



ST. THOMAS MORE

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

*Educating students to be seekers of truth, individuals of character, and
“God’s servant first.”*

HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS
2025 - 2026

Approved by
Louisiana State Department of Education and
Diocese of Lafayette

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Accredited by
Cognia and Lumen

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450 East Farrel Road
Lafayette, Louisiana 70508

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Member of
National Catholic Educational Association
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Louisiana High School Athletic Association
Citizens for Educational Freedom
One Acadiana - Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

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Reverend Michael Russo, Chancellor
Mr. Martin Cannon '93, Principal
Dr. Claire Masterson, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Holly Carbo, Assistant Principal
Mr. Nicholas Cortese '09, Dean of Students
Mrs. Anne Pitre, Director of Advancement
Mr. Kim Broussard, Athletic Director
Mr. Jeff Cormier, Religion Administrator

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St. Thomas More Catholic High School admits male and female students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or disability in violation of state or federal law or regulation in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

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St. Thomas More Catholic High School is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year at St. Thomas More Catholic High School. As we embark on another exciting school year, I would like to take a moment to emphasize the importance of our St. Thomas More Catholic High School Handbook for Students and Parents. This comprehensive handbook is a vital resource for understanding the values, policies and procedures that guide our school community and provide for a safe and stable learning environment. It is a guidebook for success.

Familiarize yourself with this handbook. Read it and discuss as a family the content within. Your understanding and cooperation is vital. When everyone is in line with it, the environment is consistent and stable.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Thomas More Catholic High School. I'm looking forward to a great year with each one of you.

Sincerely,
Martin L. Cannon, '93
Principal

FOREWORD

The regulations and other provisions outlined in this Handbook for Students and Parents are a material condition of the contractual agreement between St. Thomas More Catholic High School and each student and parent in the school. In developing the rules and policies for STM, the administration has tried to anticipate as many situations as possible. But as new and unusual situations may arise, the principal will have the authority to use his discretion in whatever circumstances the handbook rules do not precisely apply.

This handbook is designed to serve several important purposes:

It provides basic information the student needs for carrying out his or her course of study, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

It serves as an official source of the school policies and requirements for participation in academic, co-curricular, extra-curricular, and social activities at STM.

The handbook provides information for parents to enable them to assist and support their child's efforts and activities.

For a complete listing of the school's administration and staff, including their roles and responsibilities, please visit our website at stmcougars.net. This resource allows students and parents to quickly identify the appropriate contacts for specific needs.

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY

The principal of St. Thomas More Catholic High School, with the approval of the STM Advisory Council, reserves the right to amend this handbook for a cause that, in his judgment, is just. If changes are made, all parents will be sent prompt notification. In this handbook, wherever the term "parent(s)" is used, "parent(s) or guardian(s)" is implied.

PARENT COOPERATION STATEMENT

An integral part of the educational philosophy of STM is the conviction that the school assists the parents/guardians in carrying out their primary responsibility of providing for the religious and secular education of their children. An ongoing positive working relationship between the parents/guardians and the school is critical to the success of the school and the students. As part of that working relationship, parents/guardians are expected to be involved as much as possible in the educational process, to refrain from conduct which thwarts the orderly administration and operation of the school, to support and participate in school activities, and to provide instruction to and set positive examples for their children both at home and in the community. While STM encourages the constructive exchange of ideas, feedback and suggestions intended to foster the continued growth and improvement of the school, STM is ultimately responsible for the orderly administration and operation of the school, including the policies and procedures implemented to achieve the school's goals.

STM reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any student(s) in the event that it is determined by the school's administration that (1) a positive working relationship between the school and the parents/guardians no longer exists and/or is irreparably damaged or (2) that the parents/guardians have failed to provide the support, assistance and example necessary for the religious and secular education to which each child is entitled. Furthermore, failure on the part of any student to abide by the rules, regulations and policies as set forth orally and/or in the student handbook, or as may be adopted or otherwise promulgated by school administration during the applicable year could result in removal.

It is understood and agreed that STM reserves the right to remove a student at any time if, in the judgment of the administration, any parent and/or guardian violates the Handbook for Students and Parents and/or the student fails to meet the academic standards or requirements of the school as set forth in the Handbook for Students and Parents or if the student's conduct or influence, on or off the campus, is not in keeping with the standards/expectations of STM as reflected by its teachings, policies and rules. There will be no refund or cancellation of tuition and fees incurred and owed at the time of removal.

MORE INVOLVED

More Involved is a mandatory meeting for rising freshmen and junior parents. This one-hour mandatory parent education program will highlight important topics that affect our students. All freshmen and junior parents are required to attend. Failure of all custodial parents and/or guardians to attend will result in the student being ineligible for registration for the following school year. The junior parent meeting is in the fall and the in-coming freshmen parent meeting is in the spring.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE	3
FOREWORD	4
PARENT COOPERATION STATEMENT	5
MORE INVOLVED	5
HISTORY	10
BOARD OF PASTORS	11
MISSION STATEMENT	12
VISION STATEMENT	12
BELIEFS	12
SCHOOL CREST	13
THE LIFE OF OUR PATRON ST. THOMAS MORE	13
THE MORE WAY	14
ENROLLMENT	15
Enrollment After Registration Deadline.....	15
Academic and Behavior Contracts.....	15
Change of Address.....	15
TUITION AND FEES POLICY	15
Tuition and School Fees.....	15
Work-Study Program.....	16
Scholarships.....	17
Cafeteria Lunch Program.....	17
Delinquent Tuition and Fees Policy.....	17
Refund Policy Tuition and Fees.....	18
Financial Hardship Policy.....	18
SOLICITATION AND DONATION POLICY	18
COMMUNICATIONS POLICY	20
BRANDING POLICY	20
TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY	21
L.A.R.K.....	22
Social Media Guidelines.....	23
Technology Access.....	25
Help Desk.....	26
Computer Insurance.....	26
School Email System.....	26
ACADEMIC PROGRAM	27
Program of Studies.....	27
Graduation Requirements.....	28
Academic Support Program.....	29

MORE Program.....	29
Grading System.....	30
Academic Alert.....	31
Academic Probation.....	32
Progress and Mid-Quarter Reports.....	33
Report Cards.....	33
Failure/Earning Credits/Summer School.....	34
Final Exam Exemption Privilege.....	34
ABSENCES AND TARDIES.....	35
Tardies.....	35
Excessive Absences	35
General Procedures	36
Types of Absences	36
Important Note Regarding Mass Attendance.....	37
Check-in/Check-out Procedure	37
Cancellation of the School Day.....	37
Cutting Class.....	38
MAKE-UP WORK.....	38
Make-up Tests.....	38
Other Make-up Work.....	39
Academic Honesty.....	39
Academic Integrity Code.....	39
Institutional Statement on AI.....	40
Student Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).....	41
COUNSELING SERVICES.....	42
LIBRARY INFORMATION.....	43
THEOLOGY.....	43
Sacraments.....	43
Other Prayer Experiences.....	44
HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	45
School Nurse.....	45
Immunizations.....	45
Medication.....	46
Illness.....	46
Safety Drills.....	46
DRUG TESTING.....	46
Purpose.....	46
Testing Procedure.....	47
Notification of Results.....	47

SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY.....	49
STUDENT CONDUCT AND REGULATIONS.....	49
Off-Campus Conduct.....	50
Cafeteria.....	50
Cellphones and Wearable Technology.....	51
Damage to Property.....	51
Deepfake Policy.....	51
Dishonesty.....	52
Dismissed from Class.....	52
Disrespect for Authority.....	52
Distribution of Printed and Digital Material.....	52
Drugs /Alcohol / Tobacco.....	52
Fighting.....	53
Food or Drink.....	53
Gambling.....	53
Harassment.....	53
Lockers.....	53
Parking.....	54
Married Students.....	54
Pregnancy.....	54
School-Sponsored Trips.....	54
Stealing.....	55
Student Search.....	55
Threats of Violence.....	55
Trespassing.....	56
Violation Card.....	56
Violation Card Consequences:.....	56
Visitors.....	56
Weapons.....	57
STUDENT CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES.....	57
Behavioral Probation.....	57
Referral.....	57
Detention.....	57
Suspension.....	57
Major Behavior Sanctions.....	58
Withdrawal.....	58
Expulsion.....	59
ANTI-BULLYING AND HAZING.....	59
UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS.....	62

2025-2026 Uniform Requirements.....	63
HOMECOMING COURT.....	66
COUGAR COURT.....	66
DANCES AND EVENTS.....	66
DRESS CODE FOR ALL DANCES.....	67
DRESS CODE FOR OTHER STM EVENTS.....	68
STUDENT LIFE.....	68
ATHLETICS.....	69
Academic Eligibility.....	69
Athletic Eligibility.....	69
Athletic Code of Conduct.....	69
Athletic Lettering Policy.....	69
BELL SCHEDULE.....	70

HISTORY

The Diocese of Lafayette had long been aware of the need for a consolidated Catholic high school. In the early 1980s, after four years of planning, the need became a reality.

A 25-acre tract in southwest Lafayette, located on Farrel Road off Kaliste Saloom Road, was donated by Mary Frances and Louis Doucet in loving memory of Clayus and Lucille LeBlanc. The projected cost for the 136,000-square-foot building to be named the St. Thomas More Catholic High School and Bishop Jules C. Jeanmard Center for Religious Formation was \$5.8 million, financed by private donations. The school would be built for a student body of 800 but could accommodate as many as 1,000. Students would come primarily from Cathedral-Carmel and Our Lady of Fatima high schools. With more than \$3 million in donations, the project went forward.

Ground was broken on Thursday, January 8, 1981. Bishop Gerard L. Frey headed the list of dignitaries which included Dr. F. H. Davis, Jr., Hubert Dumesnil, Braxton Moody IV, Celeste Richard, Albert Comeaux, Lafayette Mayor Dud Lastrapes, Ed Landry, Father A.J. Boumans, Louis Michot, Mrs. Louis Doucet, Louis Doucet, Roy Billeaud and Fr. Don Theriot.

Consolidation of the philosophies and traditions of CCS and OLOF began in the spring of 1981, when students and faculty of Cathedral-Carmel School and Our Lady of Fatima School began meetings to merge the two schools. The two main goals were to build unity among students and to promote student involvement in the preparations for opening the school.

In the fall of 1981, a convention, New Horizons, was held for the future students of St. Thomas More Catholic High School. The students voted on a mascot and school colors chosen from selections symbolic of St. Thomas More Catholic High School and relevance to the time in which he lived. Students selected Cougars from the mascot options and chose burgundy, navy, and grey for the school colors. Alumni and faculty of both schools helped facilitate the convention which ended with a dance where Hampton Davis (now Father Davis) served as DJ. The convention also involved the parents of future students. Their sessions provided information regarding the administration, the School Board, the curriculum, funding, facilities, and opportunities for parent involvement.

Students also met to recommend organizations for the new school and worked with the school's leadership in constructing constitutions for these organizations. In the spring of 1982, student leaders from both CCS and OLOF helped plan the school year, orientation, Open House, and other activities. On May 1, 1982, the "STM Olympic" games worked as icebreakers to help future Cougars get to know one another. That summer, the first Student Council met at Pecan Island and elected interim officers for the start of the school year: Jay Paul Bernard, President; Jeannette Greene, Vice President; Melissa Hightower, Treasurer; Sylvia Logan and Ann Bernard, Secretaries. Celeste Richard was elected interim Senior Class President.

On August 15, 1982, STM was dedicated and opened its doors. Noted as the premiere high school in southwest Louisiana, it quickly gained praise as one of the finest and most modern schools in the South. STM was especially blessed to have the religious orders of the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament, the Mount Carmel Sisters, and the Sisters of the Divine Providence serving the students in these early years. The school was also fortunate to have Monsignor Sigur as a guiding force and spiritual leader who worked tirelessly to ensure STM's success.

BOARD OF PASTORS

STM is owned and operated by 12 church parishes: Holy Cross, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Wisdom, Sacred Heart (Broussard), St. Anne (Youngsville), St. Edmond, St. John's Cathedral, St. Joseph (Milton), St. Mary, St. Jules, St. Joseph (Broussard), and St. Pius X.

The Pastors of these parishes form a board which advises one of their members, designated and appointed by the Bishop of Lafayette as Chancellor, in the ecclesiastical administration of the school. The Chancellor, counseled by the Board of Pastors and ever responsive to the Board in business which involves parish funds, is Pastor of STM. The Chancellor is present to the St. Thomas More Catholic High School Advisory Council, but not as a member. The Advisory Council is advisory to the Chancellor. Policies formulated by and emanating from the St. Thomas More Catholic High School Advisory Council become effective by ratification of the Chancellor.

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF PASTORS

Reverend Thomas Vooeries	Our Lady of Fatima
Reverend Chester Arceneaux	Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
Reverend Andrew Schumacher	Holy Cross
Reverend Patrick Broussard	Our Lady of Wisdom
Reverend Michael Delcambre	Sacred Heart
Reverend Michael Russo, Chancellor	St. Anne
Reverend Joseph Champion	St. Edmond
Reverend Ryszard Zawadzki	St. Joseph (Broussard)
Reverend William Schambough	St. Joseph (Milton)
Reverend Gregory Chauvin	St. Jules
Reverend Cedric Sonnier	St. Mary, Mother of the Church
Reverend James Brady	St. Pius X

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More Catholic High School educates students to be seekers of truth, individuals of character, and “God’s servant first.”

VISION STATEMENT

STM is an exemplary Catholic High School that is mission-focused and serves primarily the registered parishioners of the 12 owner parishes. STM seeks to help students reach their individual potential and is committed to the development of the whole person.

STM is grounded in Catholicism and integrates Christian values in all aspects of the student’s education.

STM offers a rigorous college preparatory academic program rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The school prepares students to be global leaders and 21st century thinkers. STM supports its students with a dedicated faculty, technology, facilities, and resources that create the very best opportunities for success in life beyond high school.

STM engages with its stakeholders, including owner parishes, parents, families, schools within the owner parishes, alumni and the community. The school is a good steward of its resources.

STM graduates are community-minded servant leaders who make decisions based on Catholic values and teachings.

BELIEFS

St. Thomas More Catholic High School is firmly rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Catholic intellectual tradition. As such, The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the central point of all we do as a school. Recognizing its essential role in our formation and community, STM prioritizes student attendance at our weekly Masses and will address habitual absence from Mass as necessary.

We are committed to providing a high-quality education that fosters intellectual excellence, critical thinking, and strategic inquiry. Through the integration of faith and reason, we form students of integrity, character, and strong moral conviction. With a foundation in Catholic formation, academic achievement, and personal responsibility, STM takes great pride in preparing students to become principled leaders in their communities and throughout the world.

SCHOOL CREST



The crest or coat-of-arms of STM was developed in 1981. The center of the crest is the Tudor Rose, which represents the union of the two royal houses of England and was worn by the Chancellor of England. Each petal of the rose suggests a heart shape, symbolizing charity, goodness, love of God and country. The STM monogram surrounds the rose. Within the STM monogram, is the cross, symbolizing More's Catholicity, his devotion as a man of God, and his deep religious convictions, the source of More's strength. Directly below the STM monogram, the crest is embellished by More's actual signature.

THE LIFE OF OUR PATRON ST. THOMAS MORE

St. Thomas More lived in 16th century England, and was, as the playwright Robert Bolt typed him, a man for all seasons. Scholar, tutor to the future king, lawyer, family man, celebrated wit, and finally Lord Chancellor of the realm, Thomas More had everything - and sacrificed everything on a matter of religious principle. He refused to take an oath, provided in the Act of Succession, repudiating the Pope, recognizing the offspring of King Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn, as heir to the throne, and declaring Henry's first marriage to Catherine of Aragon to be no true marriage. The action cost him his life. He was truly "God's servant first." Thomas More went to the scaffold in 1535, wit to the end, commenting to the guard, "I pray thee see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself." On the scaffold he reportedly told his executioner, axe at the ready, to take care not to cut his beard since it, at least, was innocent of treason.

St. Thomas More was a martyr for his faith. He was a person who loved life but loved his God more. Thomas More was a fervent man of faith, a loyal countryman, an edifying professional, and a committed Catholic.

St. Thomas More wrote *Utopia*, a political romance published in 1516. Utopia is the name of an imaginary island. In Utopia everything was perfect – the laws, politics, morals, etc. The word has thus come into the language as a synonym for a place or state of political or social perfection. Thomas More's literary accomplishments demonstrated his commitment to scholarship and his appreciation of the arts. He was truly a man for all seasons.

As the patron of our school, the intention is to reflect St. Thomas More's qualities in our school philosophy and programs. Hopefully, all of the students who attend STM will, like Thomas More himself, mirror the virtues of love, hard work, faith in God, loyalty to the Church, and educational scholarship.

Thomas More was born in 1478 and lived 57 years. He was canonized a Saint in 1935. His feast day is observed on June 22.

THE MORE WAY

The way of St. Thomas More is the alignment of intellectual values, personal excellence, and, above all, an attitude of humble acquiescence to the will of God. St. Thomas More was a man of great intellect, wise in matters of both state and faith. While worthy of honor because of his many worldly accomplishments, we choose to model ourselves after him because of his eagerness to set aside his own achievements, judgment, and will in deference to the will of the Father. Rather than preserve his own life and reputation, St. Thomas More clung to the truth of God's law, maintained a devotion to his personal sense of character, and died as a final act of service to our Lord. Because of this, we model ourselves with the following goals in mind:

To be a seeker of Truth

To pursue Truth in all aspects of my life and to equip myself with intellectual fortitude, academic curiosity, and humility in the face of God's magnificent creation.

To be an individual of character

To develop in myself a sense of personal excellence that calls me to a life of service, integrity, and moral strength, especially in times of persecution or conflict.

To be God's servant first

To hold as the preeminent good my relationship to Christ and His Church, pursuing at every opportunity the chance to serve God faithfully as His disciple so that others may see my life and say, "If this is the servant, how great must the Master be?"

ENROLLMENT

St. Thomas More Catholic High School admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin. Because of limited space, the school has set admission priorities for students. In addition, certain conditions related to a student's academic and behavioral background will also affect the student's admission status. For information about the admission process, priority status and dates and deadlines, please refer to www.stmcougars.net/admissions.

Enrollment After Registration Deadline

Students applying after the registration deadline (or those that have incomplete applications) will be placed in a waiting pool.

Students applying after the start of the school year will be evaluated by an admissions committee providing there is space available. Candidates will be evaluated and will employ the priority system as well as the transferability of credits from another accredited institution. Applications will not be accepted for the current school year during the last nine weeks of that school year.

Academic and Behavior Contracts

Contracts developed with students will have specific requirements and consequences. The Assistant Principal and/or Counselor will recommend terms of the contract to administration. A contract signed by the administration is as strong as policy and is binding. The Assistant Principal is responsible for enforcing academic contracts with students and the Dean of Students is responsible for enforcing behavioral contracts.

If a student has been expelled from St. Thomas More Catholic High School, he/she will not be allowed to reapply.

Change of Address

All communications will be sent to the primary contact on file. To submit a change of address, email or phone number, visit stmcougars.net/update.

TUITION AND FEES POLICY

Tuition and School Fees

Tuition must either be paid in full or by an installment tuition plan through the FACTS system.

Registration fees are due in April and are nonrefundable. Other school fees are included in the installment tuition plan. Other school fees, which are mandatory, include PTC dues, laptop fee, student activity fee, Math fee, English fee, and senior fee, if applicable. An optional fee to purchase a yearbook is also included.

Athletic Participation fees are billed through the FACTS system and are paid in two payments. Advanced placement course fees must be paid in full during the first quarter and are billed through FACTS.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak or any other circumstances which, in the judgment of the school administration, make it unfeasible, unsafe or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school shall resume as soon as practical via virtual learning and/or other methods adopted and/or developed by the school administration and faculty. Due to continuing financial obligations relating to operational costs, including administrative, faculty and staff salaries, there shall be no suspension, reduction or refund of tuition or applicable fees.

Work-Study Program

Families may apply for tuition assistance through the Work Study Program. An application must be completed and submitted to FACTS between April 1st – 15th of each year to apply for grants for the following year. Notification of acceptance to the program will be made in May of each year. Assistance through this program will be based on need, will be awarded on a one-year basis, and will not be automatically renewable. **THE WORK STUDY PROGRAM IS NOT A SCHOLARSHIP.**

The St. Thomas More Catholic High School Advisory Council appoints an ad hoc committee to serve in the selection of students for the work/study program. The committee will include at least one owner pastor. This committee will report the selection of participants to the principal, who will then inform parents of the students selected. The decisions of the committee will be final.

Policies for the Work-Study Program

Students who receive assistance are required to complete work hours on campus between June 1 and July 31.

- Approved family members may contribute to the reduction of a student's hours by volunteering to work at school.
- It is the responsibility of each student, and his or her parents, to ensure that all requirements of the work/study program are met. If required service hours are not completed, the award value will be due to the school, and the student will not be eligible for the Work Study Program the following year.

Work-Study Program Requirements

Academics: The student must meet academic requirements of the school to be eligible for a grant.

Conduct: The student must be in good standing with the Dean of Students Office, with no major violations.

Scholarships

The Yvonne B. Jumonville Academic Scholarship and The Harry and Jesse Greig Memorial Music Scholarship are available for entering freshmen to attend STM. Information about these scholarships is available at registration and through the advancement office.

Cafeteria Lunch Program

This program is sponsored by the Diocese of Lafayette. Questions should be directed to the Cafeteria Manager at (337) 988-1539.

It is important for students and parents to understand that students are not allowed to “borrow” another student’s cafeteria ID number. In addition to the ID numbers being used to debit an account, the numbers are also used to generate a monthly federal meal claim for reimbursement; i.e., some students are approved for free or reduced-price meals based on family income. With computerization, no student can tell if another is receiving a federally subsidized meal. This is another reason for prohibiting the “borrowing” of ID numbers.

Delinquent Tuition and Fees Policy

Tuition and fees are past due if not received within ten (10) days of the due date. If a student’s tuition and/or fees are past due at the beginning of the semester exam testing period (December and May), the student and parent portals will be locked. All grade reports and academic transcripts are the property of STM. Academic transcripts and grade reports will not be released until all tuition and fees, including but not limited to fees associated with books, supplies, extracurricular activities (including athletics), field trips, lunches (and any extra sales), are paid in full.

In the event any payment due STM is in arrears by thirty (30) days, the school shall have the following options.

1. Immediately require full payment of all tuition and fees due the school.
2. Disallow the student from taking semester and final exams.
3. Remove the student(s) from participation in co-curricular activities.

In the case of any account that is more than 90 days delinquent, the school has the right and authority to immediately cancel the student’s enrollment.

If a student’s tuition and/or fees are past due at the time of registration, the student will not be allowed to re-register until the tuition and/or fees are paid in full.

STM reserves the right to pursue collection of any unpaid tuition/fees and in the event that said debt is turned over to legal counsel for collection, parents/guardians are liable to St. Thomas More Catholic High School for any and all costs and expenses associated with collection,

including reasonable attorney fees and expenses incurred, court costs and legal interest.

Refund Policy Tuition and Fees

If a student wishes to withdraw from St. Thomas More Catholic High School prior to the first day of school, a withdrawal notice must be received in writing and full tuition for the academic year will be refunded less a processing fee.

After the first day of school, full tuition for the first semester is due and owed as set forth in the enrollment agreement despite any subsequent absence, withdrawal or dismissal from the school of the student, and any change in the hours, program, faculty, curriculum, or auxiliary services of the school.

In the case of work-study grant applicants who do not receive sufficient financial aid to attend STM, if the student notifies the school by the first day of school, they may receive a refund of their registration fee, less a processing fee.

Other school fees charged at the time of Orientation will not be refunded after September 1. Athletic participation fees are not refundable. The registration, building, and growth fees are non-refundable for students accepted by STM.

Financial Hardship Policy

Financial Hardship Status allows for an alternate registration and tuition payment plan if there has been a significant change in the family's financial status.

The principal can grant Financial Hardship Status.

Applicants for Financial Hardship Status must submit a written explanation of the hardship, with appropriate financial documentation, along with a specific tuition request.

Tuition may be deferred but not waived as part of this program.

Regular tuition payment must be made when the family's financial status returns to "normal" as determined by STM's Finance Committee.

SOLICITATION AND DONATION POLICY

All fundraising and donation efforts on behalf of St. Thomas More Catholic High School must be coordinated through the Advancement Department to ensure consistency, effective donor stewardship, and accurate recordkeeping. To prevent overlapping solicitations and donor fatigue, any individual or group wishing to raise funds must first obtain project approval from the

Principal. Once approved, the initiative must be scheduled with the Advancement Director.

The Advancement Department must be informed in advance of all fundraising activities and donation transactions. It serves as the central resource for managing, processing, and tracking all contributions to the school. All commercial solicitation inquiries must also be directed to the Advancement Department. No individual or business may be approached for donations or sponsorships without prior approval. STM enforces a strict no-solicitation policy regarding students, and the Advancement Department will communicate this to any external parties.

All fundraising initiatives must support a specific, approved project or event and may not imply or offer any special returns or benefits in exchange for a donation.

All donations must be processed through the Advancement Department. Any cash or in-kind gift over \$1,000 requires approval from both the Advancement Department and the Principal. Donations that may result in additional expenses or new programs must also be approved by the Principal and Advisory Council before being recommended to the Chancellor. STM reserves the right to refuse any donation.

Restricted donations of \$1,000 or more that are not designated for the current year's budget must align with the school's strategic plan and be approved by the Principal and Advisory Council. If a proposed gift does not align, the Principal will consult with the donor, and the final decision will rest with the Principal and Chancellor. Approved restricted gifts will be incorporated into the current budget or a designated fund in accordance with financial policies. Restricted gifts may not be redirected without donor consent and prior approval by the Principal; the Advancement Department must be notified of any such changes.

All building projects over \$20,000 require approval from the Principal, Advisory Council, and Chancellor. Projects exceeding \$50,000 require additional Diocesan approval.

All donors must receive a written acknowledgment of their contribution within 15 days of receipt. A copy of this acknowledgment must be submitted to the Advancement Department for recordkeeping.

Gifts to Teachers

Faculty and staff may not accept any personal gifts of cash. All gifts to faculty and staff with a value of \$250 or more must be reported to the Principal by the recipients. Faculty/staff may not use their position in school to return favors.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

All school-related publications, press releases, and media content must be approved by the Advancement Department. This includes yearbooks, sports programs, literary works, and all digital content related to STM.

Our official form of communication is through the STM website. No individual, department, club, or organization may create a separate website affiliated with STM without permission from the Advancement Department. Only approved student clubs and official school business may appear on the STM website.

Social media accounts using STM's name must have prior approval from the Advancement Department. Inappropriate posts that reflect negatively on STM may result in disciplinary action, and students may be required to remove such content.

No one may speak on behalf of STM or respond to media inquiries without prior approval from the Principal or Advancement Director, unless directly responsible for an official school event.

Printed materials may not be distributed or posted on campus without permission from the Advancement Director or Principal

BRANDING POLICY

The academic and athletic logos of St. Thomas More Catholic High School are the exclusive intellectual property of the school and are protected by copyright. These marks represent our commitment to faith, academic excellence, integrity, and athletic tradition. Use of any STM logos without prior written permission is strictly prohibited. To request usage rights or obtain branding guidelines, please contact michelle.curtis@stmcougars.net.

TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

Students are expected to use all school technology legally, appropriately, responsibly, and with Christian kindness. When using school-issued devices or accounts, the following actions are not acceptable:

- creating, accessing, displaying, or transmitting on the school network, internet, or school-issued laptops or via the school email system any materials considered profane, defamatory, obscene, abusive, racially charged, threatening, harassing, sexually explicit, violent, obscene, or offensive to others;
- using any materials that are in violation of copyright law;
- participating in cyberbullying (the use of technology to embarrass, harass, humiliate, threaten, or intimidate to gain power or control);
- using AI without teacher permission;
- using a personal hotspot or any on campus network other than STM-Student;
- using course or subject-specific software deemed inappropriate by the classroom teacher;
- using technology that is distracting and/or does not support an educational purpose including but not limited to messaging, chatting, watching YouTube, playing games, surfing the internet and other tasks that may be considered inappropriate during class time without teacher permission;
- using technology to cheat (give or receive information) for a test, quiz, or assignment;
- sharing user login or confidential information with another user; attempting to obtain the login or confidential information of another user;
- accessing (or attempting to access) the accounts, files, or folders of another user;
- illegally copying, installing, or downloading software, music, documents, or games to any school-owned computer;
- unauthorized copying/installing of software programs belonging to the school to a personal computer;
- uninstalling, attempting to uninstall or tamper with programs installed by the school;
- attempting to tamper with, impair, or bypass network security;
- attempting to bypass restrictions set by the classroom teacher or school (including but not limited to teacher monitoring platforms such as Securely);
- accessing, editing, or attempting to edit the computer registry settings or group policies;
- installing additional operating systems or virtualization software;
- installing additional web browsers or using incognito mode;
- using file-sharing or peer-to-peer software on the school network and on school-owned laptops or desktops;
- accessing virtual machines or any wireless networks other than STM-Student while on campus;
- attempting to access blocked sites without permission;
- defacing the school-issued tablet: drawing or writing, removing/rearranging keys, adding or removing stickers, etc.;

- photographing and/or recording a school employee or other students without permission; posting and/or sharing photographs or recordings without permission;
- playing games rated Mature or higher by ESRD or equivalent rating on school-owned computers;
- failure to:
 - report damage to the school-issued computer within 24 hours;
 - transport the computer in the secure school-issued sleeve;
 - restart and run updates when required;
 - come to school every day with a fully charged computer in good working condition.

L.A.R.K.

L.A.R.K. is merely a summary of the school's technology policies designed to make them easier to remember. Students must adhere to the policies and procedures in the entire Responsible Use Policy.

L = LEGAL

*Ignorance of the law does not constitute immunity.

- All software, music, videos, and games used on school computers must be legally obtained and age appropriate.
- All resources (whether copied, downloaded, or shared) must be free of copyright violations.
- Cyberbullying is illegal; depending on the severity, penalties may include jailtime and/or fines.
- Using AI in a sexually explicit way or to harass, bully, or impersonate another person.

A = APPROPRIATE

- Creating, accessing, displaying, or transmitting profane, defamatory, obscene, abusive, racially charged, threatening, harassing, sexually explicit, violent, obscene, or offensive materials is in violation of the More Way.
- Students should remain on task and use only programs and websites approved by the classroom teacher.
- Any attempt to bypass the school network, access blocked sites or tamper with installed software or settings is prohibited.
- School employees or other students should not be photographed or recorded without permission.
- Online activities should be ethical and legal.
- Games, music, and videos used on STM computers should be age appropriate and in keeping with the school's mission statement.

R = RESPONSIBLE

- Diligent care is taken with all hardware and software to prevent damage or misuse whether intentional or not.
- Computers, files, and passwords should be safeguarded 24/7.
- Restarting and running updates should be conducted promptly.
- All damages must be reported immediately to the Help Desk ticketing system.
- Students must come to school every day with a fully charged computer and stylus carried in a school assigned sleeve.

K = KIND

- Computer use does not impact others' rights or feelings.
- Any form of cyberbullying (whether illegal or not) is prohibited.
- Students model the values found in the STM mission statement in all technology usage.

Social Media Guidelines

St. Thomas More understands that social media is an effective communications tool and strives, with parental approval, to use its platforms to promote our students and school community responsibly. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. In accordance with the Diocese of Lafayette Social Media Policy and CIPA, we have established the following Social Media Guidelines which include best practices for publishing, sharing, liking, and commenting on social media. Our goal is to help our students and community to understand the importance of developing a positive digital footprint. Students can be held accountable by the school for the inappropriate use of social media while off campus if this behavior becomes disruptive to the learning environment or the overall health of the school. Consequences can be administered if the use of social media conflicts with the school's Responsible Use Policy or the Code of Conduct expected by all STM students. Any policy violations will be reviewed by the St. Thomas More administration and appropriate disciplinary action will be administered including but not limited to the loss of privileges, leadership positions, school awards and honors; and the possible receipt of a detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Posts deemed threatening, dangerous, or violating any laws will be reported to the authorities.

Student Social Media Guidelines

Any use of social media (school or personal accounts) is a reflection of St. Thomas More Catholic High School's mission and values. As a Catholic school, we encourage the school community to use social media in a virtuous manner.

We ask the following of our students:

- Develop a Positive Digital Footprint
 - Use a professional handle/user name and profile picture.
 - Before posting, consider the possible effect on your future.
 - Use social media sites to positively showcase yourself.
 - Post only appropriate personal videos and photos.
 - Don't overshare.
- All posts related to STM activities must follow the school code of conduct.
- Use social media sites to positively showcase STM.

The following **will not be tolerated** by any student on any social media sites:

- Morally offensive language, including but not limited to ethnic, religious and racial slurs; profanity; sexually explicit language; use of acronyms of offensive expressions.
- Use of inflammatory or inappropriate language, or personal attacks of any kind.
- Cyberbullying of any kind, including but not limited to:
 - Insulting, targeting, embarrassing or excluding any individuals.
 - Posting pictures, negative comments or jokes about any STM faculty, staff or administrator
 - Intimidating or threatening persons
 - Threats against the school or person's property
 - Using another person's log-in or password to send inappropriate messages and images
 - Creating fake profiles of other persons
 - Creating websites to embarrass, threaten, or socially isolate another person
 - Circulating immoral photos or videos
 - Texting immoral messages
 - Impersonating and/or accessing another person's private information.
 - Creating rumors and posting false information about people

St. Thomas More does not seek to censor posts or limit freedom of speech on its social media platforms or yours. However, we ask that you carefully consider what you are posting as it may affect the livelihood of the employees and students at the school.

Parent and Volunteer Responsibility When Using Social Media

Social media is a great way to promote and celebrate our school. All content which is published by St. Thomas More can be shared on your own social media accounts. This provides STM with a tremendous amount of exposure and good will.

*We encourage parents and volunteers **to engage** in the following:*

- Encourage participation and promote STM events, service opportunities, fundraisers, activities, and programs
- Inform STM families, friends, alumni, and supporters about news, events or programs
- Recognize special achievements or accomplishments of STM students, families and staff members

*Please **do not engage** in the following on social media:*

- Negative discussions about STM
- Air grievances with fellow volunteers, school administrators, teachers, parents, students or other individuals
- Use inflammatory or inappropriate language, or personal attacks of any kind with respect to St. Thomas More

Technology Access

St. Thomas More Catholic High School provides computer devices and network resources for students, employees, and others affiliated with STM to enrich and expand the curriculum and support communication. All technology components provided through STM are the school's property and should be used in compliance with school policies. Any data on a school device or associated with an official school account is considered the property of the school and should be legal and ethical. Use of outside electronic devices (cellphones, e-readers, personal computers, wearable technology, etc.) are subject to administrative approval and must conform to all STM technology policies.

STM uses a variety of digital and online educational tools which are vetted by the school and serve to enhance lessons and improve learning outcomes. STM provides hardware and software management, monitoring, and content filtering for the school's network and student devices. The school also provides classroom management software to aid teachers in regulating students' internet/application usage in the classroom. STM reserves the right to retrieve information and records, to engage in routine computer maintenance and housekeeping, to carry out internal investigations, to check internet access history, and to disclose messages, data, or files to law enforcement authorities. The school is not responsible for any damages or claims resulting from violations to the school's Technology Responsible Use Policy.

Help Desk

STM Help Desk assists teachers and students with hardware, software, and account issues. As a self-maintainer school, STM employs 10-12 students as computer technicians to service student and teacher devices in-house. Unless the computer issue is emergent, students should avoid missing class time by coming to the help desk before school, at lunch, or after school. The STM Help Desk can be accessed from the STM mall (commons area) or the school library.

Help Desk Hours
7 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday through Friday

Students must **notify the Help Desk within 24 hours** of incurring damage to their computer through our ticketing system or by coming by the Help Desk in person. Any damage necessitating repair or replacement of equipment is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s). Any damage to another user's computer (either intentional or accidental), is the responsibility of the person causing the damage. *Charges for damages will be processed through the family's FACTS account.*

Students are responsible for monitoring, managing, and safeguarding their school-issued device 24/7 by:

- transporting the computer in the school issued sleeve;
- restarting the computer every day;
- running all available updates within 48 hours;
- appropriately storing and backing up data;
- maintaining and safeguarding password-protected access to files and accounts;
- assuring the antivirus program is running properly on the computer;
- coming to school with a fully charged laptop in good working condition.

Computer Insurance

The school does not require parents to purchase supplemental computer insurance. However, if interested, parents can purchase insurance directly from a third-party company, [Worth Group](#). Worth Insurance covers the computer if it is damaged, lost or stolen. Lost or damaged pens and power cords are not covered. If insurance is purchased through Worth Group, the parent will pay for all repairs or replacement parts directly to the school through the family's FACTS account and then will be reimbursed from Worth Group.

School Email System

STM is a Google Workspace school that provides email accounts to every student, teacher, and staff member. All communication between teachers, coaches, students, and parents should be conducted through the STM email system. School email accounts should not be used for personal transactions such as college communications, scholarship applications, and personal account creation (i.e. Spotify, Netflix, etc.). The school reserves the right to access the emails of

any user as part of an internal or external investigation, as well as sharing the findings with authorities as necessary.

When corresponding with others using the STM email system, STM students are required to use the following proper email etiquette:

- Email between students and faculty/staff/coaches should occur through the STM email system only.
- Avoid using the school email system for personal or confidential communications.
- Check email daily and respond in a timely manner.
- Pay attention to your audience; use the same respect and formality in an email that you would use in person.
- Always include a brief subject line that includes the topic to be discussed.
- Keep messages brief and to the point.
- Use proper salutation (greeting) and complimentary closing.
- Using ALL CAPS should be avoided because it suggests you are shouting.
- Pay attention to grammar and spelling.
- Do not overuse the “Reply to All” feature.
- Never send or forward chain letters or junk mail.
- Never open email attachments from an unknown sender; if you receive a suspicious email, delete it and report it to Help Desk.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Program of Studies

Rooted in the mission of the St. Thomas More Catholic High School and the Catholic intellectual tradition, the program of study at STM is guided by the Cognia and Lumen accrediting bodies, the requirements of the Louisiana Department of Education, the Louisiana Board of Regents college admissions requirements, the USCCB Curricular Framework, and the general entrance requirements of colleges, universities, and career training programs.

School, State, and College Requirements

Students entering STM will be required to complete the TOPS University Diploma. All STM students are required to take Theology each year. Other courses are outlined in the *STM Course Offerings Guide*. Please note that some courses require prerequisites.

Students will be advised annually of state requirements for graduation and of changes in college entrance requirements prescribed by the Louisiana Board of Regents.

Louisiana’s Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)

Louisiana’s Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) is a comprehensive program of state scholarships and one of the most innovative and progressive student assistance programs in

the nation. TOPS has four components, all of which will be available to undergraduate students. Students must apply for all TOPS awards by submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which corresponds to the year they plan to enroll in a post-secondary school.

The FAFSA may be filed after December 1 and must be received by the state prior to the **deadline published on the form**. The FAFSA form can be found by visiting www.studentaid.gov.

For the full compilation of TOPS rules with all changes incorporated to date, check the TOPS web site at www.mylosfa.la.gov

Graduation Requirements

All seniors are required to attend the Baccalaureate Mass, which is generally held the night before Commencement Exercises. The Baccalaureate Mass is the culmination of four years of spiritual formation for our students and is an essential component of the graduation ceremonies. Attendance at the Mass is mandatory, and students who do not attend will not be allowed to walk at Graduation.

Honors Courses

Honors courses are state-approved high school courses taught at a more rigorous and complex level than the College Preparatory courses. St. Thomas More Catholic High School offers honors courses in English, Social Studies, Math, Science, World Languages, and Fine Arts. A listing of courses can be found in the *STM Course Offerings Guide*. Placement into Honors, Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses is based on student academic performance and a demonstration of ability that ensures success at this level of course work. Honors and Dual Enrollment courses, in conjunction with Advanced Placement (AP) courses, may allow students to be recognized at graduation with different levels of honor distinction. (See Honor Graduate Requirements on page 30.)

Advanced Placement Courses

Advanced Placement Courses are college-level courses taught in high school. Students may receive college credit based on their score on the College Board Exam administered in May. All students enrolled in an AP course are required to take the examination. Any student who misses the examination and/or the makeup examination without administrative approval will receive an automatic zero on his/her final exam grade for the course in which the exam was to be taken. Courses and other details are found in the Course Offerings Guide.

Dual Enrollment

Students in Dual Enrollment courses receive grades from STM for the appropriate high school work as well as from the university granting college credit. Grades for those courses are determined by the university criteria. Students are reminded that all Dual Enrollment grades will be included on all future college transcripts and may affect a student's TOPS status for the first

semester of college. Students who fail a Dual Enrollment course or who wish to improve a Dual Enrollment grade may do so at their expense by attending a subsequent semester at the university. Dual Enrollment students must follow all guidelines, including those for plagiarism, student dishonesty, and prerequisites, as set by the individual university, as well as all St. Thomas More Catholic High School guidelines. Parents and students are responsible for all fees associated with the university credit. Dual Enrollment tuition and fees are set by each university prior to the start of the school year. Tuition and fees for Dual Enrollment classes are paid directly to the appropriate university and not to St. Thomas More Catholic High School.

Math Requirement

As a college preparatory institution, St. Thomas More Catholic High School requires all students to complete four years of mathematics while enrolled at STM, regardless of any high school credits earned prior to ninth grade. This policy reflects our commitment to academic rigor and to preparing students for the demands of post-secondary education. Students may petition the administration to substitute an alternative upper-level elective, including an approved online course, for their fourth year of math. Such petitions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering the student's academic performance, future goals, and the suitability of the proposed course as a college preparatory option.

Academic Support Program

The purpose of the Academic Support Program is to help students with specific learning difficulties achieve success in their academic courses. Although the STM curriculum will not be modified, the Academic Support Program (ASP) offers several accommodations for students who qualify for the program. For more information about the program and possible accommodations, please visit stmcougars.net.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Recent (with in the last three years) formal evaluation and/or doctor's statement with diagnosis and recommended accommodations (previous year) on file at STM
2. History of academic difficulty
3. Ability of STM to accommodate the student's needs with present resources
4. History of student's utilization of accommodations offered

Student eligibility must be approved annually by the Academic Support Program Scheduling Committee.

MORE Program

The purpose of the MORE Program is to provide extensive support to students with diagnosed learning disabilities in a differentiated classroom setting. The MORE Program provides an added level of support under the umbrella of the Academic Support Program. The St. Thomas More Catholic High School curriculum is not modified in the MORE program. Students may qualify for accommodations at STM and not meet the criteria for special testing on national standardized tests.

Eligibility for admission:

- Completed application
- Current evaluation (within 3 years) with an identified learning disability
- Physician's statement for medical applicants
- Current school records (report-card, standardized test scores)
- Participation in an elementary/middle school academic support program
- List of current classroom interventions and accommodations.

Eligibility will be approved by the Academic Support Program Committee.

More Program Courses Available:

- Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Math
- English I, II, III, & IV
- Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry
- Civics, American History & World History
- Spanish
- Study Skills

Grading System

The scholastic year is divided into four quarters. The grade for each quarter is based on daily assignments, class participation, quizzes, projects, and tests. In the computation of the student's quarter, semester, and final grade, only the one-digit decimal of .5 or greater is automatically rounded to the next higher number. Semester grades are determined by averaging the two quarter numerical grades (80%) and the semester exam grade (20%). Semester grade = $.40(Q1) + .40(Q2) + .20(\text{Exam Grade})$

LETTER GRADES	NUMERICAL AVERAGE	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY POINTS
A	94 - 100	Excellent	4
B	87 - 93	Above Average	3
C	78 - 86	Average	2
D	70 - 77	Below Average, Passing	1
F	Below 70	Failing Work	0
I		Incomplete Work	0

Grade Point Average

In determining a student's GPA, the total number of quality points is divided by the number of courses attempted (excluding those courses for which a grade of "P" is given). All grades (report cards and transcripts) will be reported on a 4.0 scale. A modified grading scale will be used for honor and AP courses: Four percentage points are added to each final quarter average and

semester exam in honors courses, and six points are added to each final quarter average and semester exam in AP courses. **The addition of the four or six points occurs only if the quarter average and semester exam grade is 70 or above.** No additional percentage points will be added after calculating semester and final averages. **GPA's are not rounded. TOPS and many college admissions offices use core grade point averages for their requirements. St. Thomas More Catholic High School does not provide core GPA.**

Honor Roll

Honor Roll status is calculated at the end of each quarter. Academic awards are presented in the fall for year-end Honor Roll only.

HONOR ROLL	GPA REQUIREMENTS
Excellence	All A's
Gold	3.80 or better
Silver	3.40 – 3.79
Bronze	3.00 – 3.39

*[NOTE: A student with an **academic** grade of “C” or less in any subject is ineligible for Honor Roll status in the quarter in which the grade of “C” or less is obtained. Students with an academic integrity violation in any quarter do not qualify for recognition during the fall academic awards ceremony.]*

Incomplete Grades

A student who has not completed course requirements due to illness, late transfer, or other authorized absence will receive a grade of **incomplete**. Students who receive an incomplete grade will have one week to finish requirements for the course. **The incomplete assignment(s) will automatically become a zero if the work is not completed within one week after the close of the grading period. An exception to the one-week limit may be made only with administrative approval.** Incomplete grades will not be given at the end of the second semester. Any exceptions to this rule must have the approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal. This policy applies to traditional face-to-face instruction on campus and virtual learning.

Academic Alert

Students are placed on Academic Alert if they receive a D or an F on a mid-quarter report or any quarter grade report. Note: mid-term exam grades and first-semester grades do not apply. Students on Academic Alert are not allowed to miss the class(es) in which they have a D or an F to participate in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. This policy does not apply to athletic playoffs, national competitions, or Kairos participation. The student is encouraged to meet with their grade-level counselor to discuss strategies for improvement. It is the responsibility of the student and the parents to be aware of any Academic Alerts. Academic alerts may expire at the subsequent grading period, mid-quarter report, or report card if the

student no longer has a grade of D or F. Registration status for students who fail one or more courses will be determined by an Academic Review Committee.

Academic Probation

Students failing two or more courses at mid-term are placed on Academic Probation and may be put on an academic contract. This contract is prepared by the Academic Review Committee and enforced by STM's administration. Registration for the subsequent school year will be placed on hold for these students until final grades are reviewed at the end of the second semester.

Honor Graduates

Honor graduates will be recognized as follows:

Utopian Honors 4.0 GPA **and** 2 AP courses **and** 10 honors/dual enrollment courses (combination of 12 AP/Honors/Dual Enrollment courses with at least 2 AP courses)

Chancellor Honors 3.7 - 4.0 GPA - 8 Honors/Dual Enrollment or AP courses (any combination of Honors, Dual Enrollment, or AP)

OR

3.5 - 3.6 GPA - 12 Honors/Dual Enrollment or AP courses (any combination of Honors, Dual Enrollment, or AP)

Scholar Honors 3.5 - 3.6 GPA – 6 Honors/Dual Enrollment or AP courses (any combination of Honors, Dual Enrollment, or AP)
3.7 - 4.0 GPA - no Honors, Dual Enrollment or AP courses required

Please note that grade point averages are not rounded.

Transfer Students

For transfer students, all final grades are recorded on the transcript as letter grades. Grades reported in progress as percentage grades will be recorded as percentage grades. Grades reported in progress as letter grades will be recorded as percentage grades based on the midpoint of each letter category of the STM grading scale.

The formula for determination of grades is as follows: (Transfer grade x the number of days in the program in a quarter) + (STM grade x number of days in a quarter at STM).

Example: $87(16/45) + 70(29/45) = 76$.

High School Credit for Elementary Students

High school credit earned in an elementary school will be recorded on the high school transcript only as pass or fail (P/F). A passing score on the minimum proficiency exam does not

necessarily prepare the student for the next level course at STM. Students must provide proof of course credit to the registrar prior to June 1.

Online Courses

While enrolled at STM, a student may be allowed to take online courses through approved course providers. These courses cannot serve as replacement courses for courses that are taught at STM. Approval from the grade level counselor and the Assistant Principal is required. Grades earned from an online course will be listed on the transcript as a separate grade.

STM sets the deadline for completion of all online courses and remedial courses. While enrolled in a course, a student may not take a correspondence class for that same credit.

College Credit

Qualified students taking courses at the college level **on a college campus** (excluding remedial courses) in the areas of English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language will receive credit on the high school transcript as pass/fail (P/F). One half credit will be granted for each three hour college course. (This policy does not apply to dual enrollment courses taken at St. Thomas More Catholic High School.) No credit will be granted for remedial courses. College credit obtained during high school must meet requirements of the Louisiana State Department of Education Nonpublic Bulletin 741.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes will be considered for extenuating circumstances only. In order to balance student enrollment in classes, the school reserves the right to change a student’s schedule. Both student and parent will be notified if a change is made.

Progress and Mid-Quarter Reports

2024 – 2025 Dates for Mid-Quarter and End-of-Quarter Report Cards

QUARTER	PROGRESS REPORT	REPORT CARDS
August 6 – October 3	September 5	October 13
October 6 – January 5	November 7	January 9
January 6 – March 13	February 6	March 20
March 16 – April 24 (seniors) March 16 - May 21 (underclassmen)	April 2 (seniors) April 17 (underclassmen)	May 11 (seniors) May 22 (underclassmen)

Report Cards

All report cards are posted on the FACTS Family Portal. Dates are included above. Students who receive a “D” or an “F” will be placed on Academic Alert (see page 30). Each student is

encouraged to schedule an appointment with their grade-level counselor. **Academic Alert carries the consequence that a student may not miss that class for co-curricular and athletic activities. Parents of students placed on academic alert are advised to contact the teacher.**

Failure/Earning Credits/Summer School

The instructional program at St. Thomas More Catholic High School is designed to ensure that each student has the opportunity to achieve success. A variety of resources are available to students who need additional assistance during the academic year. The school strives to help students attain good study habits, value continuous learning, and accept their responsibility in the learning process.

The final grade in a full year course is the average of the two semester grades. Registration status for students who fail one or more courses will be determined by an Academic Review Committee.

Final Exam Exemption Privilege

With teacher approval, students **participating** (any grade level) in State Literary Rally and taking a comprehensive subject test may be exempt from the final examination in the subject of their participation. In order for a senior to be exempt from the final exam, he/she **must** meet **all** of the following requirements:

- An A average for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters.
- An A average for 1st semester.
- A mid-term exam grade of 87 percent or better.
- Absences exceeding 16 days for the course in the school year will void exempt status.
Ten or more tardies in the course will void exempt status.
- Have no suspensions.

Exemptions are not permitted for semester courses, including Religion IV.

Homebound Student Grade Policy

Students who are out of school for more than two weeks may enter a Homebound Program. All state guidelines for a Homebound Program must be followed. Grade level counselors will work with families to facilitate the process in coordination with STM administration. Grades for the homebound period will be averaged into the regular period grade.

Grade Review

During the school year, grades must be reviewed within ten days of receipt of report cards. After that point, grades are final for that grading period. Final grades are mailed to parents following the last day of the school year.

Parents and students have ten days from the last day of the school year to review final grades. After that deadline, the grade recorded on the transcript may not be reviewed.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

Students are obliged to attend all classes every day school is in session (State attendance policy Bulletin 741) and arrive at school on time. The school policy on attendance allows sixteen (16) days of absence from school per year. Absences beyond sixteen (16) for the year may result in the loss of academic credit for that course. This policy applies to individual classes as well as whole school days. Students who exceed these allowances will no longer be eligible for any exam exemptions or academic awards and honors, including but not limited to Utopian and Honor Graduate commendations, Spring Awards, and individual course awards. Additionally, these students will not be eligible to attend a school-related activity or event during the school day. Records of individual class absences are kept by the teacher and in the registrar's office. The school reserves the right to judge the acceptability of parental requests, which involve a student's absence during the school day.

Tardies

A student must be on time for every class. A tardy to any class will result in the student's violation card being signed. If the student is tardy for at least half of the lesson time, the tardy becomes an absence for that class. Tardiness to any class will be handled by the teacher concerned. Students who are habitually tardy for first hour will be subject to the following consequences (based on quarters):

Three tardies - a lunch detention will be issued to the student

Four tardies - an after-school detention will be issued to the student

Five tardies - a referral and Saturday detention will be issued to the student

Six tardies - the student will be suspended for one school day

Seven tardies - the student will be suspended for two school days

Eight tardies - the student will be suspended for three school days and will appear before a disciplinary committee to review the student's future at St. Thomas More Catholic High School

A student tardy for first-period class must report directly to the Welcome Desk to check in.

Excessive Absences

Students who are absent for five (5) full school days or who accrue five (5) absences in a single course will receive a formal notification from the STM Administration notifying them of their absentee status and reminding them of the penalties listed above. Students who are absent twelve (12) full school days or who accrue twelve (12) absences in a single course will receive an additional notification and may be required to meet with their grade-level counselor or a member of the Administration. Students who are absent sixteen (16) or more full school days or who accrue sixteen (16) or more absences in a single course will not be eligible to attend a

school-related activity or event during the school day and will meet with Administration to discuss their absences.

Due to the rigor and unique academic formation offered by the St. Thomas More Catholic High School Theology Curriculum, there are no opportunities outside of St. Thomas More Catholic High School to remediate credit for any Theology course.

Excessive tardies may also result in a hearing or other disciplinary action, subject to the determination of the Dean of Students.

General Procedures

Requests and communication regarding attendance go through www.stmcougars.net/attendance. Through this link a parent/guardian can:

- Notify the school if their child will be absent. This should be done by 8:00 am.
- Request a check-out for a student that drives.

Except in the case of an educational absence, a student may not participate in an athletic event, practice, or co-curricular school activity on the day of the absence without the permission of a member of the administrative team.

A student must be present for at least four class periods in order to participate in any co-curricular or extracurricular activity scheduled that day. No student will be granted permission to provide transportation to another student leaving school. An exception is made for brothers and sisters in emergencies at the request of parents.

Types of Absences

Excused and unexcused absences are counted as part of the student's total attendance record as required by state attendance policies (Bulletin 741). There are two types of absences:

- **Educational:** An educational absence is one in which the student is absent from regular classes to participate in a school-sponsored activity. Such absences are not counted as days absent from school, but the student must make up whatever assignments are missed. A student with a "D" or an "F" grade in a class at the end of the most recent reporting period (progress or report card) will not be excused from that class for an educational absence. In order to be excused from classes for a college visit, students must first fill out the appropriate form from the Counselors' Office. Juniors will be granted one excused absence and seniors will be granted three. No excused absences will be given to freshmen or sophomores for college visits.
- **Absent:** A student will be marked as absent if they are not physically present in class for any reason outside of a school-sponsored activity. Arrangements for make-up work must be made by the student immediately upon return to school and the student will have three

(3) days from the date of return to make up missed work. Make-up assessments will be given in accordance with the school's Make-up Test Policy.

Important Note Regarding Mass Attendance

St. Thomas More Catholic High School is first and foremost a Catholic institution; therefore, student attendance at Mass is expected. Utilizing Mass time as an opportunity to schedule appointments or to check in late "without penalty" is a fundamental misunderstanding of this most sacred aspect of the formation offered by St. Thomas More Catholic High School. Students who are consistently absent from Mass, regardless of the reason, will be referred to the administrative team for a meeting in which the student should be prepared to account for his/her absence.

In order to preserve the sanctity of the Mass, students will not be allowed to check in or out between 8:00 am and 9:30 am on any day on which a Mass schedule is run.

Exceptions to the STM Attendance Policy may only be granted in extenuating circumstances by the STM Administration.

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

All students checking in or checking out of school for any reason must check-in/check-out with the administrative office. If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student will be sent to the school nurse and the nurse will evaluate and then contact the parent prior to check-out.

Requests for student check outs must be made using www.stmcougars.net/attendance. Students will be allowed to check out only if a form is completed and submitted online. An email response from STM confirming the check out will be sent back.

Non-Driving Students: When checking out your student, please enter the school through the main entrance and proceed to the Welcome Desk, where you will be required to present identification and sign out your student. For security purposes, students will not be sent to meet drivers in the parking lot and must be met inside by a person listed on their approved check-out list.

Lunch is considered a part of fifth hour for attendance purposes.

Cancellation of the School Day

In case of a general emergency, during which school may be called off due to dangerous weather or other circumstances, information will be posted and communicated to the STM community.

Cutting Class

Cutting class (partial truancy) is missing class without the permission of the teacher or the administration and makes a student subject to corrective action including suspension.

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up Tests

Students who miss an assessment worth 50 points or more must take a makeup test during the designated makeup testing period, which is Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 7:30 AM in the STM Cafeteria. The testing room door will be locked at 6:40 AM, and no students will be permitted to enter after that time. Any makeup test worth fewer than 50 points will be administered by the teacher and must be completed within three school days of a student's return to campus. After three days, students will receive a zero on the assessment.

Students must report to the testing room on the morning they return from an absence. If a student misses multiple tests, they will take the first test on the first day back, the second test on the following day, and so on. If time permits, students will be allowed to take multiple makeup tests on the same day. Students who experience an extended absence may be required to consult with their grade-level counselor and/or makeup test coordinator to set up an appropriate makeup plan.

The grade on a makeup test will be determined by the following guidelines:

- If the student takes the makeup test on the first day back at school (or, in the case of multiple makeups, according to the designated schedule), the student is eligible to earn full credit.
- If the student misses the first available opportunity and takes the test on the second day/opportunity, the maximum possible grade is 85% of earned credit.
- If the student misses the second available opportunity, a grade of zero will be recorded.
- A student with multiple tests to complete must take them in the order they were originally scheduled. For example, a student who misses a test in first hour and third hour must take the first-hour test first. Failure to do so may result in a grade penalty. Students with multiple makeup tests may arrange to take two in the same morning to expedite the makeup process.

Students with extended absences should consult with their grade-level counselor before returning to school to determine an appropriate makeup schedule.

Teachers are encouraged to modify makeup tests when appropriate. Make ups for assessments worth fewer than 50 points and projects will be handled by individual teachers according to the three-day makeup policy as articulated below.

If a test is missed near the end of the quarter, an “I” (Incomplete) will be recorded as the quarter grade until the makeup test is completed and graded according to the designated timeline set forth in this handbook.

Other Make-up Work

For assignments that are not tests (homework, projects, etc.) students are allowed to make up missed work for full credit within three days of their return to school. It is the student’s responsibility to promptly obtain information regarding any missed classwork and complete all assignments within three school days of returning to school. Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero for the missed work.

Arrangements for make-up work must be initiated immediately upon the student’s return. Students are also responsible for maintaining progress on homework assignments during absences or coordinating an appropriate makeup schedule with their teacher that aligns with the three-day policy.

For extended absences, students should collaborate closely with their grade-level counselors to ensure appropriate accommodations and support.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. This includes work on research papers, homework, assignments, projects, quizzes, and tests. **If work has been copied, there will be assumed guilt on the part of all students involved.** Student work or behavior that in the opinion of the teacher is a violation of the Academic Integrity Code will be subject to the consequences described in the Academic Integrity Code. Students should strive to do their best rather than take credit for the efforts of another student. Work turned in that is not entirely the student’s work is considered a violation of the Academic Integrity Code.

Academic Integrity Code

As a student of STM, I understand that I should strive to be a “seeker of truth, individual of character, and God’s servant first.” I recognize that the proper formation of my character is dependent on my virtuous activities every day. By my signature on this Academic Integrity Code, I agree to maintain academic integrity in every aspect of my work. Violations of this academic integrity code include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Checking out of/into school to avoid taking a test or turning in an assignment.
- Relaying, by any means, (giving or receiving) questions or answers from a test or quiz.
- Copying, duplicating, or transmitting by any means, any assignments that will be turned in as original work, including homework, unless it was given as a collaborative assignment.
- Using programmed materials in watches, calculators, cellphones, other electronic devices, or computers when prohibited.

- Unauthorized possession or attempted possession of materials designated for teacher use.
- Writing formulas, codes, or keywords on one's person or on objects/in cellphones for use on a test.
- Not following additional specific guidelines on cheating as established by a department, class or teacher.
- Plagiarism which includes, but is not limited to, submitting material without citing the author/artist and/or source.
- Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) or submission of AI generated work without permission.

I understand that violation of the STM Academic Integrity Code will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, academic penalties, suspension, removal from the honors program, removal from co-curricular and athletic activities, and possible withdrawal or expulsion. This code covers all school-related tests, quizzes, reports, class assignments, and projects, both in and out of class.

Students found to be in violation of the St. Thomas More Catholic High School Academic Integrity Code will appear before the Faculty Honor Council and be subject to the consequences listed below.

- A written referral by the Dean of Students
- A zero on the assignment
- Saturday detention
- Ineligibility for Honor Roll for the grading period concerned and ineligibility for end-of-year Honor Roll
- Parent notification by the teacher by phone call and/or in writing

In addition to the above penalties, the second offense can result in a review and/or hearing including the administration with additional consequences of:

- Out-of-school suspension
- Dismissal from student offices, athletics, honor societies, and extra-curricular activities

Institutional Statement on AI

In harmony with the mission of St. Thomas More Catholic High School to form seekers of truth, individuals of character, and God's servants first, our approach to the use of artificial intelligence is guided by careful discernment. We embrace the technological gifts born of human reason while steadfastly upholding the core principles of our mission. We acknowledge the significant opportunities AI offers to enhance educational mastery, enrich student support, and reinforce the vital relationship between teacher and student, as highlighted by the Vatican Dicasteries for the Doctrine of the Faith and for Culture and Education in *Antiqua et Nova* (79). At the same time, we remain attentive to the ethical challenges and potential risks AI may pose, including issues of academic honesty, the diminution of critical thinking, and the safeguarding of student privacy.

Inspired by *Antiqua et Nova* and the teachings of Pope Francis, who reminds us that “Artificial Intelligence is, and must remain, a tool in human hands,” our AI policy is designed to foster a culture of trust, integrity, and thoughtful innovation within our school community.

Student Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students are expected to use AI tools responsibly and with integrity. AI may only be used for schoolwork when a teacher has given explicit permission, and students must be honest about when and how AI was used. Any use of AI should support the purpose of the assignment and contribute to the student’s own learning, not replace it. Submitting AI-generated work without approval is a violation of the STM Academic Integrity Code and will be treated as such. Students are responsible for the accuracy and appropriateness of any AI-assisted work they submit and must follow all teacher directions regarding citation and tool selection. Misuse of AI will result in academic consequences.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is a federal law which states that a written institutional policy must be established and that a statement of adopted procedures covering the privacy rights of students be made available. The law provides that the school will maintain the confidentiality of student education records.

STM accords all the rights under the law to students and their parents. No one outside the school shall have access to nor will the school disclose any information from students’ educational records, including records to officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll, to persons or organizations providing students financial aid, or to accrediting agencies carrying out accrediting functions without the **written** consent of the student and his/her parent. Exceptions to this written consent include qualified personnel in the school, persons in compliance with a judicial order, and persons in an emergency in order to protect the health and safety of students or other persons, and to parents who present sufficient evidence that the student is dependent upon them for financial support. All of these exceptions are permitted under this Act.

Within the STM community, only those members, individually or collectively, acting in the students’ educational interest is allowed access to student education records. These members include personnel in the counseling office, administration office, office of the registrar, business office, the office of admissions, academic department coordinators, other academic personnel within the limitations of their need to know, the STM attorney, designated law enforcement officials, corporate owner pastors, and any other person deemed by the school as official.

STM reserves the right to provide directory information in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Directory information at STM includes student name, primary parent name, address(es), telephone number(s), and date of birth. Requests for non-disclosure will be honored by STM for

only one year; therefore, authorization to withhold directory information must be filed each year in the counseling office.

The law provides students with the right to inspect and review information contained in their education records, to challenge the contents of their education records, to have a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory, and to submit explanatory statements for inclusion in their files if they feel the decisions of the appeals committee to be unacceptable.

Students may not inspect and review the following as outlined by the Act: financial information submitted by their parents; confidential letters and recommendations; employment or job placement; or education records containing information about more than one student, in which case STM will permit access only to that part of the record which pertains to the inquiring student. Students may have copies made of their records with certain exceptions (e.g., a copy of the academic record for which a financial “hold” exists, or a transcript of an original or source document which exists elsewhere). Student records and transcripts are maintained by the registrar.

Any student who believes that his/her education records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading or are otherwise in violation of his/her privacy or other rights may discuss his/her problems informally with the STM guidance department or the respective guidance counselor. If the decisions are in agreement with the student’s request, the appropriate records will be amended. If not, the student will be notified within a reasonable period of time that the records will not be amended and why. The student will then be informed of his/her right to appeal to the next higher authority (e.g., department coordinator or administration).

Revisions and clarifications will be published as experience with the law and STM’s policy warrants.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The counseling department promotes students’ personal, social, academic, and career growth by partnering with families, staff, and the community. Rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church, the counseling program supports the dignity and potential of every student. Counselors build trusting relationships and maintain confidentiality, except when student safety is at risk, at which point information will be shared with parents.

If a student is identified as potentially suicidal, a counselor will meet with them the same day to assess risk and coordinate support. Parents will be contacted to assist with urgent referral.

Grade-level counselors work with students throughout high school, offering personal and academic guidance. Services include individual meetings, classroom lessons, and yearly academic planning. A college counselor also assists with career and college exploration.

LIBRARY INFORMATION

General Policies

1. Students are required to scan in when using the library unless accompanied by a teacher.
2. Checkout policy: Books are checked out for three weeks and may be renewed twice if not needed by other students. There is no limit to the number of items that can be checked out. Fines: Ten cents per school day past due. When a book is lost or damaged beyond repair, students pay the replacement value of the book plus any fines that are due. If the book is no longer available in its current format from our vendors at the displayed replacement cost, students will owe the amount of the most similar copy plus \$5.00 to cover shipping and supplies needed for maintenance.
3. A student chewing gum, eating food, or drinking any beverage with the exception of water will be assessed a \$1.00 fee (per incident and in addition to normal school/classroom penalty) to cover the costs of cleaning and maintenance of the facility.

THEOLOGY

On May 24, 2000, Bishop Edward O'Donnell issued a statement about the purpose of Catholic education in the Diocese of Lafayette. It summarizes the mission and purpose of St. Thomas More Catholic High School:

“Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lafayette exist to provide solid education in secular subjects but mainly to instill Gospel values in our young people.”

The Theology Department, in conjunction with Campus Ministry, plays a central role in the school's mission of forming students to become “God's servant first.” The Theology curriculum offers students comprehensive, systematic, and formational catechesis in our Catholic faith and morals. All students are required to take a Theology course during each semester of their four years of high school. Though courses are taught from the perspective of Catholic Tradition, students of other faiths are welcomed and are expected to learn the same material as Catholic students. A failed Theology course must be repeated.

Sacraments

The Eucharistic Liturgy (the Mass) is “the source and summit of the Christian life...the sum and summary of our faith” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1324; 1327). All students are expected to attend the weekly school Mass attentively and reverently. Catholic students are

invited to receive Holy Communion (the Eucharist) with proper spiritual preparation. Non-Catholics, however, are not allowed by church law to receive Communion (CIC 844 §1) because they do not share this full membership and unity of belief and practice.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) is offered weekly at school. Catholic students are invited to celebrate this sacrament. Non-Catholic students are invited to take part in this opportunity to speak to the priest for spiritual advice.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is not offered through STM, though students receive indirect preparation for its reception through their Theology courses. Catholic students are urged to speak with their parents and pastors about receiving this sacrament. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist both at school and in their respective parishes. Active involvement at the parish level is an STM ministry goal.

Other Prayer Experiences

Because of the essential role of prayer in the formation of a personal relationship with God, students participate in varied and regular experiences of prayer. All St. Thomas More Catholic High School classes begin with prayer.

Students are encouraged to attend one retreat during each of their years at St. Thomas More Catholic High School, as well as the retreats offered through their respective Church parishes.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Nurse

A licensed nurse will be at school daily to treat students who become ill or are injured. There is an office equipped with supplies and a bed to assess and treat them until they can either be picked up or return to class. A student must have a time-stamped hall pass from the teacher to visit the nurse unless an emergency presents itself.

Parents or guardians must provide STM with current contact information and an additional emergency contact in the event parents cannot be reached. The parents will be responsible for providing transportation home for students who are ill, please refer to our check-out policy. Students who are going home due to an illness or injury should be assessed by the nurse first.

It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to make sure the nurse is well informed of any students with health issues or a major medical history. Please contact the school nurse at (337) 988-3700 ext. 184 or at nurse@stmcougars.net to discuss and disclose any health-related issues.

Students with severe allergies or asthma will be required to have an epi-pen and/or inhaler at school in the original packaging from the pharmacy with a valid expiration date. These should be brought to the nurse during orientation or on the first day of school. In order for a student to self-carry, a doctor's order must be on file with the nurse. Parents will need to complete the Allergy Questionnaire or Asthma Questionnaire as it pertains to their student located under Parent Resources on the STM website. Though we are not a peanut free campus, every effort will be made to prevent severe allergic reactions from occurring when possible.

St. Thomas More Catholic High School provides over the counter medication that can be administered to students by our school nurse. To allow your child to receive medication during school hours please complete the Over-the-Counter Medication Release Form under Parent Resources on the STM website. Students who will need to take prescription medication during school hours must have the Medication Order Form completed by the prescribing physician and the medication must come in the original bottle or packaging from the pharmacy with a valid expiration date. All medication needed at school, prescription or non-prescription, must be delivered to school by a parent or guardian. Students may not have in their possession at any time any form of medication. Students found in violation of this will be subject to disciplinary action. Parents must pick up all medication on the last day of the school year, otherwise it will be discarded.

Immunizations

Louisiana Statute 17:170 makes it mandatory that all children be properly immunized in order to attend school. Every student is required to have an updated immunization record or statement of exemption from immunizations on file. An official statement of exemption can be obtained from

the school nurse.

Please note Louisiana law now requires students who are currently in the 11th grade, or who are 16 years of age and in any grade, to provide satisfactory evidence of current immunizations against meningococcal disease. The new law now requires the **second dose** of MCV to be administered to any students entering or currently in the 11th grade, or within 30 days of turning 16.

Medication

Students bringing prescription or non-prescription medication to school must bring the medication to the school nurse. Medication must be taken and consumed by the student in the nurse's office as per the terms of the prescription. Medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with the student's name, doctor, and dosage requirements. Parent's permission will be required before the student is permitted to consume any medication during school hours on the St. Thomas More Catholic High School campus.

Illness

A student who becomes ill during the school day must report to the school nurse's office. No student will be allowed to leave school under such illness without a parent retrieving them from school. **Students must sign the check-out statement before leaving.**

Students with a temperature of 100.4 or more will be sent home. Students with a temperature of 100.4 or more need to stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Safety Drills

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety factor. It is essential that everyone obeys promptly when the first signal is given. Drills are a time of **absolute silence**, even after the building has been cleared. Students are to be ready to follow orders given by their teachers or given over the public address system. Students should be familiar with prescribed routes for fire drills.

DRUG TESTING

Purpose

The drug testing program at STM is a powerful tool facilitating the partnership of school and parent to stand in the breach between drugs and the young people we care about so deeply. STM hopes that one of the outcomes of the drug testing policy is to foster a positive, ongoing discussion between parents and their children concerning drugs, alcohol, and the other temptations young people face.

The drug-testing program at STM is a service not only to the individual families, but it also serves the entire STM family. For the family, the test serves the parents by informing them of illegal drug use by their child. It also serves to facilitate intervention where substance abuse is detected. Though STM cannot offer substance abuse counseling on site, resources are made available to the parents to assist the family in dealing with substance abuse and its effects on the family. If a child tests positive, substance abuse rehabilitation/counseling is strongly recommended by STM.

After a child tests positive, the retest becomes a service to the STM community. The retest allows STM to take appropriate and definitive action in creating a safer environment with the goal of being a drug-free school. Through the drug testing program, STM can offer concrete evidence to our parents, the Church, and the civic community that a proactive program is in place, fighting against illegal drug use. We are in essence stating to our parents that we are doing everything in our power to offer a safe social, educational, and spiritual environment for our students.

The test screen will determine the presence of amphetamines, barbiturates benzoyllecgonine-cocaine metab, benzodiazepines, ethanol, methadone, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), propoxyphene, and marijuana (THC). These drugs were identified as “illegal drugs” in The President’s Executive Order 12564 and are the drugs mandated for testing by the Federal Government in both urine and/or hair tests.

Testing Procedure

Testing will be conducted by the drug testing company. Students will participate in a urine analysis and/or hair analysis to ascertain the presence of controlled substances.

The drug testing company has established and will follow testing protocols in each collection process in accordance with DATIA. (Drug Alcohol Testing Institute of America).

Notification of Results

1. The testing coordinator will receive, through an e-mail, student drug testing results from the drug testing company.
2. The testing coordinator will communicate to the Dean of Students when a positive drug test is received. The Dean of Students will then contact the parent and/or guardian of the student. The Dean of Students will request a meeting to discuss the situation. This meeting will include the parent and/or guardian, the student, and a grade level counselor if the parents would like a counselor’s presence. An explanation of the student’s drug test results will be given.
3. A school retest date will be established at least one hundred (100) calendar days from the first test date.

To help parents help their children:

- Every student at St. Thomas More Catholic High School will be required to submit to at least one random drug test during a school year at no additional cost.
- The student who tests positive shall be considered not in good standing with the student code of conduct, and placed on disciplinary probation for the remainder of their tenure at St. Thomas More Catholic High School.
- On a positive drug test, the student shall:
 1. Receive an out of school suspension for three days;
 2. Be required to perform 20 hours of community service dedicated to St. Thomas More Catholic High School or their church parish;
 3. Not be allowed to participate in his/her extra-curricular school activity for a period of one week (including all extra-curricular activities; practices, meetings, dances, pep rallies, Academic rallies, school plays and/or dance performances, speech debates, festivals, i.e. Hope Fest, Morestock, for athletes this includes athletic games, and Special Olympics);
 4. The student will be required to take a nine-panel witnessed collection and screen (urinalysis) every two weeks for 100 days. The cost of each screen will be paid for by the parent or guardian of the student. A parent or guardian must be present for each witnessed collection and drug screen.
 - a. If the child fails to report to the designated lab approved by St. Thomas More Catholic High School, within 24 hours of the assigned testing days, the Dean of Students will notify the parents and the student will be suspended until the witnessed collection and drug screen has been taken. The St. Thomas More Catholic High School Drug-Testing Coordinator will set the dates for these collections and drug screens.
 - b. St. Thomas More Catholic High School will be provided with a copy of the results sent to the Dean of Students.
 - c. During the 100 day testing window, if the student's confirmation levels of illegal substances fail to decrease, the student will be suspended pending a disciplinary hearing.
 5. The student shall be evaluated within ten working days by a LA State Board Certified substance abuse counselor and/or licensed addiction counselor and follow the recommendations of the counselor. Parents must submit a copy of the recommendation to the school and any progress report confirming that the student is adhering to the recommendations.
 - a. Failure to follow recommendation may result in removal from STM.
 6. The student who test positive and his/her parents/guardian must participate in two one-hour sessions of drug education. Confirmation of drug education must be submitted to the Dean of Students during the 100 day testing window.
- A student who tests positive may be randomly tested more frequently throughout their

- tenure at St. Thomas More Catholic High School.
- The cost of any further drug testing of a student who tests positive will be the responsibility of the parents/guardian of the student.
 - A student that tests positive a second time after completion of the above program will be in violation of his/her disciplinary probation and will appear before a disciplinary committee and face removal from St. Thomas More Catholic High School.

SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY

STM is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically and spiritually, consistent with Roman Catholic teachings and principles affirming that the body reveals each person as male or female and that the harmonious integration of a person's sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul by God and in the image and likeness of God. In fulfillment of these religious truths, our Roman Catholic educational environment shall reflect a relation to persons (including name and pronoun usage, uniforms, access to facilities and overnight accommodations, and eligibility for singlesex curricular and extracurricular activities) that is respectful of and consistent with each person's God-given sexual identity and biological sex at birth.

Recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God ensures that dignity is safeguarded and safe environments are fostered. When parents send their children to Roman Catholic schools and when persons choose careers in Roman Catholic education, they should expect an environment consistent with the truth that God-created sexual identity speaks to His vision for each person's relationship to Him, oneself and others. Behavior and expressions of a person's sexual identity within the school environment that are inconsistent with these principles and/or which cause disruption or confusion regarding Roman Catholic teachings on human sexuality are prohibited. The full cooperation with this policy of school officials, faculty, parents and students is required and a condition precedent to the continued enrollment of each student and the continued employment of each employee, and the enforcement of this policy by the school is deemed a spiritual mandate.

(For further reading, please see [*Male and Female He created Them: Toward a Path of Dialogue on the Question of Gender Theory in Education*](#), Congregation for Catholic Education, published on June 10, 2019)

STUDENT CONDUCT AND REGULATIONS

St. Thomas More Catholic High School administration believes every student has the right to learn in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment. To uphold this standard, no student may

interfere with a teacher's right to teach or another student's right to learn. Likewise, students must refrain from behavior that may cause harm to themselves or others.

General Expectations - Student conduct at STM is rooted in our Catholic values and commitment to excellence. Students are expected to:

- Act in a manner that reflects Christian values
- Support both their academic and personal growth
- Contribute to the good order and well-being of the school community
- Exhibit Christ-like behavior at all times
- Avoid actions that disrupt the learning environment, harm others, or undermine the values of the school

While STM respects the authority of parents in guiding their children's behavior, students' actions, whether on or off campus, can directly reflect upon the school. In such instances, STM reserves the right to intervene. The school administration will address these matters judiciously, firmly, and fairly, in alignment with school policies.

Off-Campus Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves off campus in a manner consistent with their membership in the STM community. This includes upholding the values, philosophy, policies, and goals outlined in the **Handbook for Students and Parents**.

Behavior that violates civil or criminal law, particularly acts involving **moral turpitude**, may be subject to disciplinary action by the school. Off-campus violations include, but are not limited to: public intoxication; use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia; threatening, harassing, or abusive behavior toward students, faculty, staff, or parents; or conduct that, in the professional judgment of the administration, brings discredit to STM or contradicts the moral and ethical teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Such offenses may result in disciplinary measures including, but not limited to, **suspension, mandated withdrawal, or expulsion**.

Books/delinquent accounts

Students are responsible for any of their books that are lost, damaged, or stolen. Students are responsible for their laptops and cafeteria accounts as well. Report cards will be held and online grade access suspended until responsibilities have been met.

Cafeteria

Students are expected to follow all school regulations during their lunch period to help make the cafeteria a pleasant place. The following rules must be observed:

1. Students may not cut in the service line.
2. Students are not to run or shout in the cafeteria.
3. When students are finished eating, they are to dispose of all litter and return their trays.
4. Fast food may not be brought into school after the start of the school day.

Cellphones and Wearable Technology

(smart watches, earbuds, etc...)

Cellphones and wearable technology are not permitted on the student's person during the school day, this includes bags. The school day is defined from 7:30 a.m. – 2:34 p.m. unless identified as a special schedule by the school administration. In the case of a special schedule a school day will be identified when the first bell sounds to begin the school day and will conclude when the dismissal bell sounds to end the instruction day. If an emergency arises a student should ask an administrator for assistance.

Earbuds may only be used in classes approved by the teacher as an educational tool and under the supervision of said teacher.

Use of cellphones and/or wearable technology is subject to disciplinary action including a disciplinary referral and possible Saturday detention, suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Damage to Property

A student is expected to use school buildings, furnishings and equipment only for the purpose intended. A student who by his/her action causes damage to school property, including tablet computers, is obliged to replace that property. Any act of vandalism against school property, the property of another school, or the property of any member of the faculty, staff or student body, either on or off campus may result in suspension, withdrawal or expulsion.

Deepfake Policy

The following is strictly prohibited and constitutes a serious breach of the school's student code of conduct for which violators will face severe disciplinary action including likely suspension, withdrawal or expulsion:

- The nonconsensual creation, possession and/or distribution of any private, intimate, sexually-rooted or sexually explicit images or depictions of another, including but not limited to those created by hand, photography, videography, computer app or AI-generated software.
- The distribution or sharing of any sexually-rooted or sexually explicit images or depictions of one's self, including but not limited to those created by hand, photography, videography, computer app or AI-generated software.
- The creation of a fake on-line account or misleading/manipulated media or information that may present another in a false light or that may have the effect of causing another to suffer discredit, disparagement, discrimination, injury to reputation, defamation or bullying.
- Any violation of federal, state or foreign law as it pertains to pornography, identity theft/misappropriation and/or sexual offenses involving minors, including but not limited to La. R.S. 14:80 (Felony Carnal Knowledge of a Juvenile) , 80.1 (Misdemeanor Carnal Knowledge of a Juvenile); La. R.S. 81 (Indecent Behavior with Juveniles), 81.1

(Pornography), 81.1 (Sexting), 81.2 (Molestation), 81.3 (Computer-aided Solicitation of a Minor), 81.4 (Prohibited Sexual Conduct Between Educator and Student), 81.5 (Unlawful Possession of Videotape of Protected Persons), La. R.S. 14:283 (Video Voyeurism), 283.1 (Voyeurism), 283.2 (Nonconsensual Disclosure of a Private Image), 283.3 (Abuse of Persons with Infirmities Through Electronic Means), 283.4 (Peeping Tom), 283.5 (Unlawful Communications), 283.6 (Sale of Minor Children).

A student who withdraws from St. Thomas More Catholic High School following violation of this policy shall not be eligible for re-enrollment.

The school administration reserves the right to involve the appropriate authorities as deemed warranted by the circumstances.

Dishonesty

Dishonesty including, but not limited to, **forging parents' signatures** and **willful lying**, makes a student subject to corrective action, including suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Dismissed from Class

If a student is dismissed from class, he/she must report to the office of the Dean of Students immediately.

Disrespect for Authority

Disrespectful behavior towards any faculty, administration, or staff member at St. Thomas More Catholic High School will not be tolerated.

Any faculty, administrator, or staff member of St. Thomas More Catholic High School has the authority to correct student misconduct at any time. Deliberate insubordination or insolence towards authority calls for disciplinary action by the Dean of Students and may result in suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Distribution of Printed and Digital Material

As the school is neither a public forum nor a public property, no person is allowed to distribute or post any type of materials on campus without the permission of the administration. Any type of communication (written, verbal, video, etc.) that violates any school policy or that implies harm or danger to STM, or those associated with STM, is a severe violation and will be dealt with as such.

Drugs /Alcohol / Tobacco

St. Thomas More Catholic High School is designated as a Drug-Free Zone. The sale, purchase, possession, or consumption of any of the following is strictly prohibited: illegal drugs, including anabolic steroids, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, synthetic substances, tobacco or nicotine products. This policy applies before, during, and after the academic day, on campus, and at any

school-related event or function, whether on or off school property.

Students are not permitted to possess tobacco or nicotine products in any form—on their person, in their belongings, or in their lockers. The use of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, or any nicotine-based products is strictly forbidden at all times on school grounds and in the immediate vicinity of the campus.

Any student who violates this policy, or who chooses to remain in the presence of someone violating it, will be subject to disciplinary action. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: suspension, mandated withdrawal, or expulsion.

Fighting

Fighting at St. Thomas More Catholic High School may result in suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion and/or notification of the appropriate law enforcement officials.

Food or Drink

Food and drinks are not allowed to be brought to school during school hours. Gum chewing is prohibited on campus during school days. Water is allowed to be consumed in classrooms with teacher permission.

Gambling

With the exception of school-authorized raffles, no form of gambling or games of chance are allowed on campus. Violations may result in suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Harassment

Each student of St. Thomas More Catholic High School has a right to his/her dignity and individuality. Thus, any person harassing or demeaning another student verbally, physically, or sexually will be subject to appropriate corrective action. Incidents of harassment must be reported immediately to the administration. Violations may result in suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion. The scope of this policy includes cyber-bullying.

Lockers

Locker space belongs to the school; it is not a private area for the student. **The administration reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time for any reason.** Only school related items are allowed in the school locker. Non-school related items are **subject to confiscation** at any time by the administration. Students may go to their lockers before school, between classes, at lunch, and after school. Students may not return to school at night after the building is closed to go to their lockers.

Students are responsible for the books and materials stored in their lockers. They are to keep their lockers clean and neat. Students are urged to keep their lockers **locked** at all times.

Parking

Parking is by permit only; permits are non-transferrable. Permits are purchased for \$80.00. After the semester break, they can be purchased for \$40.00. Students must have a Louisiana driver license and present it when purchasing a permit. Student vehicle information must be submitted online and permits are to visibly hang from rear view mirror at all time. Abuse or misuse of the on-campus parking privilege will result in the loss of the privilege for a time determined by the Dean of Students, or the vehicle may be towed away from the campus at the owner's expense. No student is allowed to be in the student parking lot during the school day without proper permission. There is no loitering in the student parking lot. Students are to park their cars and enter the building directly. A designated area is reserved for visitors, faculty, staff, handicapped, and fire lanes. Students are not to park in these sections. Student vehicles will be towed or ticketed at the student's expense if they park in these designated areas. Students may lose their parking privileges for repeated violations and/or dangerous driving. It is advised that students lock their vehicles daily. More information on purchasing parking permits can be found on the school website under Campus Life.

Married Students

Individuals who are married may not enroll in or attend Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lafayette. Students who have been covered under the provisions of unwed pregnancies, may, however, marry and continue as a student if they remain married and agree in writing to submit to and abide by all school rules and regulations.

Pregnancy

The following statement is the Diocesan policy approved by Bishop Flynn in 1989:

Catholic Church teachings do not condone unwed pregnancies; however, when an unwed pregnancy does occur among the faculty or student population, the principal is to counsel with those involved in a Christ-like manner. Jesus always showed love and concern for everyone, and never did He send anyone away from Him.

The young ladies who become involved in this situation, with the advice of their physicians, are to be allowed to make the decision of when to withdraw from on-campus instruction.

School-Sponsored Trips

On any school trip, students must go and return on the means of transportation provided by the school and must remain at the event unless explicit written permission to the contrary is obtained from the administration. If transportation is not provided by the school, the school's responsibility and liability begins and ends at the event. School dress is required on any trip unless otherwise specified, and all appropriate school regulations remain in effect.

Any student embarking on a school-sponsored trip must have the appropriate permission slip signed by parents.

Stealing

A student caught stealing property from the school or from any person on campus will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension, withdrawal or expulsion, and/or notification of the appropriate law enforcement officials.

Student Identification

A student must wear the official St. Thomas More Catholic High School ID card at all times while on campus. A student must surrender the ID on demand to any administrator, faculty, or staff member. ID cards are to ensure campus security, used to gain admittance to any school function, purchase lunch, print using the student copy machines and check out library books. A student who does not have his/her ID card will be sent to the Dean of Students immediately. Temporary IDs must be obtained at the administrative office prior to the 7:30 a.m. bell. A \$1.00 fine is the cost of a temporary ID. A replacement ID is \$20.00. A student who does not have his/her ID card will have detention issued as a consequence. The student ID card and violation card are the only items allowed in the ID pouch (no stickers, pictures, etc.). An STM lanyard will be issued to students to attach ID pouch. The lanyard should not be used to attach any other objects. Replacement pouches are \$1.00 and replacement lanyards are \$2.00. Payments will be made with cash or billed to FACTS.

Student Search

St. Thomas More Catholic High School recognizes its contractual relationships with students. Part of the contractual agreement contains the rights of the school to exercise reasonableness under all circumstances in the area of search and seizure.

Officials of St. Thomas More Catholic High School first make a determination of whether the search is justified at its inception. This means that officials of St. Thomas More Catholic High School have reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Random searches for “contraband” (drugs, or drug paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, nicotine products), or **ANY weapons** are considered reasonable and justified in order to maintain a safe and productive school environment. A search may take place at school or any school related function. The type of search conducted by school officials of St. Thomas More Catholic High School will be related to the objective of the search, and the search and seizure will not be excessively intrusive in light of the student’s age, sex, and nature of the infraction.

Threats of Violence

When informed of possible violence or even threats of violence, STM will take this information seriously and follow the procedures outlined by the Diocese of Lafayette when addressing the issue. STM will have a no-tolerance policy for dealing with and addressing not only real threats of violence but also those which may be considered frivolous. Even frivolous threats can disrupt the operation of the school. The appropriate penalties for violation of this policy are as follows:

1. The school administrator will contact the appropriate civil authorities immediately and follow their directives.
2. If the threat or danger involves a student or students, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
3. If the student is on campus, he or she will be detained according to the directives of the local law enforcement agency.
4. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools will be informed of the threat and the action being taken.
5. If the threat or danger comes from a non-student, appropriate action will be left in the hands of the civil authorities.

Trespassing

Students are not permitted on campus outside of school hours without supervision of faculty or staff. Violation of this policy may result in suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Violation Card

A student must have an official St. Thomas More Catholic High School violation card (VC) card on his/her person at all times while on campus. Upon request, a student must surrender the VC to any administrator, teacher, or staff member.

The administrator, teacher or staff member will sign and date the student's VC every time a student commits a minor violation. (i.e. arrives to school tardy (unexcused), in the hall without a pass, is caught chewing gum, cafeteria violation, uniform, etc.)

If the student does not/cannot present their VC to the administrator, teacher or staff member upon request a detention will be issued. A new card will be issued at the beginning of each semester.

Violation Card Consequences:

First, Second, and Third Violations: Administrator, teacher, or staff member will sign and date the student's card and immediately return the card to the student.

Fourth Violation: Will result in lunch detention

Fifth and Sixth Violations: Will result in afternoon detention.

Seventh Violation: Will result in a Saturday detention and possibly a parent meeting.

Visitors

A student may not invite or bring visitors to the campus without prior administrative approval. Students who have a desire to shadow a STM student must be scheduled through the admissions office. All visitors must adhere to the dress code as described by the school. All school visitors must report to the front office. All visitors must have a visitor's pass.

Additionally, STM students who are not in school on days when other schools are in session are strictly prohibited from visiting those campuses unless they have been explicitly authorized to do so by an STM administrator or official designee.

Weapons

A weapon is defined as any instrument that is used or may be used to cause grave bodily harm. No student is permitted to possess any type of weapon while on the school grounds or at any school-related function. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to confiscation of weapon and disciplinary action, including possible suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

STUDENT CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES

Behavioral Probation

A student may be placed on behavioral probation if, in the judgment of the STM administration, the student has experienced chronic behavioral problems and/or a serious behavioral problem. Behavioral probation places a student in jeopardy of being expelled from St. Thomas More Catholic High School. During probation time, no serious misconduct will be tolerated. At the end of the probationary period, a student may be removed from probation, may have the probationary period extended, or may be subject to suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

Referral

A referral is a written report of a behavioral sanction provided to the Dean of Students by the teacher. That administrator determines disciplinary action for a referral.

Detention

Detention is the least severe disciplinary action at St. Thomas More Catholic High School. It is conducted and moderated by the administration under the supervision of the Dean of Students. Failure to attend an assigned detention may result in suspension.

- Detentions will be held during lunch periods, on Wednesday afternoons, and Saturdays.
- The type of detention assigned will escalate on this scale for a student who has served multiple detentions.
- Excessive detentions may result in a parent meeting and student suspension.
- All detention notices must be returned with a parent signature.

Suspension

Suspension is the second most severe disciplinary action at St. Thomas More Catholic High School. A student may be suspended for serious misconduct or repeated occurrences of less serious misconduct. Suspension places a student in jeopardy of withdrawal or expulsion from St. Thomas More Catholic High School.

In-School Suspension: A student placed on in-school suspension will be placed in a designated detention area or may be assigned to a work detail for a specific class period or an entire school day. He/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in school activities during the suspension period. He/she will not be allowed to attend co-curricular

events the day of in-school suspension. He/she will be allowed to make up all work not to exceed **70** percent of the total credit earned.

Out-of-School/Out of Class Suspension: A student placed on out-of-school/out-of-class suspension will not be allowed to attend school or individual class for the length of the suspension. He/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in co-curricular events the day of out-of-school whole day suspension. He/she will be allowed to make up all work not to exceed **70** percent of the total credit earned.

Major Behavior Sanctions

Major Behavior Sanctions will be defined as those that deal with possible withdrawal or expulsion. St. Thomas More Catholic High School will have a Disciplinary Committee Review procedure for handling major behavior sanctions.

The Dean of Students or the student subject to the disciplinary action may request this review. The Dean of Students will inform the student that this option exists. The student may choose to waive this option.

If such a review becomes necessary, the Dean of Students will call a disciplinary committee hearing. The disciplinary committee will consist of the Dean of Students, the student's guidance counselor, at least one of the student's teachers, and two teachers or staff members who do not already know specifics of the situation.

- All school and diocesan policies will apply.
- Only the student and his/her parents may be present at the hearing.
- The student will be allowed to explain his/her behavior or part in the incident.
- After the facts of the case have been established at the hearing, the committee will forward a recommendation for disciplinary action to the principal.
- The principal will recommend disciplinary action to the Chancellor.

The student may appeal the decision of the principal **as outlined** by the diocesan appeals process.

Withdrawal

The parents must inform the school registrar of their intention to withdraw their child from STM. All tablets, books, fees, uniforms, and items belonging to STM must be accounted for before the transcript will be released.

The withdrawal procedure requires two days to gather the necessary grades, signatures, etc. The initiation of the withdrawal process would not terminate any disciplinary process that could result in expulsion.

Mandated withdrawal requires that a student withdraw immediately from STM. If a student has been asked to withdraw from St. Thomas More Catholic High School because of academic or behavioral problems, he/she will not be allowed to reapply for one calendar year from the date of

withdrawal. The initiation of the withdrawal process would not terminate any disciplinary process that could result in expulsion.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the official removal of a student from the rolls of St. Thomas More Catholic High School. A record of this act of expulsion remains a part of the student's official transcript. The expelled student is prohibited from **all** activities on the school campus. If a student has been expelled from St. Thomas More Catholic High School, he/she will not be allowed to reapply.

ANTI-BULLYING AND HAZING

Policy Statement

The intent of this policy is to support our Catholic schools' commitment to provide a safe learning environment for all students. As we are all created in God's image and likeness, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette affirms that all people have inherent dignity. We are called to reflect the values of Jesus in His regard and respect for all people as it is written "So always treat others as you would like them to treat you; that is the Law and the Prophets." (Mt. 7, 12). In this way, we build up the Body of Christ within our Catholic schools. Bullying and hazing creates an environment in which dignity and respect are compromised. Therefore, we attest, bullying and hazing have no place in our Catholic schools.

This policy shall apply to all students and shall be in effect while students are on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated/leased vehicles, while attending or engaged in school sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and/or the reputation/welfare of the school.

Prevention/Education

To enhance the education, formation, and safety of our students, schools should endeavor to actively promote positive student behavior while prohibiting inappropriate behavior such as bullying and hazing. Therefore, schools operating in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette are strongly encouraged to:

- Prohibit all forms of student bullying and hazing;
- Provide adequate supervision to minimize the risk of bullying and hazing;
- Provide continuing education/professional development on bully prevention for faculty and staff members;
- Develop school-wide bullying and hazing prevention programs to educate students;
- Incorporate bullying and hazing prevention lessons into the school's curriculum.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as a pattern of one or more of the following behaviors:

- Gestures, including but not limited to obscene gestures and making faces;
- Written, electronic, or verbal communications, including but not limited to calling names, threatening harm, taunting, malicious teasing, or spreading untrue rumors;
- Physical acts, including but not limited to hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping choking, damaging personal property, or unauthorized use of personal property; and
- Repeatedly and purposefully shunning or excluding from activities.

Behavior defined as bullying is exhibited toward a student, more than once, by another student or group of students and occurs, or is received by, a student while on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related function or activity, in any school bus or van, at any designated school bus stop, in any other school or private vehicle used to transport students to and from schools, or any school-sponsored activity or event.

Bullying must have the effect of physically harming a student, placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm, damaging a student's property, placing the student in reasonable fear of damage to the student's property, or must be sufficiently severe, persistent, and evasive enough to either create an intimidating or threatening educational environment, have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's performance in school, or have the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying and is defined as the transmission of any electronic textual, visual, written, or oral communication with the malicious and willful intent to emotionally harm, coerce, and/or intimidate. Electronic devices may include, but are not limited to:

- Computers
- Tablets
- Mobile phones
- Other interactive or digital technologies

Definition of Hazing

Hazing is the deliberate encouragement, direction and/or participation (active or passive) of any activity which subjects another student to actual or potential physical, psychological or emotional harm, or civil or criminal consequences for the purpose of initiation into, admission to, affiliation with, continued membership in or acceptance by existing members of any school organization, group, or extracurricular activity, whether occurring on or off campus. "Consent" of the victim shall not be recognized as a defense to the school's prohibition of hazing. Hazing may involve harassment, degradation, humiliation, intimidation and/or ridicule to an individual or group, willful destruction of public or private property, or criminal or other offensive acts against third parties.

Reporting

The principal/designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of the anti-bullying and hazing policy. All school employees and volunteers supervising school-sponsored functions should report alleged violations of the policy to the principal/designee.

Appeals

In the event of an alleged violation, misapplication or misrepresentation of an anti-bullying rule, regulation or policy where said grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the school administration, the “Appeals” policies of the Diocesan Policies for the Administration of Catholic Schools (L1 – L3) shall apply.

Investigation

Once an allegation is made, the principal/designee should promptly investigate the claim as soon as feasible under the circumstances. Any student accused of violating this policy shall be advised of the complaint and shall be given an opportunity to be heard. The extent of the investigation shall be at the discretion of the principal/designee as dictated by the facts and circumstances, and may include interviews and a review of any evidence presented and/or discovered.

Documentation

Documentation of the allegation, the results from the investigation, and the disposition is to be maintained in the school’s student records of both the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s).

Notification

Parents/guardians of the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) are to be notified by the principal/designee.

False Accusation

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or hazing is subject to disciplinary action as set forth in this policy.

Retaliation

Retaliation against any person who reports bullying or hazing in good faith is prohibited and is subject to disciplinary action as set forth in this policy.

Discipline

Disciplinary action arising out of a violation of this policy shall be at the discretion of the school administration. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, a warning, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Repeat violators are subject to additional disciplinary action. Violators may also be subject to criminal penalty under Louisiana law, including §14:40.7 (Cyberbullying), §14:40.3 (Cyberstalking), §14:40.2 (Stalking), §14:40.1 (Terrorizing), §14:40.8 (Criminal Hazing), §14:35 (Battery), §14:36 (Assault), § 14:40.6 (Unlawful Disruption of the

Operation of a School), and other criminal laws.

Anonymous Safety Reporting

The safety and well-being of all students are our highest priorities. If you see or hear something that concerns you—whether it involves threats, bullying, weapons, drugs, self-harm, or any situation that may endanger others—you are encouraged to report it.

Students may submit an anonymous safety report online at any time by visiting the [Anonymous Safety Reporting](#) form.

All reports are taken seriously and reviewed promptly by school administrators or appropriate personnel. Your identity will not be shared unless you choose to include it. Retaliation for submitting a report is strictly prohibited.

If there is an immediate threat or emergency, call 911 or notify a trusted adult right away.

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

The administration reserves the right to determine if the student meets the standards of the school regarding dress and grooming during the school day and at school events. In general, clothing and personal grooming should be such as to suggest the serious-minded Christian student. Students should wear the school uniform properly at all times.

Students who are not in compliance with the dress code will correct the violation at once. If the uniform violation cannot be corrected on-site, parents will be called to pick up the student and resolve the violation before the student returns to school.

- A detention will be issued if the violation cannot be corrected on-site.
- A violation will result if the violation can be corrected without calling his or her parents.

St. Thomas More Catholic High School's school-wide logo must appear on shirts, vests, sweaters, fleece jackets and girls' long pants.

School-wide Logo



Uniforms may be purchased at:

- School Time - 1875 W. Pinhook Road
- Uniformity - 2800 W. Pinhook, Suite 12
- Young Fashions School Uniforms - 2722 Kaliste Saloom Road
- Fashion World School Uniforms – 4313 Johnston Street

Boys’ and Girls’ Requirements

Jewelry – Excessive jewelry is not allowed. Boys may not wear earrings at any time to school or at school functions. Any accessories that become a distraction or deemed inappropriate will be addressed by administration.

Outerwear - Sweaters and sweatshirts are optional within the school plant. However, if students wear sweaters, sweatshirts, or jackets inside the school building, the sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets must meet the uniform regulations listed below. No hoodies or hats are to be worn inside the school building during school hours.

Sweaters – A navy blue pullover v-neck sweater, v-neck sweater vest, cardigan, or a navy full-zip fleece jacket must have the 2” school-wide logo on the left chest.

Sweatshirts - Only navy-blue crewneck, hoodless sweatshirts may be worn during school hours. These may only be purchased at the Cougar Closet. Clubs and teams must purchase their individual sweatshirts through Cougar Closet.

STM Letter Jacket – STM letterman outerwear may be worn at any time.

2025-2026 Uniform Requirements	
Boys	Girls
Pants – Heather Grey Elderware <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Flat Front Pants Style #1358● Pleated Pants Style #1258MN School Apparel – A+● Flat Front Pants Style #7863M● Pleated Pants Style #7088	Pants - Navy Classroom Pants <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Style #51072Z School Apparel – A+ Pants● Style #7896J● Style #7102J STM logo must be patched 1” from the bottom of the waistband and located on the right rear of pants between the center and side seams. The patch will be supplied and installed by the vendor.
Shirts -Navy or White Polo Short or long sleeve w/schoolwide logo in Jersey knit, pique or moisture-wicking	Shirts Navy or White Polo Short or long-sleeve w/schoolwide logo in Jersey knit, pique or moisture-wicking
Shorts - Heather grey walking shorts made of polyester. The STM logo is not required. Length - touching the top of the kneecap.	Shorts - St. Thomas More maroon, navy, and gray plaid cuffed uniform walking shorts. Length - touching the top of the kneecap.

<p>Shoes - Brown leather 2 or 3-eyelet lace-up Top-Siders. Students needing to wear classic, all-white lace-up shoes must receive approval from the Dean of Students. Permissions will be temporary unless otherwise noted in writing by the administrator. Shoes must be worn properly at all times.</p>	<p>Shoes - Navy and white classic leather saddle oxford shoe or Ked’s navy and white classic saddle oxford or brown leather 2 or 3 eyelet lace-up Top-Siders. Students needing to wear classic, all-white lace-up shoes must receive approval from the Dean of Students. Permissions will be temporary unless otherwise noted in writing by the administrator. Shoes must be worn properly at all times. Saddle Oxford spats are not allowed.</p>
<p>Socks – Ankle, crew socks, or knee-high socks must be worn at all times. Socks may be white, navy, black, grey, or STM socks purchased in the Cougar Closet. Socks must be visible. Tube, footies, or no-show socks are not permitted.</p>	<p>Socks – Ankle, crew socks, or knee-high socks must be worn at all times. Socks may be white, navy, black, grey, or STM socks purchased in the Cougar Closet. Socks must be visible. Tube, footies, or no-show socks are not permitted.</p>
<p>Belts - A belt is required on all pants that have belt loops. The belt must be a 1-1/4” solid brown or solid black, oil-tanned belt, with a 1-1/4” buckle. This belt is unisex.</p>	<p>Tights – Solid navy, white or grey tights may be worn in cold weather under shorts or skirts. Pattern, sweater or lace tights may not be worn.</p>
<p>Grooming for Boys - Hairstyles may not be considered extreme by the administration and must be clean, neat, and well-groomed at all times. Students must be clean-shaven at all times. Extreme/excessive styles of sideburns are prohibited and must not exceed the earlobes. Hair styles must be of moderate length in front, back, top, and sides. Hair must not extend 3” from the scalp and may not extend below the eyebrows. Hair should be above the ear and should not touch the shirt collar in the back. Gel substances in moderation are allowed but may not be used to disguise the hair length. Dreadlocks and Mohawk hairstyles are considered extreme and are not allowed. Shaving or carving into the natural hairline, dyed, bleached or tinted hair is not acceptable. All male hair color must be natural. Natural is defined as hair that has not been altered by chemical additives.</p>	<p>Grooming for Girls - Hair and styles may not be considered extreme by the administration and must be clean, neat, and well-groomed at all times. Layered hairstyles and highlights with appropriate colors are allowed. Weaves/extensions of appropriate length and color are allowed. Dreadlocks, feathers, shaving or carving into the natural hairline, and excessive dyed or bleached hair are considered extreme and not permitted. Makeup in moderation is allowed.</p>
<p>General Requirements for Boys: Shirts must be</p>	<p>General Requirements for Girls: The blouse must be</p>

tucked into the pants or shorts at all times. Chain wallets, earrings, and posts are not allowed. Hats and headbands are not permitted in the building. Body piercing of any type is unacceptable. Tattoos that are visible at any time are not allowed.	tucked into the skirt or shorts at all times. Hair accessories (bows, ribbons, etc.) must be <i>navy, maroon, or white</i> . Body piercing of any type is unacceptable. Tattoos that are visible at any time are not allowed.
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DRESS UNIFORM is required on Mass days and other designated days. Failure to adhere to Mass dress regulations will result in a detention and the student must contact the parent and comply with the policy.

Boys	Girls
<p>Boys' dress uniform requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heather grey uniform long slacks ● White oxford button-down uniform shirt (short or long-sleeve); the 1.5" school-wide logo on the left chest is required. ● Uniform tie (to be purchased at STM on Orientation Day) ● Uniform socks and shoes ● Uniform sweaters or jacket may be worn. <p>Note: No uniform shorts or sweatshirts are allowed on Mass Day.</p>	<p>Girls' dress uniform requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only the STM plaid uniform skirt may be worn on Mass Day ● White oxford button-down uniform shirt (short or long-sleeve); the 1.5" school-wide logo on the left chest is required. ● Uniform socks and shoes ● A uniform sweater or jacket may be worn <p>Note: No uniform shorts, pants or sweatshirts are allowed on Mass Day.</p>
<p>Spirit Dress Day Policy for boys and girls:</p> <p>Every Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The following guidelines govern spirit dress days: ● STM team or club t-shirt with a uniform bottom ● STM team or club jackets, sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn only on Friday ● All other uniform requirements apply 	<p>Free Dress Day Policy for boys and girls:</p> <p>The following guidelines govern free dress days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No spaghetti strap shirts, tube tops, crop tops, halter top, or tank tops ● No leggings, jeggings, or spandex of any kind ● No hats ● No shorts unless they are STM uniform shorts. P.E. and athletic shorts are not permitted. ● Jeans must be full-length and have no holes or tears in them ● Sweatpants/joggers are allowed; however, they cannot be tight-fitting. ● Skirts/dresses must touch the top of the kneecap. ● Linen pants are acceptable ● No pajamas of any kind ● No pillow sandals, slippers, or slides are allowed as footwear

HOMECOMING COURT

The following criteria will be used to determine eligibility for senior girls for Homecoming Court:

- Have been an STM student for the past 2 years
- Must be a female senior student
- Have a minimum GPA of 2.0 (final year GPA) as of the end of the student's Junior year
- No major infractions for previous school year and no major infractions and/or suspensions for current school year
- No excessive unexcused absences and tardiness up to this point in current school year
- Must be an active member in good standing in one or more club(s) for at least one year of one's high school tenure

COUGAR COURT

The following criteria will be used to nominate students for Cougar Court:

- Have a minimum GPA of 2.0 (final year GPA) as of the end of the student's previous school year. (excludes Freshmen)
- No major infractions for previous school year (excludes Freshmen) and no major infractions and/or suspensions for current school year
- No excessive unexcused absences and tardiness up to this point in current school year

DANCES AND EVENTS

All St. Thomas More Catholic High School students and their guests are expected to follow school policies during school sponsored dances. Dances are chaperoned by STM faculty, staff, and Lafayette Parish Sheriff's deputies. Violations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal.

- Dances are held from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- No entry after 8:30 p.m.
- Students may not leave and re-enter unless escorted by a chaperone.
- Guests must be registered in advance with the school office.
- Each guest must be at least a high school freshman and under 21 years old.
- Prom guests must be juniors or seniors (no freshmen or sophomores).
- STM students are responsible for their guest's behavior.
- All students and guests must follow STM behavior guidelines.
- Drug and alcohol policies are strictly enforced.

Anyone under the influence, in possession of, or smelling of alcohol or drugs will be denied entry and face disciplinary action. Parents will be notified immediately in such cases.

- The use of STM facilities for pre- or post-dance activities is not permitted.
- Students and guests may not leave during the dance.
- Hotel/motel use before or after dances is not allowed.

- Parents are urged to coordinate safe, alcohol-free gatherings before and after events.

DRESS CODE FOR ALL DANCES

Modesty is a top priority at St. Thomas More Catholic High School. If an administrator deems a student's attire to be inappropriate, the student will not be allowed to enter the event. These guidelines also apply to non-STM dates.

Female Dress Code

Dresses may not be cut below the bust-line in the front; this includes cut-outs below the bust line. No cleavage will be permitted. Front necklines of female students must not be lower than five inches from the base of the neck.

Back of dresses should not dip below the bra line; this includes cutouts below the bra line. No sheer netting or transparent material is allowed in areas that need covering. A thick material **MUST** be used as an underlay.

Skirt and dress length must be past the knee. Side, front, and back slits in a dress/skirt must be past the knee. Only tea-length dresses, floor-length dresses and pants will be allowed.

Male Dress Code:

For boys, appropriate dress for dances includes a suit or tuxedo, dress shirt, tie or bow tie, dress slacks, belt, dress shoes, and socks. In addition:

- No jeans, joggers, cargo pants, or athletic wear will be allowed.
- Shoes must be formal; no casual footwear is permitted.
- Hairstyles and facial hair must be neat and in accordance with school grooming standards.
- Inappropriate suit-wear that may be considered costume attire, such as novelty suits, brightly colored or patterned tuxedos, or themed outfits, will not be permitted.

While we will be reasonable in our interpretation, please be aware that students will not be allowed into dances or other events if they are not dressed appropriately. If a student is uncertain whether or not their attire is acceptable, they may submit a picture in of themselves in their planned attire to an administrator at least one week prior to the dance for approval.

DRESS CODE FOR OTHER STM EVENTS

Appropriate dress code is required for all school-sponsored events, on and off campus. Appropriateness will be determined by the STM staff member on duty.

- No spaghetti strap shirts, tube tops, crop tops, halter top, or tank tops
- Jeans must be full-length and no holes or tears in them
- Skirts/dresses must be below the knee.
- Dresses may not be cut below the bust-line in the front; this includes cut-outs below the bust line. No cleavage will be permitted. Front necklines of female students must not be lower than five inches from the base of the neck.
- Back of dresses should not dip below the bra line; this includes cutouts below the bra line.
- No sheer netting or transparent material is allowed in areas that need covering. A thick material **MUST** be used as an underlay.
- All outfits must touch the top of the knee or longer for any and all events.

STUDENT LIFE

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities are provided by STM to appeal to the interests and needs of the student body. Each student is encouraged to participate in these activities for his/her own enjoyment and development. These after-school activities are numerous and varied. Organizations and clubs include participation in academic activities and projects, fine arts areas, literary work, community service projects, and school spirit. The school encourages its students to participate in at least one co-curricular activity. To become a member of any organization, a student must contact the moderator of that group. For more information about student life at St. Thomas More Catholic High School, visit stmcougars.net.

ATHLETICS

Academic Eligibility

Working with each student's academic program, St. Thomas More Catholic High School's athletic department seeks to make the St. Thomas More Catholic High School student a well-rounded individual. To be eligible for participation in the school's athletic program, the student must adhere to the following:

1. To be eligible for the first semester, a student grades 10-12 must have passed six units **AND** have earned a 1.5 grade point average for the entire previous school year.
2. To be eligible for the second semester, a student must have passed six units during the first semester of the school year.

Athletic Eligibility

An incoming Freshman who lives in the STM/Comeaux school zone (Comeaux & STM share the same zone) is immediately eligible for Sub-Varsity & Varsity sports. An incoming freshman living outside the school zone is eligible for sub-varsity sports (Fr and/or JV) for one school year, then becomes eligible for Varsity sports the remaining three years at STM. An ineligible student/athlete is allowed to practice/train with the varsity team, just cannot dress out or participate in a Varsity contest.

An incoming freshman who attended an eighth-grade Catholic school in the Diocese of Lafayette for the entire eight grade year is ELIGIBLE for competition at all levels – Freshmen, JV and Varsity. There is certain criteria established by the LHSAA for an athlete who transfers from another school. Contact the Athletic Director for questions regarding eligibility.

Athletic Code of Conduct

STM is a member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association and is classified as a 4A school for athletic competition. The school follows the rules and regulations of the LHSAA. In addition, the school follows its own sportsmanship code that incorporates Catholic values into the athletic program. STM fans and students are urged to demonstrate Christian sportsmanship, patience, and fair play when officiating, coaching, participating, and scheduling may not appear to conform to an individual student, teacher, or parent preferences.

Athletic Lettering Policy

Students in good standing and who have met the individual sport requirements are eligible to receive a letter. The school does not purchase or issue letter jackets. Jackets are available for purchase locally. Students who lose their good standing may lose the letter awarded. The athletic department reserves the right to monitor what patches may be worn in addition to the school letter.

For more information regarding athletics at St. Thomas More Catholic High School, visit Athletic at stmcougars.net.

BELL SCHEDULE

	Regular	Mass	Pep Rally	12:30 Dismissal	Power Monday
Warning Bell	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	8:55
Homeroom	7:34 - 7:44				
1st Period	7:44 - 8:34	7:34 - 8:15	7:34 - 8:24	7:34 - 8:08	9:00 - 9:40
Mass		8:15 - 9:27			
2nd Period	8:39 - 9:29	9:32 - 10:13	8:29 - 9:16	8:13 - 8:47	9:45 - 10:25
3rd Period	9:34 - 10:24	10:18 - 10:59	9:21 - 10:08	8:52 - 9:26	10:30 - 11:10
4th Period	10:29 - 11:19	11:04 - 11:45	10:13 - 11:00	9:31 - 10:05	11:15 - 11:55
1st Lunch	11:19 - 11:49	11:45 - 12:15	11:00 - 11:30	10:05 - 10:35	11:55 - 12:25
1st Fifth Period	11:24 - 12:14	11:50 - 12:31	11:05 - 11:52	10:10 - 10:44	12:00 - 12:40
2nd Fifth Period	11:54 - 12:44	12:20 - 1:01	11:35 - 12:22	10:40 - 11:14	12:30 - 1:10
2nd Lunch	12:14 - 12:44	12:31 - 1:01	11:52 - 12:22	10:44 - 11:14	12:40 - 1:10
6th Period	12:49 - 1:39	1:06 - 1:47	12:27 - 1:14	11:19 - 11:53	1:15 - 1:52
7th Period	1:44 - 2:34	1:52 - 2:34	1:19 - 2:06	11:58 - 12:34	1:57 - 2:34
Pep Rally			2:06 - 2:34		