

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

STUDENT AND PARENT

HANDBOOK



Photo taken pre-COVID-19 | September 2019

Rev. John Libone
PASTOR

Jennifer A. Watts, M.Ed.
UPPER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Patrick J. Magee, Ed.D.
PRESIDENT

Lauren Roberts, Ed.D.
LOWER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

With a tradition of excellence in Catholic education since 1947, we strive to provide your child with opportunities to grow and thrive in a nurturing, faith-based, values-driven community.

As a member of our vibrant school community, your child will come to discover his or her unique gifts and learn to use these gifts for personal success, to help others at school, and to serve those in need in the broader community.

I am delighted that you have chosen St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School for your child's education.

Sincerely,

*Patrick Magee, Ed.D.
President*

Mission Statement

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

Vision Statement

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

Philosophy

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School strives to educate children of parishioners who desire a Catholic education and 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.

All policies and procedures relating to COVID-19 and STA@Home are posted on the school website at staschool.org/covid19plan.

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100 Series

Administration

101 Governance

Pastor

The chief administrator of the parish within the Diocese is the Pastor who is canonically responsible for the total operation of all organizations within his parish. The Pastor is both spiritually and fiscally responsible for the school.

Catholic Schools Office of the Dallas Diocese

The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) of the Dallas Diocese provides spiritual and professional guidance to the school by setting policies for all Catholic schools in the Diocese. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools is appointed by and responsible to the Bishop and represents him in the administration and supervision of Catholic schools in the Diocese.

President

The President is the leader of the school. The President is the Chief Executive Officer and has general charge of controlling the school's operation, budget, and facilities.

Principals

The Principals oversee the day-to-day operation of the school. The Lower School Principal is directly responsible for grades PK-2, and the Upper School Principal is directly responsible for grades 3-8, overseeing curriculum development, faculty and staff, and students. The Principals are assisted by Assistant Principal of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, and school support services for the well-being of each student.

102 Admissions Requirements and Criteria

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is a parish school and welcomes applicants desiring a Catholic education. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, and disability. The administration will make final 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 PK-8. The Principal and admissions committee reserve the right to conduct preadmission screenings and evaluations to determine the ability of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School to meet a student's individual needs. Applications must include:

- birth certificate
- baptismal certificate (if Catholic)
- most recent report card/transcripts if currently in school
- any standardized or diagnostic testing completed
- current immunizations* record signed by a medical physician
- confidential evaluation from the student's current teacher(s) and principal
- non-refundable \$125 application fee per child

*St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not accommodate provisional enrollment; applicants not in compliance with immunization requirements will not be accepted. Students must remain current with immunizations at all times while enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. If for any reason the student is not current with immunizations and requests to be in compliance are not carried out, the student will be removed from school.

Admission Criteria

An offer of admission is based upon:

- Preadmission screening
- Academic readiness
- Previous academic performance
- Conduct and behavior
- Submission of all required documents

- Space limitations

Prioritization of Applications

In cases where enrollment is limited, applications are prioritized. A prioritized application does not guarantee acceptance. The following criteria will determine admission for applicants once all academic and behavioral standards are met:

1. Contributing parishioners* with children currently enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
2. Contributing parishioners* with new students applying to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
3. Non-contributing parishioners with children currently enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
4. Non-contributing parishioners with new students applying to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
5. Non-parishioners with children currently enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
6. Non-parishioners with new students applying to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School

*Contributing parishioners are defined as persons who:

- are registered members of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
- have demonstrated a true commitment to the practice of the Catholic faith
- support the mission of the Catholic Church by attending Mass
- financially support the parish to the best of their abilities with minimum contributions of \$800 to the parish offertory, \$200 to the Annual Gap Drive, and \$200 to the Msgr. John T. Gulczynski Endowment Fund each fiscal year
- Volunteer a minimum of twenty hours per year per household

103 Enrollment

Parents must agree to the Diocesan enrollment policy as follows:

I/we am/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 individual's 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.

104 Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment of existing students at all grade levels begins in January. A non-refundable registration fee is required at that time. Re-enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is not automatically extended to every student.

105 Financial Requirements

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School expects all families who have a child or children enrolled in the school to pay tuition and fees promptly when due. Failure to pay tuition and fees when due impairs the ability of the school to provide quality education for all students. 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.

Registration and Other Fees

Registration and all other required fees must be paid in order for a student to begin the school year and be enrolled in a class.

Annual or Monthly Tuition Payments

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has engaged FACTS. Families may elect to pay tuition for a school year in one installment due in June, in two installments due in June and December, or in up to 11 monthly installments commencing in June for the school year beginning in August. Tuition payments will only be accepted through FACTS tuition management and billing services. Enrollment will not be official with St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School until an active FACTS agreement has been created. Enrollment for students whose tuition is delinquent in May of the current school year may be cancelled for the next school year at the discretion of the school. In no event will a student be permitted to attend class at the beginning of the next school year unless the delinquency from the current school year is cured in full.

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.

Incidental Billing

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School uses FACTS for incidental billing/fees. These fees include book/technology fees, supply fees, fees for field trips, graduation fees, etc. Each family is required to enroll in the auto pay system through FACTS. The incidental fees are automatically deducted either through a credit card charge or automatic bank draft. Families will receive a reminder of the draft two weeks prior to deduction. Checks for incidental bills will not be accepted by St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

Delinquent Tuition and Fees

If at any time tuition or fees become delinquent, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to partner with the school business office and school administration to make financial arrangements. A student's continued enrollment is contingent upon parents' compliance with any financial agreements made. If tuition and fees are split between two responsible parties, both accounts must be current. Both parties will be made aware of any delinquencies.

Emergency Tuition Assistance

We recognize that there may be exceptional cases of a family experiencing temporary financial difficulty due to loss of employment, illness, or other factors beyond the family's control. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the family to contact the business office promptly and work out suitable arrangements or apply for emergency tuition assistance as may be available. Failure to communicate promptly with the business office on this issue may adversely impact the student's continued enrollment.

Eighth Grade Financial Requirements

. Per the Diocese of Dallas, in order to fully participate in graduation activities, all debts for 8th grade students must be cleared by the first Monday of May. Note that additional 8th grade fees are assessed after the first semester for graduation expenses.

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.

106 Educational Records

Parents and guardians are requested to notify the school in writing of any change of address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, or emergency contacts. Parents should complete the address change form on the school website at staschool.org/parents. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

Parental Access to Student Records

Parents will be allowed to inspect and review their child'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. Parents should complete the transcript request form on the school website at staschool.org/parents.

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 court order to the school at the time the student is enrolled. If such a court order is issued after a student has enrolled, the family must provide a current signed copy of the court order to school administration 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 a court order. However, school personnel are not family lawyers, and it is not the school's responsibility to enforce court orders. See Section 306 and 307 for additional information regarding reimbursement of the school's costs and attorneys' fees for school involvement in family custody disputes.

Schools will generally not release a student's records to third parties without the written consent of the student's parent or legally responsible adult. As an exception to this rule, a school may disclose student records to 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; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law; and to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

107 Withdrawal Procedures

Parent and guardians must notify the Admissions office and the Principal in writing to withdraw a student from the school prior to the actual withdrawal date.

108 Accreditation

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department and COGNIA (formerly AdvancED Accreditation).

109 Asbestos Certification

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. Any building built before the late 1970's contains at least some asbestos in pipe insulation and structural fireproofing.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School was re-inspected in January 2017. Some asbestos-containing materials remain in locations including floor tiles and pipe insulation but 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 Catholic School is monitored on a regular basis to ensure its containment as required by law. A copy of our management plan and re-inspection report is on file in the school's administrative office. These reports are available for review during business hours on school days.

110 School Calendar

The official school calendar approved by the Diocese of Dallas is provided to all families and is located on the school website.

200 Series Students

201 Curriculum

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

202 General Placement

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

202 Accelerated Classes

Accelerated classes are offered for qualifying students in math (grades 6-8). The criteria for qualification include a combination of quarterly grades, various test scores, and teacher recommendation. The final decision for placement any homeroom and/or class will be made by the administration and is reevaluated annually.

203 Physical Education

Physical Education is a required course, and the school does not recognize exemption requests or appeals.

204 Report Cards and Grading Scale

Report cards are issued every nine weeks for grades 1-8. PK and kindergarten students receive their first report card at the end of the first semester. PK students receive two reports: one in the fall and 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. Parents are encouraged to print and maintain a copy of their children's report cards.

Upper School

The Upper School (grades 3- 8) report card will display academic grades as follows:

A = 94 -100

B = 85-93

C = 76-84

D = 70-75

F = 69 and below

The Upper School report card will display conduct grades as follows:

S = Satisfactory

NI = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

Comment codes*, represented by numbers, for each class are as follows:

1. Observes school rules
2. Demonstrates self-control
3. Completes homework/assignments on time
4. Prepares for class/test
5. Demonstrates positive attitude
6. Participates in class/uses time wisely
7. Makes up work when necessary/absent
8. Class attendance enhances progress
9. Meets expectations

**A negative (-) sign before a number indicates need for improvement.*

Lower School

Grades 1-2 report cards will display grades for religion, reading, phonics, written language, spelling, mathematics, science and social studies as follows:

E = Exceeds grade level expectations

The student has advanced understanding and exceeds grade level expectations. (94 - 100) This student shows initiative, will challenge him/herself, and demonstrates advanced knowledge of a content area. An "E" is difficult to achieve and indicates a high ability in an academic area.

G = Grade level expectations

The student has proficient understanding and meets grade level expectations. (80 - 93) This student is on track with our high academic expectations. A "G" is a celebrated success.

M = Meets minimum grade level expectations

The student has a basic understanding and minimally meets grade level expectations. (70 - 79) This student understands basic skills and concepts but has not reached a proficient level. An "M" indicates the child may require extra help in a content area.

N = Needs improvement

The student has minimal understanding and does not meet grade level expectations. (0 - 69) For this student, serious academic weaknesses exist according to our Diocesan expectations. This student may require remedial assistance in order to be academically successful in a content area.

For oral expression, handwriting, social development, work skills, art, computer, music/drama and PE, measurement codes are O = Outstanding, S = Satisfactory, U = Unsatisfactory.

Kindergarten utilizes a skills-based report card with the following indicators:

M = Has met objective

P = Acceptable progress

I = Improvement/practice needed

Progress Reports

Lower School students in grades 1 and 2 receive a progress report at the midway point of each quarter. This report allows students and parents/guardians to be aware of student strengths and weaknesses.

Upper School parents are responsible for checking their child's progress by reviewing grades posted at the midway check point. Academic grades on this day will be live on FACTS Family Portal at 4 PM.

205 Promotion and Retention

A student is advanced to the next higher grade or course if all State of Texas and Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED) requirements have been met. It is recommended that students be retained in the lower grades (grades PK-2) if a stage of maturity for learning has not been reached. If retention is deemed necessary for students at higher grade levels, parental involvement will be sought in developing an educational plan. The final decision for retention rests with the administration. All new students entering in grades 1-8 are accepted on a probationary basis.

Upper School

A student in grades 3-8 who fails a core subject (math, science, social studies, religion, English, or literature) will be required to successfully complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. Students failing two or more core subjects will be required to meet with administration to determine if it is in the best interest of the student to remain at the school.

Lower School

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.

206 Graduation

Students must complete Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department requirements for 8th grade to receive a St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School diploma.

207 Attendance

The Texas Compulsory Attendance Law requires that each school offer 180 days of instruction. A student may not be given credit for a class or the school year if he or she has been absent more than 10% (18 days) of the year, which is 19 or more absences of the required 180 days. Parents will be contacted by administration when excessive absences or tardies occur.

208 Absences

Repeated absences may be grounds for suspension, retention, or dismissal. Students are expected to be present and on time every school day. Parents must notify the school of any absence by 8:30 AM.

Parents are asked to schedule vacations during regular school breaks (see official school calendar). Teachers will not give assignments in anticipation of a vacation.

Students who are absent may not participate in athletic or other extra-curricular activities until they have returned to school. Students must follow the school illness return policy. (See health services section of handbook.)

Per Diocesan policy, verification of all medical appointments is required. Submit this written verification (doctor's note) to the front desk upon the student's return to school.

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 in writing from the parent/guardian prior to dismissal. A log 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. Parents should not ask for their children to be released after 2:40 PM to avoid interruptions of the dismissal process unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

Release During Lunch Hours

Lunch and recess are considered an integral part of the day. If parents take their child to lunch during this time, no additional students are allowed to leave with them. At the Upper School, a class tardy is issued if the student is not back on campus on time.

209 Assignments for Absentees

Students are required to make up all work missed due to absence. Students have one school day to make up work for each day they are absent. Teachers will determine how and when the student will make up missed schoolwork. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete make-up work.

Upper School students should check FACTS Family Portal, OneNote, and/or Teams for assignments. Any parent who wants to pick up books and assignments must contact the teacher before 11:00 AM via email. Lower School parents 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.

210 Tardiness

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrivals disrupt class and cause loss of valuable learning time.

Lower School students are considered tardy if not in their homerooms by 8:00 AM. Tardy students must sign in at the front desk with a parent/guardian.

Upper School students are considered tardy at 7:55 AM, Tardy students must check in at the front desk. Parents will be notified when tardiness becomes excessive.

211 Student Recognition

Lower School Angels in Action

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

Upper School Christian Witness Award

This award is given to Upper School students who are Christ-like in word, action, and attitude. Recipients are selected by the homeroom teacher and awards are presented at grade-level Mass.

212 Honor Roll (Grades 5-8)

Academic High Honors will be awarded to those students who receive all A's in the core curriculum areas: religion, English, literature, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Academic Honors will be awarded to those students who receive all A's and B's in the core curriculum areas: religion, English, literature, mathematics, science, and social studies.

213 Honor Code

The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School community strives to create an environment in which people care for one another and respect each other's property.

St. Thomas Aquinas Honor Code

As a member of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School community, I pledge to:

- Be responsible for my actions
- Always do my best as an individual and as a part of a team or group
- Respect the uniqueness and gifts of others
- Be forthright and honest in my words and actions
- Not lie, cheat, plagiarize, steal, or condone these behaviors in others

I will follow this Honor Code and I will help others to do the same. I am the difference.

I am expected to show the following attributes at all times:

- **W Wisdom** We are actively learning about God, others, and ourselves.
- **I Integrity** We are honest with ourselves and others.
- **L Loyalty** We are dedicated to the school's mission and vision.
- **D Diligence** We are hardworking and honest in all we do.
- **C Courage** We stand up for what is right even if it is not popular.
- **A Attitude** We maintain a positive attitude in school and with others.
- **T Truthful** We can be relied on to tell the truth at all times.

214 Academic Dishonesty

Students are solely responsible for the work they complete. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated and consists of, but is not limited to, collusion, copying or sharing answers, receiving and/or supplying answers, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication or falsification, multiple submissions, not citing sources, changing answers during self-grading, and misuse of academic materials or technology.

215 Homework

Homework is an integral part of the total instructional program at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in grades K-8. It is meant to support the learning experiences that occur daily in the classroom. Homework should promote and develop the following: independent study, independent research, and independent skills practice.

Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student to turn assignments in on time. Homework is considered late if a student does not have the work when they arrive at school. Students are responsible for homework when absent. Students must communicate to their teacher any mitigating circumstances that prevent completion of homework.

Parent Responsibility

Parents should provide a specific time and place for homework. Parents should help supervise but not complete the child's homework.

Teacher Responsibility

Teachers will plan homework designed to enrich and reinforce work introduced during class time.

Assignments may include the following:

- Practice to help students master objectives
- Study to prepare students for assessments
- Extension to expand understanding of new skills or concepts
- Projects to reinforce interdisciplinary skills

Time Allotment for Homework

The time it takes individual students to do homework will vary. Generally, homework should not exceed the following:

Grades K-2	20-30 minutes
Grades 3-4	30-45 minutes
Grades 5-6	45-60 minutes
Grades 7-8	60-90 minutes

Parents with homework time allotment concerns should contact the teacher directly. Assigned work brought to the Upper School by parents or guardians during the day will be placed in the designated teacher's box and will be considered late.

216 Tests

In compliance with Diocesan policies and procedures, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School administers the Iowa Assessments and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) annually to students in grades 1-8. The results of these tests are used by teachers for assessment purposes and to direct instruction. Additional testing will also be administered at the school's discretion. Midterms and finals are administered to middle school students.

217 Textbooks and Computers

Textbooks, laptops (6th-8th grade), and consumable workbooks are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. Textbooks and laptops should be protected at all times. Damaged or lost textbooks and laptops are the student's responsibility. Fees will be assessed by school administration.

218 Educational Evaluations

Students may be required to undergo educational and/or psychological/behavioral evaluations at the expense of the parents to provide more complete information and to maintain enrollment.

219 Guidance

Social and emotional learning is a critical component of the educational experience at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. At the Lower School, teachers lead students through the PATHS® Program through weekly lessons. PATHS® addresses the five distinctive components of social emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision making. At the Upper School, teachers are implementing the Second Step®, a social emotional learning program that builds a culture of connectedness and empowers students with the skills and concepts to succeed socially, in academics, and in life.

220 Field Trips

A field trip is recognized as a valuable extension of the classroom experience and serves an educational purpose. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic requirements and behavioral expectations or if the proper signed permission form is not returned.

Field trip participation is considered a privilege. Participation is subject to the discretion of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. Students' conduct will be monitored by St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School staff, and a student may be removed from participation at the sole discretion of the administration/faculty/staff. All students must return to school for dismissal.

Chaperones for field trips must have a current Safe Environment ID badge and understand that they must supervise students at all times. For liability purposes siblings are not allowed to accompany chaperones. Parent chaperones will not be required for 6th-8th grade field trips as middle school field trips are chaperoned by administration/faculty/staff.

221 Extracurricular Activities

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School offers a wide range of extracurricular activities. Students represent St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School whether these activities occur on or off campus. Participation in any extracurricular activity including athletics is a privilege not a right. Students must follow the same behavioral expectations and guidelines that are in place during the school day. Students' academics and conduct will be monitored by the school, and a student may be removed from participation in such activities at the sole discretion of administration.

Parents agree to the following Diocesan policy on extracurricular activities:

Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms (see section 416)

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.

Transportation to/from Extracurricular Activities: Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms (see section 416)

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.

222 Athletics

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School students in grades 5-8 may participate in a variety of sports within the Dallas Parochial League (DPL) athletic program. The governing organization for St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School athletics is the Dallas Parochial League. The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Athletic Director (AD) oversees our students and coaches. Visit the DPL website for more information about individual sports.

All athletes are required to complete an athletic physical form found on the school website, and parents must sign a registration and release form. Athletic fees are collected by St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School at the time of online registration. The AD, in conjunction with the school administration, selects coaches and works with the sport coordinators to find the best fit for volunteer coaches. The final decision for placement and selection of all coaches will be approved by the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School

administration. Coaches have discretion to appoint an assistant(s) with the approval of the AD. All coaches must be Safe Environment cleared and trained in the Play Like a Champion training. Please see Health Service guidelines regarding absences.

During the school year, only Dallas Parochial League (DPL) teams may utilize the school's athletic facilities. Parish approved organizations may request use when available, for permitted activities only.

The STA Athletics Handbook can be found at staschool.org/campus-life/athletics/policies-forms.

Athletic Mission Statement

The mission of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Athletic Department is to provide an athletic program with an emphasis on Christian principles and good sportsmanship, and to promote healthy competition between teams and among student-athletes in grades 5-8.

Governance

The Athletic Director, appointed by the President and Principal, supervises and directs the extracurricular athletic program in a manner consistent with the policies of the school and the DPL. The AD also oversees the scheduling and maintenance of the field and gymnasiums. The Athletic Committee, chaired by the AD, assists in the coordination of the athletic program and serves in an advisory capacity. Committee members include coordinators for each sport, the Booster Club president, and a recording secretary. The coordinators and recording secretary are appointed by the AD with approval of the Principal. The AD may appoint additional members as appropriate. Coordinators' responsibilities may include registration, tryouts, practice schedules, assigning coaches, and uniform/equipment distribution and return.

Parents agree to the following Diocesan policy on athletics:

Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms (see section 416)

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.

223 Conduct

The highest standards of conduct and respect are expected of students and 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 other students is adversely affected, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents are expected to partner with the school regarding student discipline. Appropriate communication between parents and the school is expected at all times. Student discipline includes both behavioral and academic 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 administrators may interview any student regarding discipline problems without prior notice to the parent(s).

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School students are expected to:

- witness Christ to others
- be respectful of persons in authority and the rights of others
- behave courteously at all times in manner and speech
- follow the school rules, including the dress code
- respect school property and personal property of others
- exercise proper care in the use of materials and equipment
- be reverent in church

- follow the Honor Code

224 Discipline

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

Core Beliefs on 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 whenever possible.

We believe that students should have the opportunity to tell their side of the story.

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.

K-2 Discipline

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.

Upper School Consequences for Disciplinary Infractions

For students who do not adhere to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School guidelines, whether on or off campus, teachers and administration may apply any of, or combination of, the following consequences (listed in no particular order):

- Verbal reminder
- Intervention
- Silent lunch/recess time
- In-school work
- Out-of-school work
- Detention
- Immediate removal from class
- Student/parent conference with administration/teacher
- Grade of zero for academic violation
- Disciplinary probation (the loss of extracurricular activities and technology privileges including any and all school functions, clubs, athletics, and organizations)
- In-school suspension
- Repose period (In accordance with Diocesan policy, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School may remove a student from school until a disciplinary action is decided upon that is in the best interest of the school, the student, and the family.)
- Suspension
- Probation
- Expulsion (The procedure for expulsion will follow Diocesan guidelines in order to protect the school community.)

225 Severe Infractions

Severe Infractions listed below may result in the immediate suspension and/or automatic termination of enrollment:

- Sale of a controlled substance on campus
- Possession or use of weapons of any kind on campus regardless of intent
- Vandalism
- Consuming, having possession of, or being under the influence of any controlled substance on campus or at any school-sponsored activity. Controlled substances include but are not limited to alcohol, tobacco, vape, marijuana, narcotics, hypnotics, sedatives, or any chemical depressant or stimulant as defined under the Penal Code of the State of Texas not prescribed by a physician.
- Injury to self or others
- Terroristic threats regardless of intent
- Bullying
- Serious infractions of our social media policy including cyber-bullying and sexting
- Any infraction deemed severe by the administration

226 Behavior Outside of School

Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior during school-sponsored events and non-school activities outside of the school day that reflect negatively upon the school may receive disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.

227 Suspension/Probation/Expulsion

Suspension

Suspension is determined by the administration. Efforts will be made to notify a parent before a student is suspended. However, parents may not be notified of the decision to remove a student from class before removal occurs if the administration deems the action to be immediately necessary. Students are responsible for all work during suspension period. The student is ineligible to participate in any school activity during a suspension period, unless authorized by the school administration. A student may be suspended without any prior behavioral issues or consequences.

Probation

Students not meeting academic and or conduct requirements may be placed on either academic or conduct probation at the discretion of the administration. Probation status and eligibility will be monitored by the administration, the Athletic Director, and any sponsor of extracurricular activities.

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. 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.

228 School Property

Damage and Destruction

Anyone who intentionally or accidentally destroys or damages school property, or the personal property of another, must pay the cost to repair or replace the property. This includes painting or adhering signs or stickers of any kind to the surfaces of the school, school lockers, or storage spaces. Disciplinary actions, including fines, will be assessed as deemed appropriate by the administration.

Lockers/Storage Spaces

Each student is provided a locker or storage space. Any property, money, and other valuables left in a locker or storage space is the responsibility of the student to whom the locker or storage space is assigned. Teachers will provide guidelines for students regarding lockers and storage spaces. The exterior of the locker must remain clear and clean. The locker or storage space is the property of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School and is subject to inspection by authorized personnel. Based on the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Honor Code, no locks are necessary or allowed.

Search and Seizure

The Principal or administrative delegate will conduct search and seizure without prior notification to students or parents if there is cause deemed reasonable by the administrator in charge. The administration reserves the right to conduct searches or inspections of personal effects, baggage, vehicles, and/or other student property for the purpose of determining if any individual on the premises of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is in possession of any illegal or unauthorized items. These searches may be conducted from time to time without prior announcement. The school will cooperate with law enforcement. Law enforcement and school administration may question students without parents being present or notified.

229 Harassment

Harassment of employees or students is strictly prohibited at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. All allegations of harassment/intimidation will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted advances, imitations, or comments.
- Visual contact such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- Physical contact such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movements, or interfering with work, study, or play.
- Threats and demands to submit to inappropriate requests, to avoid some other loss, or to offer of benefits in return for inappropriate favors as a condition of continued enrollment.
- Any amorous relationship or activity between a student and employee is prohibited, whether or not consensual.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

Any student who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment shall report the alleged harassment in writing to the campus 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. Law enforcement will be involved when necessary.

230 Bullying

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School actively seeks to provide a supportive, caring environment, safe for all people and free from all forms of intimidation including bullying. Bullying is a form of harassment. It involves behavior through deliberate action, with intent to hurt, threaten, frighten, or humiliate someone. This behavior will not be tolerated in any form at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School or school-sponsored programs and activities. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School prohibits both active and passive support for

acts of harassment or bullying. Bystander support of harassment or bullying will not be tolerated. All witnessed incidents of bullying must be reported.

A plan and procedure for addressing bullying or intimidation is in place through the school counselors and the administration.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is, and always should be, considered abuse. Bullying involves 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, and/or psychological. 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 the school are final.

Anti-Bullying Procedures:

- All members of the school have a responsibility to recognize bullying and to take action when they are aware of it.
- St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will continue to communicate anti-bullying messages to students throughout the year.
- All faculty and staff will treat any report of bullying seriously and take action.
- Teachers will discuss bullying at staff meetings and review the reporting and investigation procedures, prevention strategies, and disciplinary approaches.
- Students who report bullying will be assured that they acted correctly in reporting bullying.
- Administration will thoroughly investigate allegations of bullying. This may include interviews with students, parents, and staff members as well as review of school records. The victim, accused student, and any witnesses shall be interviewed separately to establish an accurate account of events.
- Emphasis must be placed on changing the behavior of the bully, while providing care and support for the person who has been bullied.
- Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying behavior will face disciplinary action.

231 Technology Acceptable Use Policy

An Acceptable Use Policy is a set of guidelines for student use of the internet as a tool for learning. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School offers all students access to our school's computer networks and the internet for student research and communication. 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 appropriate behavior on school computer networks.

The following are not permitted:

- The use or possession of an external storage device
- The use of any internet browser other than Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Edge
- The installation or use of any operating system to bypass St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School security protocol
- Willfully damaging computers, software, computer systems, or computer networks
- Using the network or internet to plagiarize or violate copyright laws
- Employing the network for commercial purposes
- Using the network to send or display offensive and/or obscene messages or pictures
- Using computers to access materials that are profane or obscene, or that advocate illegal acts, violence, or discriminate 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 the school during the school day or at school sponsored events including, but not limited to, smart watches, Google Glass, FitBits, or similar devices that have the capability to read/send text messages, surf the internet, take pictures, or communicate with people or other devices.

- This rule applies whether or not the device is activated, and whether or not said device is placed in sleep mode, airplane mode, or similar modes, or does not have a pairing device to connect to as a source.
- All such items must be turned off and kept in a locker when on school/church property. This includes, but is not limited to, arrival, and dismissal times. A student must have specific permission from St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School staff to use such a device when on School or Church property.
- The use of cell phones or other devices to record other students without teacher approval.

Disciplinary actions will be decided by the administration.

Video Conferencing

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has added video conferencing capability. Teachers will set up conferences with the strictest privacy settings and offer access to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. This access is a privilege – not a right. Students and parents must sign the most current e-learning agreement to participate in video conferencing.

Students and parents will adhere to the following rules and restrictions or will face a loss of technology privileges as well as other disciplinary action:

- Students are responsible for good behavior in video conferences, just as they would be in a classroom or school hallway. General rules for behavior and communication as stated in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook apply.
 - This applies to any behavior visible on camera or heard on a microphone during a video conference.
 - Images, sounds or other inappropriate content will not be tolerated, and students may be removed and blocked from the conference and/or any future conferences.
- Students are prohibited from creating their own video conferencing account. Students will have the full ability to join and participate in video conferences without the creation of an account through their parents accepting an invitation from the teacher.
- Students are to follow free dress rules as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook when participating in a video conference.
- Any person, especially minors, not associated with the video conference should be prevented from being seen on video so as to protect their online privacy rights.
- Students and parents are prohibited from sharing meeting links and passwords with anyone who did not receive an invitation from teachers. (If a person is having an issue joining a video conference, they should contact the teacher hosting the video conference.)
- In accordance with the Parent/Student Handbook, students and parents are prohibited from taking pictures and/or recording video and/or audio of video conferences in any manner so as to protect student privacy.

Per the Dallas Diocese, the following internal guidelines are in place:

- STA teachers are required to record all video conferences.
- All videos will be archived and saved for internal records.
- STA is not allowed to share any recorded videos outside of school staff in order to protect the privacy of our students.

232 Cell Phones

At the Upper School, students are not allowed to access cell phones during the school day on campus; cell phones must be turned off and stored in student backpacks in lockers. Lower School prohibits possession of student cell phones and smart watches. Students can never use their cell phones to photograph or film other students during school hours. The school is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen cell phones. A student using his/her cellphone during the school day may have his/her device confiscated. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to confiscate cell phones if used during the school day or at a school-sponsored event. Parents/guardians may be requested to retrieve the confiscated cell phone from

administration. A fee of \$25 may be assessed at the sole discretion of the school. Disciplinary actions may be decided by the administration if necessary.

233 Social Media

It is expected that all parents, volunteers, and students using social media platforms refrain from:

- Taking photos or videos during the school day or on field trips without parental approval of all parties included
- 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

Social media sites are not the appropriate forum for discussion of school concerns or school business. Any concerns related to the school should be addressed directly with the school.

234 Photographs and Videos

The enrollment packet includes a Video/Image Release that must be completed by each family. Events during the school day are photographed by approved class/activity photographers. Due to the enormous volume of student images captured throughout the year and our sizeable student body, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School cannot guarantee a student's image will not be captured.

235 Dress Code and School Uniforms

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School recognizes the effect students' dress and grooming have upon student behavior and commitment to learning. We further recognize the role of parents in assisting their children in making appropriate choices regarding the school uniform, dress down day accessories, and grooming. STA expects all students to exercise modesty regarding their appearance. Attire considered disruptive to the learning environment or that could present a health or safety issue is not appropriate.

The following uniform, dress down clothing, and personal appearance guidelines are designed to meet the standards of neatness, cleanliness, and modesty.

See detailed Uniform Requirements and Options Chart below.

The school uniform helps to identify the student as a member of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School community. Families must purchase kindergarten through 8th-grade uniform items through the school's contracted vendor:

Risse Brothers School Uniform
15048 Beltway
Addison, TX 75001
rissebrothers.com

Additional required uniform items that may or may not be purchased from Risse Brothers:

- Boys' belts must be solid black or brown.
- Boys' shoes must be solid black tennis shoes (no visible logo).
- Socks for boys and girls (not purchased from the Spirit Store) must be solid white, black, or navy and worn with shoes. Socks must be visible above the shoe line.
- For formal Mass, boys in 5th-8th grade must wear the STA uniform necktie or bowtie (blue and silver).
- Girls may wear solid navy blue, black, or white leggings or tights under their uniform skirt during cold weather. Leggings must be ankle-length.

Families may purchase the following items from the Spirit Store: STA monogrammed knit polo shirts, STA elite socks, and STA monogrammed fleeces and performance pullovers.

General Uniform Guidelines:

- Shirts and blouses must be tucked in.
- Skirts and shorts must be no more than three inches above the knee (the length of a credit card).
- Skirts may not be rolled up from the waist. Modesty shorts are required under skirts.
- Sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts must be worn correctly.
- Hats and sweatshirt hoods may not be worn during school hours.
- Hair accessories and bows must not be more than 4-5 inches in length or width and must match the school uniform skirt colors.
- Hair should be kept clean and neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Hair must be the student's natural color - no bleaching, tinting or dyeing.
- Boys' hair must be short around the face area and not exceed the top of the collar.
- Tattoos (including Henna), body glitter, and body piercing are not permitted.
- Girls may wear only one pair of studded earrings; dangling and hoop earrings are prohibited for safety reasons. Boys may not wear earrings.
- One simple necklace is permitted. Chokers are not allowed.
- One simple bracelet may be worn. A watch (non-technological/non-texting) may be worn.
- Expensive/valuable jewelry is strongly discouraged.
- Make-up is not permitted. Acrylic nails and fingernail polish are not allowed. Exceptions: clear lip gloss and clear nail polish. Eighth-grade girls may wear mascara.
- Students may not write on their hands, legs, arms (any body part), clothing, or shoes.
- Jackets and coats (outerwear) may not be worn inside the school buildings.
- School issued ID badges will be worn every day. Lost badges can be replaced for \$5.

It is expected that both the student and their parents carefully monitor hair length and hairstyle to remain in compliance with the dress code. Neither teachers nor administrators should have to repeatedly remind a student to keep their hair cut, styled, or colored properly. Frequent haircuts are encouraged so the student will meet the dress code at all times. Students and their parents are responsible for adhering to all uniform and dress down guidelines. Parents will be notified when uniform code violations become excessive. The teachers and administration ask for parent partnership and student compliance regarding uniforms and dress down requirements. Interruption of educational instruction due to uniform issues is detrimental to the learning environment and academic process.

Special events, birthday dress down, and community service fundraising days (\$ Dress Days) are days when students may be out of the official uniform.

Dress Down Guidelines (including, but not limited to, the following):

- Skirts and shorts must be no more than three inches above the knee (the length of a credit card).
- Skirts may not be rolled up from the waist. Modesty shorts are required under skirts.
- Shirts must cover a student's stomach/midriff when raising arms.
- Tank tops, spaghetti straps, sleeveless shirts, see-through garments, and tight, form-fitting clothing are not permitted.
- Jeans, capris, and slacks are acceptable.
- Leggings (girls only) are only allowed if the bottom of the shirt reaches the mid-thigh for modest coverage during all activities. Leggings may not be see-through or have any cutout sections.
- Shoes must cover toes and heels and have a slip-free, flat base – tennis shoes are always the best option for safety during PE classes and recess time.
- Sandals, flip-flops, crocs, clogs, or shoes with heels are not permitted.
- T-shirts and all other clothing must not display or contain suggestive slang, images of alcohol/drugs, cryptic/violent images, politically distracting messages, or inappropriate language, pictures, or offensive phrases.

- Clothing may not be torn, frayed, cut, or have holes or mesh/see-through.
- Hats are not permitted.
- All other uniform guidelines regarding jewelry/make-up and nail polish always apply.

The school administration will make the final decision regarding the appropriateness of any fad or questionable article of clothing, accessory, or hairstyle. All students are expected to comply with the dress code. Students who do not meet the dress code will be asked to change into appropriate clothing and will not be allowed to attend class until parents provide appropriate clothing. For compelling reasons, the administration may, at their discretion, review an individual situation.

Scout uniforms:

Scouts may wear their Scout uniforms on days of Scout meetings or other days approved by the school administration. Scout uniform shorts, jumpers, or skirts must be the length of the school uniform shorts, jumpers, or skirts.

Uniform Requirements and Options Chart

Lower School PK (Modified school uniform)	
<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White peter pan collar blouse • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) • Plaid double breasted jumper with navy modesty shorts • Navy skort and/or navy shorts • Navy pants • Solid colored tennis shoes with Velcro closures • Mary Jane styled shoes with Velcro closures <p><i>Note: No light-up shoes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) • Navy pants • Navy shorts • Solid colored tennis shoes with Velcro closures <p><i>Note: No light-up shoes</i></p>

Lower School K - 2nd grade	
<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
<p><u>Shirts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White peter pan collar blouse • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) <p><u>Outerwear:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy cardigan sweater • STA navy monogrammed fleece* • STA grey performance pullover* • STA School uniform sweatshirt* <p><u>Jumper/Skorts/shorts/Pants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaid double breasted jumper with navy modesty shorts • Navy skort • Navy cuffed shorts with pleats <p><i>Note: shorts must be no longer than 3 inches from knee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy pleated pants <p><u>socks /tights/Leggings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, navy or white solid crew or knee high socks 	<p><u>Shirts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) <p><u>Outerwear:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy cardigan sweater • STA navy monogrammed fleece* • STA grey performance pullover* • STA school uniform sweatshirt* <p><u>Pants/shorts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy pants • Navy pleated shorts <p><i>Note: shorts must be no longer than 3 inches from knee</i></p> <p><u>socks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, navy or white solid crew socks (small brand logos are permitted) • STA elite socks* <p><u>Belts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black or brown (leather or braided)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA Elite socks* • solid black, navy or white tights or leggings worn under skirts and jumpers <p><i>Note: Leggings must come to ankle and meet socks.</i></p> <p><u>Shoes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/blue Saddle oxfords - Keds or Classic Style 	<p><u>Shoes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid black athletic shoes (logos must also be black)
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Upper School 3rd grade - 8th grade	
Girls	Boys
<p><u>Shirts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • 3rd grade only - White peter pan collar blouse • White oxford cloth shirt (short or long sleeved) • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) • 8th grade only - blue oxford cloth shirt (short or long sleeved) <p><u>Outerwear:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th grade only: navy acrylic varisty sweater • Navy cardigan sweater • STA navy monogrammed fleece* • STA grey performance pullover* • STA School uniform sweatshirt* <p><u>Jumper/Shorts/Pants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd grade only - Plaid double-breasted jumper with navy modesty shorts • Plaid skirt with navy modesty shorts • Navy pants • Navy pleated shorts <p><i>Note: shorts must be no longer than 3 inches from knee</i></p> <p><u>Socks /Tights/Leggings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, navy or white solid crew or knee high socks • STA elite socks* • solid black, navy or white tights or leggings worn under skirts and jumpers <p><i>Note: Leggings must come to ankle and meet socks.</i></p> <p><u>Shoes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/blue saddle oxfords - Keds or classic style <p><i>Note: All shoes must be secured by laces or Velcro - no slip-on or loafers</i></p>	<p><u>Shirts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA navy or red monogrammed polo shirt* • White oxford cloth shirt (short or long sleeved) • White polo shirt in jersey knit or pique (short or long sleeved) • 8th grade only - blue oxford cloth shirt (short or long sleeved) <p><u>Outerwear:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy cardigan sweater • STA navy monogrammed fleece* • STA grey performance pullover* • STA school uniform sweatshirt* <p><u>Pants/shorts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy pants • Navy pleated shorts <p><i>Note: shorts must be no longer than 3 inches from knee</i></p> <p><u>socks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, navy or white solid crew socks (small brand logos are permitted) • STA elite socks* <p><u>Neckties:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5th-8th grade only - blue and silver striped necktie or bow tie (clip or tie) <p><u>Belts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black or brown (leather or braided) <p><u>Shoes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid black athletic shoes (logos must also be black) <p><i>Note: All shoes must be secured by laces or Velcro - no slip-on or loafers</i></p>

PE uniform requirements (All grades)
<p>PK - 5th grade wear their regular uniform during PE class</p> <p>6th - 8th grade girls and boys only: P.E. uniforms are required for 6-8 grades and will be part of the grade for PE class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shorts: STA logo shorts from the Spirit Store or any solid blue or black shorts with no emblems or designs. <p><i>Note: shorts must be longer than fingertips when placed at sides.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shirts: Any STA t-shirt from the Spirit Store or any solid colored, loose fitting, short sleeved t-shirt with no emblems or designs. • PE clothes and athletic shoes must be kept in a drawstring bag for easy transportation.

**indicates that these items are purchased through the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Spirit Store.*

236 Cafeteria

Cafeteria service is available to all students. Lunches may be purchased from our catering service or brought from home. Lunches brought from home may be warmed in a microwave (food must be in a microwavable safe container, covered, and limited to one minute warming). Lower School student food will be warmed by cafeteria supervisors. Glass containers and/or cans with pull tabs are not permitted. Rules of the cafeteria must be followed on both campuses.

The contract with the cafeteria service provider does not permit class parties to replace lunch, and special arrangements for lunch from outside vendors for groups of students are not allowed. For security purposes, Upper School students are not allowed to have visitors during lunch.

Lower School Parent Visits During Lunch

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 you will be seated at a separate table. Please do keep in mind that lunchtime is an important time for social skill development with peers, so for this reason we encourage you to keep lunchtime visits to a minimum.

237 Health Services

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School health clinics are staffed by full-time nurses. The clinic is open daily from 8:00 AM through student dismissal. Parents are asked to inform the school nurse of any changes in medication that may occur during the school year.

Health-Related Restrictions

We ask that the parent/guardian of any child with a health-related restriction 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 school will provide an alternative learning environment for students with restrictions.

Parents agree to the following Diocesan policy:

AUTHORIZATION OF CONSENT TO TREAT MINOR

I/We, the parents/guardians of the Student, 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 Indemnatee 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.

Illness

If your child is not feeling well, keep your child home from school and extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the parent to partner with the school any time the health clinic requires the student to go home due to illness or accident. Children must stay home when they have had fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, swollen glands, vomiting, diarrhea, eye infections, unusual skin eruptions, or suspected communicable diseases. Also:

- If your child has been experiencing a temperature of 100 degrees or more, the child must stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducer.
- If your child has vomited or has diarrhea, either at school or home, the child must stay at home for 24 hours after the last vomiting or diarrhea event.
- If your child requires medications during school to prevent them from exhibiting signs of illness, such as coughing, wheezing, fever, or copious drainage, it would be in their best interest to stay home until the symptoms have abated.

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 or reenrolled. For applicants entering K-8th, the record must be received, reviewed, and deemed complete by St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School prior to on-site assessment or shadowing. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not accommodate provisional enrollments; the school requires all applicants and students to be current on immunizations prior to acceptance/registration/attendance. Students must remain current with immunizations at all times while enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. If for any reason, the student is not current with immunizations, the student will be removed from school.

2020 - 2021 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, §§97.61-97.72. This document is not intended as a substitute for the TAC, which has other provisions and details. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is granted authority to set immunization requirements by the Texas Education Code, Chapter 38.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

A student shall show acceptable evidence of vaccination prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to a 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		
	Grades K - 6th						Grade 7th	Grades 8th - 12th							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	
Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td/Tdap)	5 doses or 4 doses						3 dose primary series and 1 booster dose of Tdap / Td within the last 5 years	3 dose primary series and 1 booster dose of Tdap / Td within the last 10 years							<p>For K – 6th grade: 5 doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine; 1 dose must have been received on or after the 4th birthday. However, 4 doses meet the requirement if the 4th dose was received on or after the 4th birthday.¹ For students aged 7 years and older, 3 doses meet the requirement if 1 dose was received on or after the 4th birthday.¹</p> <p>For 7th grade: 1 dose of Tdap is required if at least 5 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine.*</p> <p>For 8th – 12th grade: 1 dose of Tdap is required when 10 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine.*</p> <p>*Td is acceptable in place of Tdap if a medical contraindication to pertussis exists.</p>
Polio	4 doses or 3 doses												<p>For K – 12th grade: 4 doses of polio; 1 dose must be received on or after the 4th birthday.¹ However, 3 doses meet the requirement if the 3rd dose was received on or after the 4th birthday.¹</p>		
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella ² (MMR)	2 doses												<p>For K – 12th grade: 2 doses are required, with the 1st dose received on or after the 1st birthday.¹ Students vaccinated prior to 2009 with 2 doses of measles and one dose each of rubella and mumps satisfy this requirement.</p>		
Hepatitis B ²	3 doses												<p>For students aged 11 – 15 years, 2 doses meet the requirement if adult hepatitis B vaccine (Recombivax[®]) was received. Dosage (10 mcg /1.0 mL) and type of vaccine (Recombivax[®]) must be clearly documented. If Recombivax[®] was not the vaccine received, a 3-dose series is required.</p>		
Varicella ^{2,3}	2 doses												<p>For K – 12th grade: 2 doses are required, with the 1st dose received on or after the 1st birthday.¹</p>		
Meningococcal (MCV4)							1 dose						<p>For 7th – 12th grade, 1 dose of quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine is required on or after the student's 11th birthday.</p> <p>NOTE: If a student received the vaccine at 10 years of age, this will satisfy the requirement.</p>		
Hepatitis A ²	2 doses												<p>For K – 11th grade: 2 doses are required, with the 1st dose received on or after the 1st birthday.¹</p>		

NOTE: Shaded area indicates that the vaccine is not required for the respective grade.

Medications

Only medication which is necessary for a child to remain in school will be given by authorized school staff during school hours. A signed permission form from the parent/legal guardian must accompany all over-the-counter and prescription medications. Prescription medication must be prescribed by a licensed physician. Over-the-counter medication may be distributed by the school nurse or by authorized school staff if accompanied by the signed form. These forms are located on the Parent page of the school website. Each medication must be in its original, properly labeled container and include the following information:

- Student name
- Physician/dentist name
- Date
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Directions for administration
- Duration medication is to be given

Medication which must be administered to a student during the school day is only given by authorized school staff. All medications, over the counter and prescription, should be delivered to the front desk by the parent. Students may never self-medicate or be in possession of any type of prescription or over-the-counter medications.

Asthma Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic 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 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.

Allergy Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School recognizes that life threatening food allergies can be serious. In order to minimize the incidence of allergic food reactions, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will maintain a school-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. Parents are required to provide an EpiPen for students with severe allergies.

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

- 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 epinephrine (EpiPen) and Avui-Q auto-injectors
- The specific steps to follow in the event of an anaphylactic emergency
- The activation of emergency medical response – 911
- The location of emergency medications, including the school's stock EpiPen

The parent/guardian will be responsible for notifying classroom teachers and clinical staff about 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 that a student has a severe allergic reaction (where there is no known anaphylactic history), the school's stock EpiPen will be administered, and emergency services will be called. Immediately.

The school's protocol for field trips ensures that the nurse will send with the teacher the student's emergency action plan and the EpiPen as ordered by the student's physician.

Head Lice

Head lice (Pediculosis) can spread rapidly. Students found to have head lice must be removed from school immediately. The school follows a "nit free" policy for readmittance. Student's head check child on return to campus.

Accidents and Injuries

All student accidents and injuries on school premises and at school-sponsored events should be reported to the school office immediately. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School follows the Schools Concussion Protocol after a concussion diagnosis.

Student Accident Insurance

As a part of tuition, St. Thomas Aquinas 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. When an accident is reported, the school will provide the necessary paperwork. All claims are handled directly by the insurance carrier.

238 Student Support Services

The purpose of Student Support Services is to ensure that each individual student's learning needs are addressed to help him/her meet the unique and rigorous challenges of our curriculum with success and a sense of competence. In order to meet this purpose, the services provided utilize a team approach, collaborating with teachers, parents, administration, and outside professionals to identify and meet student learning and social development needs. Because the program is individualized, the application of these guidelines will vary.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has an excellent support system, which is further enhanced by:

- Reading Specialists – Availability of this support is supervised by the school counselor based on a concern made by the classroom teacher. The learning specialist and reading specialist collaborate to meet the needs of Lower School students who need additional reinforcement in order to meet grade-level goals. Students with diagnosed reading disabilities take first priority when creating the CALTs' schedules at the beginning of each school year.
- *Take Flight* - A program specifically designed to provide qualifying students a multi-sensory approach to reading instruction. This service is provided on both campuses when a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) is available on each campus and only for students that have a diagnosis or when a professional with the appropriate credential to make the diagnosis has authorized this intervention.

Student support services are available to any student who is having academic, behavioral, and/or emotional difficulty with particular focus on identifying and serving students with learning disabilities.

In some instances, the learning specialist and/or counselor will need to investigate a student's academic/emotional challenges through a more detailed process. This process may include student observation, teacher input, parent input, and/or screening instruments. When the results indicate a need for additional intervention/ evaluation, the learning specialist and/or counselor will provide recommendations for outside services that may include tutors, psychologists, diagnosticians, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, and medical providers, or other professionals.

Although St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not offer special education services, students with diagnosed disabilities may qualify for accommodations in the classroom. The student will have an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) written, implemented, and monitored by the learning specialist and/or counselor. Accommodations provided will not alter the curriculum of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. Accommodations are utilized only when academic integrity can be maintained. The learning specialist and/or counselor determine what accommodations are made based on the diagnostic testing results/report, teacher input, parent input, and the individual needs of the learner. Modifications to curriculum may be made only for the students with a diagnosed need.

All form requests related to outside diagnostic testing or special services (Occupational Therapy, speech, etc.) must be submitted directly to the counselor/learning specialist, not teachers.

Criteria for Accommodations in the Classroom

Eligibility for accommodations necessitates the student meet the following requirements:

- The student must have an educational need or diagnosis that directly affects his/her ability to learn.
- The student must have been evaluated by a professional with the appropriate credential to make the diagnosis (e.g. psychologist, diagnostician, doctor).
- Evaluations must be current as outlined in the ETS guidelines (Educational Testing Service, www.ets.org). Extenuating circumstances may warrant an individualized decision for a student's reevaluation.
- A full report must be submitted to the learning specialist for use in developing an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP).
- The report will be kept on file with the learning specialist.
- The report must include a clear description of the diagnosis listed in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) or in the current edition of the International Classification

of Diseases (ICD), scores from measures of cognitive functioning, academic achievement, and information that supports the diagnosis along with specific recommendations for appropriate accommodations.

Counselor

The counselor helps students and their families to overcome dilemmas that may interfere with the educational experience at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. The school counselor assists with 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 under the direction of the counselor. Guidance is provided to students in order to assist them in making decisions that impact their school life and home life in a positive way.

239 Library

Every grade has a specified library time that supplements the formal reading program. Procedures are in place on each campus for book check out. Students are responsible for the books and materials checked out from the library. Replacement fees are in place for any damaged or overdue library material.

240 Lost and Found

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Lost and found bins are located on both campuses. All uniform items and possessions should be clearly labeled with student's first and last name. Expensive items should not be brought to school. Students should bring found articles to the office immediately. Unclaimed articles may be given to the St. Vincent de Paul Society on a regular basis. Lost and found is located near the spirit store and can be accessed on Tuesday and Thursday morning 7:30-8:30 when the Spirit Store is open.

241 Parties and Birthdays

Dates for all classroom parties are listed in the school calendar and are planned by administration and teachers. Teachers coordinate activities with the help of STAPA representative (homeroom parents) when needed. Equity across all grade levels regarding treats, games, and party favors is in place. The contract with the cafeteria service does not permit class parties to replace lunch. No special deliveries for any reason or occasion are allowed. Party invitations may not be passed out at school unless everyone in the class is invited to the party.

Lower School Parties

Information about parties will be communicated by the homeroom parent. Parties are attended by students, teachers, and the assigned party volunteers only. The Lower School celebrates individual students' birthdays.

Upper School Parties

The Upper School student birthdays are celebrated with grade level traditions. Students at the Upper School are not permitted to bring food or treats to the classroom or lunch.

300 Series

Parents

301 Parent Cooperation

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

Parental behavior or failure to partner with the school 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 from the school, or a family may not be invited to return the following year.

302 Confidentiality Agreement

The confidentiality and privacy rights of all students are paramount. Any information obtained or overheard while on campus in any capacity in or out of the classroom is considered confidential. It is understood that every member of the community is personally responsible and liable for any violation of this policy.

303 Parent/Teacher Communications

It is imperative that parents not disturb teachers during school hours. Emailing is an appropriate method for communicating simple information between home and school or requesting a meeting with a teacher. More serious issues should be dealt with by arranging a conference with the teacher or other appropriate parties. Teachers should respond within two school days.

304 Principle of Subsidiarity

Parents/guardians and teachers are expected 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.

305 Safe Environment Requirements

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School ensures that all adults working directly with students have completed the Safe Environment program. All persons (employees or volunteers) working with St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School 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 located on the school website. Safe Environment cleared volunteers must wear their ID badges while on campus.

Volunteers and Visitors

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic 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.

All visitors and volunteers (including any student's parent, guardian, or other relatives) entering the school must first report to the school office for clearance. No one may proceed directly to any part of the campus without reporting to the front desk. Visiting is a privilege, and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to refuse any visitor.

306 Custody and Family Law Issues

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School understands that families within the school community may be affected by custody and other related legal disputes. The school works to balance sensitivity to difficult family situations and the interests of safety and orderly school administration. Involving school personnel in family and custody issues diverts finite school resources from the school's primary function. Parents' inability to partner with each other and the school may result in the family being asked to withdraw their child/children from the school. It is important that families within the school community who are affected by custody and other related legal disputes read and understand the following:

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 current signed copy of the

relevant court order and to point out to the school any relevant portions of the court 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. The school 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) with a supporting business records affidavit to both parents or their attorneys free of charge.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is private property and 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 administration has 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 or seek other appropriate recourse. If administration believes 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.

307 Reimbursement for School Expenses and Legal Fees

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School recognizes 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, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has implemented the following policy.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is sometimes 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, at the sole discretion of administration, the school will 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 by electronic signature, 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 Indemnatee, or 4) threatened or actual litigation against any Indemnatee which does not result in a final and appealable judgment adverse to the Indemnatee.

308 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 Catholic School, 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 twenty adult volunteer service hours each calendar year. Volunteers must be cleared by the Safe Environment officer, and volunteer hours must be logged in ParentsWeb by the end of the calendar year.

400 Series Operations

401 School Hours

Lower School (PK-2) regular school hours are from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM and early dismissal hours are 8 AM – 11:45 AM. The Upper School (3-8) regular school hours are from 7:55 AM to 3:16 PM and early dismissal hours are 7:55 AM – 12:00 PM. Neither campus opens for students until 7:30 AM. Children must never be unattended outside the school building prior to 7:30 AM. School office hours on both campuses are 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

402 Arrival and Dismissal

Carpool rules for both campuses are as follows:

- **In accordance with state law, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School 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.**
- Parents should follow all school guidelines provided in the Back to School packet at the beginning school year.
- Drivers must remain in their vehicles during carpool.
- No left turns allowed into or out of school property.
- Always grant the Pastor and school staff the right of way.
- Students will only be released to parents or the individuals listed as authorized pick-up in FACTS Family Portal.
- Carpools with more than one child are to follow the procedure for their youngest child on that campus.
- Do not block crosswalks.
- Drivers must follow traffic flow patterns.
- School issued carpool tags must properly displayed in car window in order to pick up any student.

Lower School Morning Dropoff

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.

- PK students are dropped off at the Alderson entrance via carline only.
- Walking students **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.
- If you are walking your child to the school building, please do not park in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School lot, on St. Mortiz, or in the Tom Thumb parking lot. Park in the Luby's lot and walk along the fence line to the sidewalks in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School lot; do not cross the carpool line.
- Parents are asked to say their good-byes at the designated space.

- 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.
- Do not take your child to the classroom or attempt to have unscheduled time with your child's teacher.

Lower School 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.
- Students who are not enrolled in the Extended Day Program and are not picked up by 3:30 PM will be escorted to and placed in the Extended Day Program and a fee will be assessed.

Upper School Arrival and Pick-Up

The Upper School arrival and dismissal guidelines will be provided in the Back to School packet and must be followed.

403 Inclement Weather Dismissal

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School requires an alternative dismissal plan when there is inclement weather. A text alert will be sent to parents' cell phones when the Upper School requires indoor dismissal due to inclement weather. Walkers/cyclists may be released if weather is light. In the event of severe weather, walkers/cyclists must be picked up through carpool by a parent or an authorized emergency contact. A text alert will also be used when the Lower School will not dismiss via the walk-up gate due to inclement weather. It is the parents' responsibility to update the school with any changes to phone numbers.

404 Pedestrians (Walkers) and Cyclists (Upper School Only)

- Students designated as walkers must have an authorization form filled out by parents during enrollment to walk to and from school, and any change in walker designation must be communicated to the front desk.
- Bicyclists are considered walkers and should follow the rules for pedestrians outlined above.
- Do not cross the vehicle queue on foot (except at the designated crosswalk).
- Do not cross Kenwood on foot except at the crosswalk at Abrams.
- Children who walk to school must follow the pedestrian routes.
- Children walking from school will be released after pick-up has begun.
- Bicyclists must provide their own locks for their bikes.

405 Extended Day

Extended day care is provided on both campuses for students enrolled in the program immediately after dismissal time until 6:00 PM. Extended Day registration opens during the enrollment process. Parents may register for Extended Day at any time during the year. Drop-ins cannot be accommodated.

406 Weapons and Fire Arms

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is a gun/weapon-free zone. It is the Church's prerogative to maintain places of worship as gun-free zones. No person may possess a weapon at any facility owned, leased, or operated by the Diocese or St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, or at any activity or function organized or sponsored by the Diocese or St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, even if that person holds a license to carry a weapon, concealed or not.

407 Crisis Management

The safety of the faculty, staff, and students of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is a priority. Each campus has an onsite crisis coordinator, crisis team and a crisis management program for specific on-site procedures. All faculty and staff are trained in the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) procedure. The five components of the SRP provide actions to be taken in an emergency. Students and faculty are trained and practice drills on the following:

- HOLD – In your room or area. Clear the halls.
- SECURE – Get inside. Lock outside doors.
- LOCK DOWN – Locks, lights, out of site.
- EVACUATE – A location may be specified.
- SHELTER – Hazard and safety strategy.

The SRP is located on the Parent page of the school website.

408 Safety and Emergency Procedures and Drills

Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is used on both campuses. You can find the SRP under the Parent tab on the school website. Emergency drills are held in accordance with the State of Texas, City of Dallas fire codes, and Diocesan policy. Absolute cooperation in abiding by the rules set forth by faculty and staff is expected. Faculty and staff will give direction to students and visitors in the school buildings. Maps and directions for emergency drills are posted throughout campus.

409 Child Advocacy

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. Contact the agency's local office or call the 24-hour toll free Child Abuse Hotline (800) 252-5400.

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.

410 School Business

No purchases or contractual agreements by parents may be made on behalf of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

411 School Name and Logo

All logos, names 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 written consent from the school administration. This includes any and all St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School-related logos as well as images from the school website. Independent use of any of these logos, names, and images for sports teams, uniforms, paper goods, clothing, decals, monogrammed or imprinted items, etc. is prohibited.

412 School Communications

The weekly newsletter, Week at a Glance (WAAG), is the primary source of information for parents and is emailed every Friday at 1:00 PM. Resource information, calendars, and forms can be found on the Parents page of the website. FACTS Family Portal and My STA App are both used for grades, grade book information, behavior notices, and homework.

413 School Directory

The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School online directory includes parent and student names, parent e-mail addresses, and home, mobile, and work numbers. This directory is password protected and for the personal use of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School families only. It may not be sold or used for mailing lists or solicitation purposes of advertising personal businesses or promoting outside businesses. Email distribution lists given out from the school are also included in the policy.

414 Community Service and Fundraising

Throughout the school year students have the opportunity to “Know it, Show it and Live it” by participating in school-sponsored community service events and fundraising opportunities. These collections are designed to support a variety of charitable organizations within and outside of our school community.

All community service events and fundraising opportunities are approved by administration one school calendar year in advance and listed on the school web site.

Students may not solicit funds or items for any reason using the school as the drop off or collection point. Due to liability issues, facilities, including but not limited to, parking lots, cafeterias, and drama rooms, cannot be used to organize group fundraising efforts. This includes solicitation for personal gain, or for St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School-sponsored or non St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School-sponsored organizations, clubs or groups.

Carwashes requested to be held on campus and approved by administration and the church office are reserved as an 8th grade privilege.

415 Facility Usage

All facility use requests must originate at the parish office. All facility usage is reserved for church or school events and, once approved, the required signed Facilitates Use Agreement must be on file with the parish and school offices.

416 Diocese Release and Indemnification

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.

Acknowledgement and Agreement

For online acknowledgement: By my electronic signature, I represent that I have read the foregoing Handbook and understand and agree to the contents thereof. I agree that my child and I will 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.

417 Right to Amend

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