroom, team pages on social media sites, whether public/private, is not permitted, and not supported/endorsed by STA under any circumstances.

Social media sites are not the appropriate forum for discussion of school concerns/school business.

Please use professional means to let school related concerns be known by setting up a meeting with the appropriate person/people when concerns arise.

Refer to Photo/Video Release of the Diocesan Addendum at the end of this Handbook

The Handbook Acknowledgment form includes a Photo/Video Release that must be completed by each family.

Photos or videos taken during the school day, or on field trips, by students, parents or visitors must not be included in any social media format without parental approval of all parties included. Events during the school day are photographed by approved class/activity photographers. Due to the enormous volume of student images captured throughout the year of our sizeable student body, STA cannot guarantee a student's image will not be captured.

The Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools of the Diocese of Dallas indicates that:

Employees, clerics and volunteers are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information, including photos and/or video, of any child under the age of eighteen without verifiable consent of a parent or guardian. Personal identifiable information includes full name, photos, home address, email

address, telephone number or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact a child. Verifiable consent can take the form of a release/permission form, an email from a parent or guardian, or spoken permission by a parent or guardian in the presence of another adult. The Diocese of Dallas and its affiliates will review alleged violations of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, and the Safe Environment Policy of the Diocese of Dallas, on a case-by-case basis.

St. Thomas Aquinas has addressed potential dangers and issues of various technology for our students through the Safe Environment Office's web safety presentations. There are also strict content restrictions in place for on-site technology use. However, home use of technology cannot be monitored by the school administration. We encourage parents to be highly involved in their child's technological education should they elect to provide them with the means for such interaction.

Dallas Diocese Social Media Policy – Protection of Children

All visitors are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information, including photos/video of any child under the age of 18 without verifiable consent of a parent/guardian. Personal identifiable info includes, but is not limited to, name, photos, home address, email info, telephone number, or any information that would allow someone to identify (or, contact) a child.

Consequences of Violation (student)

Possible Consequences for Violation of the policies and procedures of St. Thomas Aquinas are located in this handbook under "Conduct and Discipline".

Disclaimer - St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not assume responsibility for inappropriate materials acquired through the Internet access at the school. *St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School cannot be held responsible for managing community social media use.*

VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS

The goal of the volunteer service hours policy is to increase parent participation in the parish and the school. At St. Thomas Aquinas, we rely on committed parish families to be part of the life of the parish and the school. To be considered a contributing/participating parishioner all families must complete a minimum of 20 adult volunteer service hours each calendar year and are encouraged to do more as a means of fostering a spirit of community at St. Thomas Aquinas. Non-parishioners with children at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School are also encouraged to volunteer their time. We recognize that there are some families with 2 households and the expectation is that through cooperative parenting the family unit(s) will have a minimum of 20 adult volunteer service hours. Parents who have not yet been cleared through the screening process (required by the diocese for all persons who work with children) need to contact the Parish Safe Environment Staff for assistance. The ultimate decision about whether the volunteer obligation has been satisfied will be the Pastor's.

Volunteers who have been cleared through the screening process will be issued a picture identification badge that must be worn anytime around children. This is for the safety of the children. If you lose your badge please notify the Parish Safe Environment Office immediately.

The adult volunteer service hours system is set up on an honor system for performing the required hours and for reporting the hours worked. The responsibility rests upon the adult volunteer to ensure that the required number of hours has been performed and to timely report hours worked each month. Parents can report their hours online at www.renweb.com. Go to Family Information, click on your name and then click on the "Service Hours" tab. Random verification of the hours reported will be conducted.

Service that builds the parish community will count toward the adult volunteer service hours required. A list of volunteer opportunities can be found in the Parents' Web of www.renweb.com. To sign up to volunteer log on to either the school's web site at www.staschool.org and click on the link or go directly to www.renweb.com. If you have a question about whether an activity will count toward satisfying your volunteer obligation or if you need assistance in reporting your hours, you should contact the Parents' Association Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer hour description: A minimum of 20 volunteer hours per household must be given during calendar year 2017 in order to qualify for parishioner tuition status. If you only have a preschool child and no other older siblings enrolled in St. Thomas, you are not required to give volunteer hours. Families with kindergarten children and no older siblings, are required to give a minimum of 7 hours during the Fall of the kindergarten year. New families, entering school between August and December of 2017 (grades K-8th) are required to give a minimum of 7 hours between August and December of 2017.

Hours: Volunteered time to any organization connected with St. Thomas Aquinas School/Parish during 2017. Examples include: Carnival, last school year's Auction, Parents' Association, Holy Name Society, Altar Society, Mothers' Association, Lector, Eucharistic Minister, School Library, Science Lab, Art Department, Material Moms and Dads, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Athletics, and Booster Club.

Contributing parishioners are defined as persons who contribute to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish on a consistent basis as outlined above and who satisfy the volunteer requirements defined in the St. Thomas Aquinas Parent/Student Handbook. (Minimum contribution requirements are determined by the parish office. New families are required to begin their volunteer responsibilities after their child is enrolled.)

VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS

St. Thomas Aquinas School welcomes volunteers from our parish community. Those wishing to donate time and energy are encouraged to contact the St. Thomas Aquinas Parents' Association Volunteer Coordinator and the Parish Safe Environment Office. Please see the Safe Environment, Safety and Security section of this handbook regarding required clearance and procedures for volunteers or visitors.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DALLAS SCHOOL POLICIES HANDBOOK ADDENDUM

OVERVIEW

Catholic schools within The Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas (the “Diocese”) are an extension of the religious ministry of the Diocese and, in the case of parochial schools, of the parish to which they are attached. To help schools fulfill this important role, the Diocese has promulgated certain policies for implementation in every school within the Diocese. Accordingly, the policies contained in this Addendum amend, replace, and control over any local school policies which apply to the same subject matter thereof.

EXPULSION

Orderly school administration is essential to fulfilling the core mission of Catholic schools. Even a single failure by a member of the school community to uphold the standards of behavior to which all community members agree when a student is enrolled can cause irreparable harm. Thus, while in many cases expulsion is reserved for very serious or persistent misconduct, a school may properly determine that a single instance of on- or off-campus misconduct requires separation of a student from the school community. Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student (including parents or other family members) can also significantly hinder a school’s ability to perform its essential task of educating students. As a result, misconduct committed by a person connected to the school through a student (including parents or other family members) may result in the expulsion of the student from the school when, in his or her sole discretion, the chief administrator determines that such action is appropriate.

Grounds for Expulsion

Any instance or course of misconduct may, at the sole discretion of the school’s chief administrator, be sufficient grounds for expulsion. In many cases, it is appropriate to attempt to correct the problem behavior through less severe disciplinary measures. In other cases, however, the school’s chief administrator may determine that expulsion is the appropriate sanction for misconduct that has not previously resulted in probation, suspension, or other discipline.

Examples of behavior that will generally result in expulsion include but are not limited to:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students;
- Incorrigible or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class;
- Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence—whether intended in jest or not—directed toward any school personnel, students, member of the school community, or other person on school property or during school-related activities;
- Habitual or persistent violation of school regulations;
- Possessing, selling, giving away, using, or being under the influence of alcohol and drugs and/or hazardous substances on campus, at school functions, or at a time and place that directly involves the school or the welfare of members of the school community;
- The on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage;

- Use or possession of firearms or other potentially harmful objects or weapons;
- Gang-related conduct or activity including but not limited to, symbols, graffiti, apparel, colors, hazing/initiations, and hand signals commonly associated with gangs;
- Theft, extortion, arson;
- Habitual truancy;
- Malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school;
- Hazing;
- Serious bullying and/or harassment;
- Conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or parish;
- Transmission of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any student or person who appears to be a minor child; and
- Use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community.

Additionally, off-campus misconduct may result in expulsion, especially when it is related in some way to the school community because it is directed towards a member of the school community, directly or indirectly involves multiple members of the school community, or may negatively impact the school's reputation in the community.

Procedure for Expulsion

Circumstances giving rise to expulsion can arise and unfold quickly. The chief administrator's primary duty in such situations is to protect the school community. No student or family has any right to the application of a particular procedure before or in connection with the expulsion of a student. Nevertheless, the following process can serve as a general guideline when, in the chief administrator's discretion, circumstances warrant:

When practical, the pastor of a parochial elementary school and the president of a diocesan high school should be apprised of the circumstances of a potential expulsion before the decision to expel is implemented;

When circumstances permit, before the decision to expel is implemented, the student's parents should be advised of the potential for expulsion and a summary of the grounds for expulsion.

The student and his or her parents should be invited to a conference with the school's chief administrator. In parish schools, the local pastor should be advised of the scheduled conference. In high schools, the president should be advised of the scheduled conference. At the chief administrator's discretion, this conference may be held before or after the decision to expel is implemented.

The final decision to expel a student rests with the school's chief administrator and will not be reviewed except to ensure compliance with any applicable pre-expulsion procedures. In parochial elementary schools, the pastor should be consulted. In diocesan high schools, the president should be consulted.

Tuition and Fees

Prepaid tuition and fees are not refunded if a student is expelled. If a student is expelled before tuition or fees would ordinarily come due, the family of an expelled student shall be excused from further payment.

PARENTAL ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Parents will be allowed to inspect and review their student's education records, at a date and time convenient to the school, unless a court has ordered otherwise. Records will always be reviewed in the presence of school personnel appointed by the chief administrator. The school may provide copies of the records and, if it does so, may charge a fee.

In the event a court order is in place which limits a parent's access to a student's educational records, or which otherwise limits the contact a parent may have with the school regarding the student, the family must provide a complete, final, signed copy of the order to the school when the student is enrolled. If such a court order is issued after a student has enrolled, the family must provide a complete, final, signed copy of the order to the school as soon as it is signed by the judge.

The school will, when and to the extent reasonably possible, honor restrictions on access to educational records imposed by such an order. However, school personnel are not family lawyers and it is not the school's responsibility to enforce court orders. **See below for additional information regarding reimbursement of the school's costs and attorneys' fees for involvement in family custody disputes.**

Schools will generally not release a student's records to third parties without the written consent of a student's parent or legally responsible adult. As an exception to this rule, a school may disclose student records to or for:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

If a specific reason exists to further limit access to a student's educational records, the student's parent or legally responsible adult must provide a specific, written request that explains the basis for the additional restriction to the school's chief administrator. The chief administrator, in his or her sole discretion, will determine whether implementing special procedures for a student's records is appropriate and reasonably feasible on a case-by-case basis.

CUSTODY AND FAMILY LAW ISSUES

The Diocese and its schools understand that many families within the school community are affected by custody and other related legal disputes. The Diocese and its schools work to balance sensitivity to difficult family situations and the interests of safety and orderly school administration. Involving school personnel in family and custody diverts finite school resources from the school's primary function. As a result, it is important that families within the school community who are affected by custody and other related legal disputes read and understand the following policies and procedures.

Generally, a child's biological or adoptive parents have equal rights to custody of and visitation with the child unless and until a court orders otherwise. When this arrangement has been changed by court order, it is the responsibility of the affected student's family to provide the school with a complete, final, signed copy of the relevant order and to point out to the school any relevant portions of the order. Unless and until a student's family does so, the school may assume that both of a child's biological or adoptive parents have equal rights to custody of and visitation with the student.

It is the responsibility of the parents, not the school, to ensure that the school is promptly provided with any relevant original or amended custody orders. Schools will take reasonably practical steps to facilitate compliance with relevant family court orders. However, it is the responsibility of the family, and not the school, to enforce family court orders regarding a student. School personnel are not family law attorneys and are not responsible for interpreting or enforcing custody or other family court orders.

Attorneys representing parents in custody disputes should not contact school personnel directly, including to request the production of documents and execution of supporting affidavits for use in litigation. Parents may obtain contact information for diocesan legal counsel from the school and should provide this information to the parents' attorneys if school involvement in a custody dispute is requested. If the school is required to engage counsel to interpret or otherwise advise the school regarding a custody or other family court order or dispute, the parents of the affected student are jointly and severally liable to the school for all costs and attorneys' fees associated therewith. As an exception to this general rule, upon request by either parent, the school will generally, at the chief administrator's sole discretion, provide one copy of a student's central file (e.g., attendance records, report cards, enrollment documents, etc...) with a supporting business records affidavit to both parents or their attorneys free of charge.

Diocesan schools are private property and are not open to the public. Additionally, it is detrimental to the well-being of the affected students and to the school community as a whole when family disputes are brought onto school property. Parents are expected to do everything possible to avoid parental confrontations or arguments on school grounds. The chief administrator of the school or his or her designee has full discretion to exclude any person from the school when, in his or her sole discretion, doing so is necessary or appropriate. School personnel may contact law enforcement for assistance when doing so is necessary to enforce this discretion. If a parent who is prohibited by court order from coming to or near the school attempts to enter the school, the school may call the police and/or seek other appropriate recourse.

If school personnel believe that the behavior of a parent or other legally responsible adult presents an imminent threat of harm to a student, the school may refuse to release the student to the parent or other legally responsible adult or take such other steps, including but not limited to contacting law enforcement or the student's emergency contact, as the school deems necessary.

REPORTS TO AND COOPERATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

Reports to Law Enforcement

Texas law requires the principal of a private school, or his or her designee, to notify law enforcement if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that certain crimes listed in section 37.015 of the Texas Education Code have occurred. The notice provided to the police must include the name and address of each student the person believes may have participated in the activity, and must also be provided to each employee of the school who has regular contact with a student whose conduct is the subject of the notice. It is the policy of the Diocese of Dallas and its schools to comply with this statutory requirement.

Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Child Abuse Investigations

Texas law requires schools to make students available for interviews by child protective workers in connection with an investigation into suspected child abuse. The child protective worker may or may not allow a school representative to witness the interview. Diocese of Dallas schools will cooperate with such interview requests.

From time to time, law enforcement officers also seek to interview students while at school in connection with an allegation or suspicion that the student has committed a crime. When faced with such a request, school personnel will refer the requesting officer to the school's chief administrator or his or her designee. The chief administrator or designee will request additional information regarding the nature of the interview requested and the allegations or suspicions relating to the student. The chief administrator or designee will, if the crime is not serious and contemporaneous or imminent, also request that the interview be delayed until the student's parent or other legally responsible adult is present. School personnel will then notify the student's parent, other legally responsible adult, or emergency contact as soon as possible.

If the officer refuses to delay the interview until the student's parent or other legally responsible adult arrives, the chief administrator or designee will request to be present during the interview. **However, if the officer refuses to allow the chief administrator to be present and refuses to delay the interview, school personnel will not physically prevent the officer from conducting the interview, and the parent or other legally responsible adult signing below agrees that the school is under no duty to do so.**

PARENTAL COOPERATION AND BEHAVIOR

All members of the school community, including parents and family members, are expected to comply with all school rules and policies while on campus and in communications with the school, be respectful, cooperate with the school with respect to all decisions affecting the student, and avoid behavior which disrupts the orderly administration of the school. A community member's failure to meet these expectations jeopardizes school administration, requires the school to expend limited resources to address inappropriate and unnecessary behavior, and detracts from the school's core mission and, as a result, may jeopardize a student's continued participation in the school community. At the school's sole discretion, the failure of a student's parents or other

family members to comply with these expectations, separate and apart from the student's conduct, may result in suspension or expulsion of the student.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR SCHOOL COSTS AND ATTORNEY'S FEES

The Diocese of Dallas and its schools recognize the financial sacrifice many of its families make to participate in the school community. Out of respect for this sacrifice and in recognition of the school's responsibility to wisely steward financial resources for the benefit of all members of the school community, the Diocese and its schools have implemented the following policy:

From time to time, a school is required to retain outside legal counsel to respond to parent requests or demands, requests or subpoenas for testimony or documents in legal proceedings to which the school is not a party, or to address other issues affecting or involving only one or a few students or families. In such situations, the school is typically required to expend finite financial resources to address an issue which otherwise affects only a very small portion of the school community. To ensure that the school community at large is not adversely impacted in such situations, the school will, when the chief administrator in his or her sole discretion deems it appropriate, require the family or families involved to reimburse the school for attorney's fees, costs of court, and other expenses incurred (including, without limitation, the cost to secure substitute staff when school personnel are subpoenaed to testify in court proceedings).

Accordingly, each person who acknowledges his or her agreement to the contents of this Handbook, either by written or electronic signature or by enrolling a student in a school within the Diocese of Dallas, agrees that, in the School's absolute and sole discretion, he or she shall indemnify and reimburse the School, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, and their respective officers, employees, agents, and representatives ("Indemnitees") on demand from and for any and all attorney's fees and related costs including without limitation the cost of responding to requests for documents or other records or information arising from, in connection with, or related to 1) a violation of any provision of this Handbook, 2) any request or demand made upon the School which pertains to a legal proceeding to which the School is not a party, 3) threatening or harassing communications directed to any Indemnitee, or 4) threatened or actual litigation against any Indemnitee which does not result in a final and appealable judgment adverse to the Indemnitee.

AUTHORIZATION OF CONSENT TO TREAT MINOR

I/We, the Parents listed below, are the ___ parent(s) / ___ guardians of the Student listed below, and as such do hereby authorize the School named below and its employees, contractors, and adult volunteers as our agent(s) (collectively, "School") to consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis or treatment or hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under the general or specific supervision of, any physician or surgeon licensed under the laws of the jurisdiction where such diagnosis or treatment may be given, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician, at a hospital, or at any other location.

I/we understand that this authorization is given in advance of any specific treatment or diagnosis, but is given to provide authority and power of treatment or hospital care which the aforementioned physician in the exercise of best judgment may deem advisable. This authorization is given pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 32 of the Texas Family Code. This authorization shall remain effective for up to one year from the date of completion of this form, unless sooner revoked in writing delivered to said agent(s).

In consideration of acceptance of this authorization, but without any time limitation and without any future right of revocation, I/we hereby release and agree to fully and unconditionally protect, indemnify, and defend School, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, and their respective officers, agents, and employees, (collectively, "Indemnitees") and hold each Indemnitee harmless from and against any and all costs, expenses, attorney's fees, claims damages, demands, suits, judgments, losses, or liability for injuries to property, injuries to persons (including Student) and from any other costs, expenses, attorney fees, claims, suits judgments, losses, or liabilities of any and every nature whatsoever arising in any manner, directly or indirectly, out of, in connection with, in the course of, or incidental to such treatment, treatment decisions, diagnosis, or hospital care relating to Student, REGARDLESS OF CAUSE OR OF THE JOINT, COMPARATIVE OR CONCURRENT NEGLIGENCE OF THE INDEMNITEES.

ENROLLMENT

I/We is/are the natural parent(s) or managing conservator(s) of the Student listed below and have the legal authority to enroll Student in the School. Having considered all the facts, I/we believe that enrolling Student in the School for the coming school year is in Student's best interest. I/we understand that School is a Roman Catholic School and that Student's education and the expectations for Student's behavior and the conduct of Student's family in relation to the School community will be consistent with and governed by Christian morals, values, and principles.

I/we have been provided with and have read, understood, and had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding School's student/family handbook. I/we understand that the handbook is incorporated into this agreement and forms a part of this legally-binding contract. As a result, I/we understand that Student's continued enrollment at School during the coming school year is contingent upon compliance with the policies set out in the handbook by Student and by Student's family in their dealings with the School community. I/we understand and agree that failure to comply with the expectations for conduct set out in the handbook may result in discipline, up to and including separation of Student from the School at School's sole discretion and without any right to appeal.

I/we understand that I am/we are responsible for providing School with a current and complete copy of any court order affecting Student's enrollment in School or the right of a parent or conservator of Student to make educational decisions for Student, communicate with School, or access Student's educational records. I/we understand that it is not School's responsibility to mediate or resolve disputes regarding custody of Student and related matters, and that involving School in custody and similar disputes requires School to expend unbudgeted time and other resources. I/we have read and agree to the provisions of the School handbook regarding School's right to recover attorneys' fees incurred as a result of Student or family misconduct and custody and related legal matters.

I/we have informed School of all relevant information regarding any special educational or medical needs of Student and agree to advise School if Student's educational or medical needs change during the school year. I/we agree that School may contact any person who signs this agreement or whose name is provided to School as an emergency contact regarding any emergency involving Student and may disclose to those individuals information regarding Student's education, behavior, and/or medical conditions as needed.

I/we have been provided with and understand all necessary information regarding tuition, fees, and costs associated with Student's enrollment at School for the coming school year and am/are satisfied that I/we will be able to pay all such tuition, fees, and costs

subject to any applicable financial aid awarded. I/we understand that School's budget for the school year anticipates full payment of all amounts due on behalf of all enrolled students. Accordingly, I/we understand that failure to pay all tuition, fees, and costs in full and on time may, in School's sole discretion, result in Student's separation from School without any refund of amounts already paid.

PARENT CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

The School offers students the opportunity to participate in a wide range of education, extracurricular, and athletic activities, both on and off campus. The School believes that parents, students, and the School community are best-served when parents and students together determine the range of activities that are appropriate for a particular student's participation. Parents should review the opportunities listed below, determine which activities are appropriate for their student's participation, and students and parents should sign where indicated below for each activity.

Student Name ("Student"):	
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Athletics: Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's participation in School-sponsored athletic activities, including without limitation athletics-related training and exercise programs, practices, School-sponsored pre- and post-game activities, games, competitions, and tournaments. I/we have read, discussed with Student, and understand the Student conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued participation in athletics is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct when engaged in any School-related activity, whether academic, athletic, or otherwise.

Parent(s) initials:	Yes:	No:
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Transportation to/from Athletics: Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's use of School-sponsored transportation to and from any and all School-sponsored athletics activities described above. I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued use of School transportation is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct.

Parent(s) initials:	Yes:	No:
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Extra-curricular Activities: Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's participation in School-sponsored extracurricular activities, including on-campus and off-campus extracurricular activities. I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued participation in extracurricular activities is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct when engaged in any School-sponsored activity, whether academic, extracurricular, or otherwise.

Parent(s) initials:	Yes:	No:
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Transportation to/from Extracurricular Activities: Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's use of School-sponsored transportation to and from any and all School-sponsored extracurricular activities described above. I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued use of School transportation is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct.

Parent(s) initials:	Yes:	No:
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Video/Image Release: Subject to the Release and Consideration and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, and for good and valuable consideration, I hereby grant to the School the irrevocable and unrestricted right to make, use and/or publish any and all photographs, videos, and other images of Student, or images in which Student may be included, now existing or hereafter made, in any case, with or without identifying Student for editorial, advertising, news, or any other purpose and in any manner and medium; to alter the same without restriction; and to copyright the same.

Parent(s) initials:	Yes:	No:
Student: <i>If age 18 or over, initial appropriate box to the right:</i>	Yes:	No:

Release and Indemnification:

For and in consideration of admitting Student to School, allowing Student to participate in any of the activities described above, and for other good and valuable consideration, on behalf of myself, Student, and our respective heirs, assigns, survivors, estates, beneficiaries, I hereby release and agree to fully and unconditionally protect, indemnify, and defend School, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, and their respective officers, agents, and employees, (collectively, "Indemnitees") and hold each Indemnitee harmless from and against any and all costs, expenses, attorney's fees, claims damages, demands, suits, judgments, losses, or liability for injuries to property, injuries to persons (including Student) and from any other costs, expenses, attorney fees, claims, suits judgments, losses, or liabilities of any and every nature whatsoever arising in any manner, directly or indirectly, out of, in connection with, in the course of, or incidental to any activity described above in this Section 10.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

For hard copy handbooks: By my signature below, I agree that I will comply and will require the student listed below to comply with the school's policies, procedures, and instructions, and understand that such compliance by me, the student, and persons connected to the school by reason of the student is a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. I also understand and agree that the timely payment of all tuition, fees, and costs imposed by the school is also a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. Furthermore, by signing below, I represent, warrant, and agree that I am authorized to sign this agreement, undertake the duties, and grant the releases set forth herein on behalf of Student.

Student Name (print): _____

School Name (print): _____

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

School year: _____

Date: _____

For online acknowledgement: By submitting this form to the school, I represent that I have read the foregoing Handbook and understand and agree to the contents thereof. I agree that I will comply and will require the student listed below to comply with the school's policies, procedures, and instructions, and understand that such compliance by me, the student, and persons connected to the school by reason of the student is a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. I also understand and agree that the timely payment of all tuition, fees,

and costs imposed by the school is also a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school.

Addendum #2

Addendum 2.1

Homework (addendum to page 10)

Teachers will coordinate homework assignments so that maximum time spent does not exceed:

Grade	Maximum Time
K	10 minutes per night
1	20-30 minutes per night
2	30-45 minutes per night
3	45 minutes – 1 hour per night
4	45 minutes – 1 hour per night
5	1 – 1-1/2 hours per night
6	1 – 1-1/2 hours per night
7	2 – 2-1/2 hours per night
8	2 – 2-1/2 hours per night

Addendum 2.2

Probation

Students not meeting academic and or conduct requirements at progress report and/or report card dates may be placed on either academic or conduct probation at the discretion of administration. Probation status and eligibility will be monitored by administration, the athletic director and any sponsor of extra-curricular activities.

Addendum 2.3

Health and Immunizations (Addendum to page 28)

Food Allergy Policy:

St. Thomas Aquinas School recognizes that life threatening food allergies can be serious. In order to minimize the incidence of allergic food reactions, St. Thomas Aquinas School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions. The nurse will maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student has a potentially life threatening allergy.

In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, St. Thomas Aquinas School will provide training and education for all St. Thomas Aquinas faculty and staff.

- A description/definition of severe allergies
- Explanations of the most common food, medication, latex and insect bite allergies
- The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
- The correct use of an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen)
- The specific steps to follow in the event of an anaphylactic emergency
- The activation of emergency medical response – 911
- The location of emergency medications

The parent/guardian will be responsible for notifying classroom teachers and clinical staff in reference to the nature and severity of the allergic reaction faced by the student. This notification will include an explanation of the severity of the health threat, a description of signs and symptoms, and what allergens to avoid.

In the event of a severe allergic reaction (where there is no known anaphylactic history), the school nurse will be notified and emergency medical services will be called immediately.

The school's protocol for field trips insures that the nurse will include the student's emergency action plan and the EpiPen as ordered by the student's physician.

Asthma Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas School recognizes that asthma can be a serious condition affecting many school children. The school encourages children with asthma to achieve their full potential in all aspects of school life by providing a clear policy that is understood by faculty, and staff. All faculty and staff who come in contact with children with asthma are provided with training annually from the school nurse.

Asthma Medication

Immediate access to the student's rescue inhaler is vital to keeping the student's asthma under control during school hours. Parents are asked to complete the in-school medication form, and provide the clinic with a rescue inhaler labeled with the student's name, medication, and name of prescribing doctor. The nurse will keep the student's inhaler in the clinic for easy access. Parents are asked to inform the school nurse of any changes in medication that may occur during the school year.

School policies and procedures are reviewed at the beginning of each school year.

Addendum 2.4

Right to Amend *(Will be added to the front cover of the book and at the end)*

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents when necessary.