



# **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

## **2021-2022**



## St. Thomas More Parish School Family Handbook

*About the logo:* STM's logo was specifically designed for the celebration of the Silver Anniversary of St. Thomas More Parish School. The logo portrays the basic principles of Catholic education. The cross represents the central theme of Christianity, while the quill stands for scholarship. The unfinished circle emphasizes the never-ending quest for knowledge.

*About the Artist:* A native Houstonian, John C. Davis graduated from Texas Southern University with a degree in Art Education. Mr. Davis began his career as an art teacher in Galveston ISD and at the time he created the logo he was the supervisor of Medical Illustration at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Dental Branch.

Accredited with the Texas Catholic Conference Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, St. Thomas More Parish School fulfills state requirements and is published in the Texas School Directory for accredited schools. Member of the National Catholic Education Association and the Texas Association for Non-Public Schools.

*The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin in the administration of its admission, loan, athletic, or scholarship program.*

### ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL ABIDES BY THE FOLLOWING ACTS AND POLICIES:

St. Thomas More School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

St. Thomas More School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding access to student records.

**St. Thomas More School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.**

The school and/or the Principal retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

## **ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Alive with our Mission...We, the pastor, staff, and parents of St. Thomas More Parish School, are committed to developing the minds, hearts, and the souls of our students.

By planting faith-filled seeds of good habits, we open our students' minds to knowledge, their hearts to service, and their souls to the beauty of God's Creation.

### **ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The faculty, staff, and parents of St. Thomas More Parish School believe that through our combined efforts each child can be formed into a responsible individual with the ability to make right judgments based on Christian values. To this end, we strive to fulfill a shared goal—to build within each student a deep respect for God, self, and others. A safe, loving environment which encourages Christ-like love offers students the opportunity to practice kindness, offer moral support, and develop lasting friendships based upon God's Word. We believe that by providing a rigorous academic program within a learning environment which emphasizes the importance of self-confidence, self-discipline, respect, and responsibility, we will successfully guide our students to open their minds to knowledge, their hearts to service, and their souls to God's presence in creation.

### **ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision for the future of St. Thomas More Parish School is to continue to offer an exceptional Catholic education. Academic excellence, quality extra-curricular programs, and a strong Catholic spiritual program remain the focus for the future of the school.

Our vision for the future is to further integrate technology into our academic programs, by purchasing and maintaining state-of-the-art equipment and by incorporating the use of technology in core subjects. Our goal of keeping up with current trends in technology will further prepare our students to succeed academically after they leave St. Thomas More Parish School.

We seek to assure financial security for the school by significantly increasing our endowment fund. Our long-term goal is to grow our endowment fund to the point that the interest earned will allow us to maintain a tuition that is as affordable as possible and allow for a generous tuition assistance program.

Finally, we seek to maintain full enrollment in the school by continuing to provide an academically superior education in a nurturing, Catholic setting. We will further this goal by maintaining and enhancing our programs and facilities and by continuing sound financial practices and marketing.

ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL SONG



Raise your eyes and see St. Thomas More in victory.

In this family of families

We sing in unity.

With the voice of the tiger And the stripes of the  
martyr,

We march always onward,

Our hope is in the Lord.

Man for all seasons, pray for us.

We are the world's good servants But God's first.

Spring 2015  
Erin Novak  
STM Class of 2009

## MISSION STATEMENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF TEXAS

The ministry of Catholic Education in general is the fulfillment of the educational mission of the Catholic Church and has as its primary goal the continuous formation of the Christian person.

As a pastoral instrument of the Church, the strength of the Catholic School is its ability to respond to the needs of the whole person, the Church in a time of transition, and the world with a global perspective for a peaceful and sustainable future.

The Catholic School is a unique environment in which students can experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. Its focus is on the individual person's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development. In the Catholic School, students and teachers are drawn to proclaim the Gospel message, to unite in worship, to respond to the needs of the community through fellowship and social justice, and to serve all people through the sharing of their spiritual gifts and temporal goods.

Intellectually, students are challenged to work to the best of their abilities. In a world of diversity and absolutes, students need to be free to appreciate and understand the living organism called Earth, the peoples and cultures that inhabit it, and to develop global perspectives by which to form their lives and consciences. Students are provided opportunities to develop basic academic and physical skills, pursue knowledge, and critically study and analyze the world in which they live.

The effective Catholic school must call its students to the conviction that people are more important than material gain, that justice is more important than success, that love is more important than esteem, and that collaboration unites while competition divides. The truly successful Catholic School student is not necessarily one who is successful in every endeavor, but one who accepts Christian responsibility for fulfillment of personal potential and shares these gifts with others.

*Approved May 1990 by Catholic Bishops of the State of Texas.*

## ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON PHILOSOPHY OF CURRICULUM

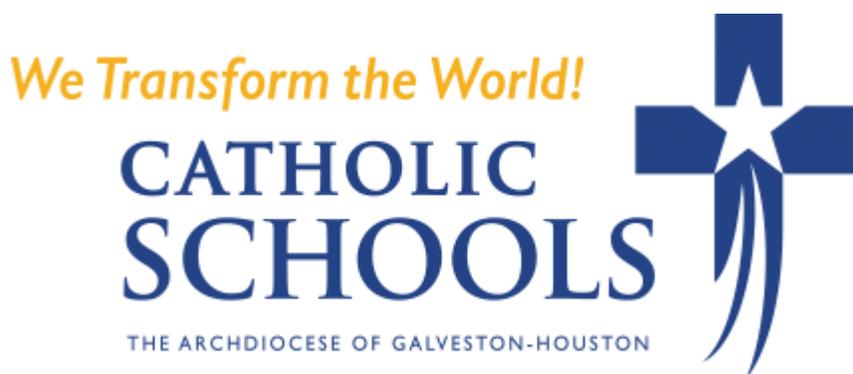
We believe that the curriculum of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston involves a total, Christ-centered environment. This environment enables the community of learners to live and model Christian Catholic values and ethics.

We believe the pivotal point of the curriculum for each student is interaction with teachers. The vehicle for this interaction is the content area, central to the educational process.

We believe in a learner-centered curriculum which recognizes and supports the uniqueness of the individual and the development of the whole person. Therefore, our curriculum is based on the firm belief that every child, regardless of his preferred learning style, can learn and reach beyond the level which he/she has already mastered.

We believe that rapid-societal changes challenge us to continually evaluate and update our curriculum utilizing current educational research and technological advances. We are therefore committed to the continuous professional growth of all responsible for delivering the educational process.

Finally, we believe that the outcome of all learning experiences in Catholic School is the formation of an active, life-time learner, a Christian eager to embrace his/her responsibility of *Message, Community and Service* to the world.



## GOALS FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS

- A. The Catholic school promotes a community of believers, learners, and active doers in the spirit of Jesus Christ as experienced in the Catholic Church and lived out as active citizens in today's society. The School fosters:
1. A clear understanding of its purpose and goals of education by staff, parents and students.
  2. A Catholic identity through the religious atmosphere which permeates the total instructional program.
  3. The Gospel values as modeled in the school procedures and in the actions of staff and students.
  4. A faith community expressed through religious experiences that include formal classes for teaching Catholic doctrine according to Vatican II and the religious spirit of the diocese, programs for personal spiritual formation, opportunities for worship, expression of beliefs through service to others, appropriate sacramental catechesis, the sponsoring of adult programs, and active participation of students in their parish community.
  5. Active interaction between school and parish families in various functions when school is attached to a parish.
  6. Active participation of laity on boards and in school organizations.
  7. The formation of behavioral patterns consonant with Christian social standards.
  8. A sensitivity and responsiveness to the demands of social and economic justice.
  9. Knowledge and skills that lead to the development of Christian attitudes toward life, human sexuality, and the family.
  10. The formations of students: to set goals and find ways to attain them, to see persons as equals and worthwhile individuals, to be self-disciplined and determined, to be responsible, responsive, compassionate and empathetic to the feelings and needs of others, to recognize and build on personal strengths and to respect the individual differences present in others.
- B. The Catholic school provides instructional leadership and maintains an effective and efficient program of studies. The administration and staff have the responsibility to:
1. Be visible and accessible to the school and civic community to insure interaction and involvement in the educational process.
  2. Communicate on a regular basis regarding school activities and general accomplishments.
  3. Provide systematic reporting to the parents regarding student progress.
  4. Communicate expectations for student academic performance to parents and students.
  5. Organize the school and business community to advise and support the school.
  6. Provide a safe and orderly environment with a clear discipline code.
  7. Inform its constituency of school policies and regulations with specific attention given to: rights and responsibilities of staff, students, and parents; grievance procedures; discipline code; school policies; grading system; and compliance with local, state, federal laws and regulations.
  8. Provide a realistic and functional guidance program through all grades.
  9. Provide school facilities which project a positive and future-oriented image and environment for teaching and learning.

10. Provide programs of instruction to meet students' diverse learning needs.
11. Develop excellence in education through compliance with the Texas Catholic Conference recognized by Texas Education Agency.

C. The purpose, design, and implementation of the curriculum represents the school's mission which is understood as well as shared by teachers, students, and parents. All students should:

1. Develop a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and a personal relationship with God as evidenced by attitude and practice.
2. Develop a proficiency in the fundamentals of language arts and mathematics in the lower grades, followed by studies in advanced mathematics, technology, science, social studies, fine arts, English, and foreign language.
3. Develop higher order thinking skills for research, analysis, evaluation, and problem solving.
4. Develop a proficiency in the use of basic communication skills and technology, as well as the ability to recognize propaganda in their lives.
5. Develop skills of problem solving for integrating information and a framework with which to sort out the diverse values present today.
6. Acquire knowledge and appreciation of the culture of the ethnic groups that make up our American heritage.
7. Develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity together with inter-relational skills needed with the local, national, and global community.
8. Acquire an understanding of the importance of physical and mental health in one's life by developing healthy attitudes regarding human sexuality, nutrition, and chemical substances, as well as the development of health maintenance skills.
9. Acquire knowledge of the democratic process and develop an understanding of the privileges of citizenship and learn to assume its responsibilities.
10. Develop an understanding of human geography and of planetary cultures as they exist today.
11. Be knowledgeable in government practices, political principles, and current activities suitable to the grade level.
12. Be aware of the principles of consumer economics, private enterprise, and other economic systems.

Approved May 1990 by Catholic Bishops of the State of Texas.

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# PARENT INFORMATION

## ADMISSIONS

St. Thomas More Parish School admits all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin in the administration of its admission, athletic, or scholarship programs. All students applying for admission to St. Thomas More Parish School must submit birth certificates, sacramental records, and health records. Students applying in grades one through eight must also provide copies of standardized test scores and a copy of their current and previous years school report card. In addition to supplying the above information, all incoming students are required to take an entrance test prior to admission. Priority acceptance is given to qualifying children of St. Thomas More parishioners.

## ADVANCEMENT PLAN

St. Thomas More Parish School relies on fundraising as part of our Advancement Plan. Listed below are our three major fundraisers. All Parents/Guardians are expected to support the following parent-driven fundraisers:

**Annual Fund** - As part of our long range planning, we are excited to add the STM Annual Fund to our advancement programs. This fund, Together We Give and Together We Grow, will directly benefit every child in the school and we are asking each parishioner to prayerfully consider a donation as we embark on this new initiative. While the Annual Fund will help with yearly operating costs, it is also designed with a longer view in mind. We are blessed to have you in our parish community, and your participation in the Annual Fund would be a welcomed demonstration of your support for St. Thomas More Parish School. Look for more information in September on how you can become involved with STM's Annual Fund.

**Parent Auction Gala** - This event is held annually in the Spring and is one of the two major STM fundraisers. The evening begins with bidding on auction items followed by a delicious catered dinner. Items for this gala are donated by businesses and generous STM families. STM students work year round to create special class items for auction too. Invitations to this event are mailed in December. All proceeds benefit STM School directly.

**Oktoberfest** - This is a day-long event held the third Sunday in October on STM parish and school grounds. There is something for everyone: international food, rides, games, and live entertainment. This is also an opportunity for STM families to meet and enjoy the day while raising funds for the school. There are many ways to become involved in this event. Look for information beginning in September.

## **AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS/CHEERLEADING**

Students in grades 6 through 8 may try out for after-school sport teams including coed soccer, girls basketball, girls volleyball, girls softball, boys basketball, boys baseball, girls softball, and coed track. Students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade may try out for the track team. Any student who participates in any STM school sponsored sport must have a physical examination by a licensed physician, licensed physician assistant, or registered nurse recognized as an Advanced Practice nurse by the Board of Nurse Examiners PRIOR to participation on the team. Physical examinations must be done AFTER June 1 to be eligible for the upcoming school year. Students will not be allowed to start team practices, or play in scheduled games, without completed Physical Examination and Medical History Form and Extracurricular Athletic Activity Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Form on file in the school office.

*See additional information on the academic requirements for participation in extracurricular activities in the EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES section of this handbook.*

## **ASBESTOS REPORT**

The Archdiocesan Risk Management Office requires that every school in the Archdiocese complete a 3 year asbestos review. The report confirms that STM School has no asbestos in any building that the students use including Rehkopf Center, the school building, the preschool building, the Scout House and the new gym. The complete asbestos plan is available for viewing in the school office.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In compliance with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and the State of Texas Family Code, the schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (and St. Thomas More Parish School) follow compulsory attendance laws.

The school year consists of **75,600 minutes** (the equivalent of 180 7-hour days). To be counted present for a full school day a student must be in school six hours. A half day credit will be given if the student is present for at least four hours. A student must be present for a minimum of 90% of the school year to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level. Therefore, seventeen absences or more will negate promotion. **PERFECT ATTENDANCE WILL BE FORFEITED IF THE STUDENT HAS SIX OR MORE TARDIES FOR THE YEAR.** In addition, because we value instructional time and its importance to student learning, our policy is that 6 tardies equal 1 absence.

Should a parent need to pick up a child for an appointment during the school day, the parent must come to the office or clinic and ask that the nurse or receptionist call for the child. **PARENTS MUST COME TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE IN ORDER FOR A CHILD TO BE RELEASED EARLY FOR AN APPOINTMENT.** If a child is returning to school after an appointment, the parent should accompany the child to the office for an admit slip. A note from the doctor's office must be presented upon return.

Daily school attendance is the only effective way to assure continued academic progress. School absence is categorized in the following manner:

A. FAMILY EMERGENCY such as death in the immediate family and serious or prolonged illness, is always handled on an individual basis. Special care and consideration for the student and his/her family would dictate the procedure that the school would follow in such circumstances.

B. ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS - if a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school by calling the clinic, 713-729-3434, or sending an e-mail to [attendance@stmorenews.com](mailto:attendance@stmorenews.com) before 9:00 a.m., to report the nature of the illness.

The school requires a doctor's verification for frequent or prolonged illnesses and injuries. Students will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up assigned work and tests. Normally an allowance of one school day for each day the student was absent will be given. Documentation is due within three days of return to school.

In grades K through 5, parents may request homework for a sick child by calling the school office, or e-mailing [attendance@stmorenews.com](mailto:attendance@stmorenews.com), before 10:00 a.m. Homeroom teachers will be notified if homework has been requested for a student. This homework should be picked up in the school office at the end of the school day. Students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, should call a friend in the same class grouping to obtain information concerning class notes and homework assignments.

C. ABSENCES FOR OTHER REASONS - when a student is absent from school for any reason other than illness or family emergency, the student will be required to make up the work that he/she missed at a reduced grade. The school staff is not obligated to make special arrangements when a parent opts to schedule activities that warrant student absence on compulsory attendance days as indicated on the annual calendar.

High School Visits – STM 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will have the opportunity to visit Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, Incarnate Word Academy, St. Agnes Academy, St. John XXIII, St. Pius High School, St. Thomas High, and Strake Jesuit Preparatory as a class. Should a student wish to shadow at a particular school, the absence will be counted.

With the exception of official high school visits, children who are absent for the length of the school day may not participate in any after school sport or other extracurricular activity.

D. TARDINESS - a student is tardy if he/she arrives after the designated time set by the school schedule (8:00 a.m.). A student who is late is required to report to the school office before being admitted to class. Everyone can oversleep or have an emergency occasionally. The faculty and staff feel strongly that every student should have a good start to his or her school day. Habitual tardiness seriously affects school performance. A tardy is classified as excused if the student is late due to unavoidable or emergency situations, such as illness, appointments, severe weather, accidents, etc.

The following consequences may be given for unexcused tardies:

- 3 unexcused tardies – 30 minute detention (3:30-4:00 p.m.)
- 6 unexcused tardies – 60 minute detention (3:30-4:30 p.m.)
- More than 9 unexcused tardies in any one quarter – suspended from all extra-curricular activities for a 2-week period

Excessive tardies of 18 days or more during the school year may affect student promotion and/or re-enrollment for the following year. Cases are reviewed on an individual basis.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CARE (ASC)**

The St. Thomas More Parish School After Care Program (ASC) provides a safe and caring environment after regular school hours, where respect for Christian values is evident and the well-being of the child is a priority.

The STM ASC program serves parents who require after school care for their children in a Christian environment. It is an extension of the school day and is governed by all procedures and guidelines in this document as well as the Family Handbook. It is NOT to be confused with a drop-in service. Texas Catholic Conference Education Department regulations state that only students enrolled in the school and registered in the ASC Program are permitted. The program operates throughout the school calendar year. The program will be closed on school holidays, early dismissal days, and staff development in-service days. Texas Catholic Conference Education Department guidelines prohibit the operation of the program on days other than school days.

In accordance with Archdiocesan policies, the ASC Program cannot accept students on a "drop-in" basis. Students must be pre-registered. St. Thomas More Parish School After School Care Program operates in accordance with the Archdiocesan Board of Education policy number 621 that reads: "A school within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston that will be known, as a Catholic School, shall follow the regulations as set forth by the Catholic School Office." Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston -Houston guarantee all students the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the general student body. Catholic Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, or national origin. St. Thomas More Parish School also adheres to the guidelines established by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and maintains full accreditation status. We currently hold membership in the National Catholic Education Association.

The STM ASC Program accepts children enrolled at St. Thomas More Parish School. After care dismisses at 6:00 p.m.

Our rules are simple. Besides following the School's Code of Conduct – Hands-Off Policy, we expect the students to:

1. Show respect for All (God, each other, parents, After School Staff).
2. Think and act safely at all times.
3. Take care of school property, equipment, and grounds.

We will live by the following rules: BE SAFE, BE KIND, and BE FAIR. In taking a positive approach to discipline and to the development of self-discipline and self-direction, “discipline” is placed in the category of a learning experience. St. Thomas More Parish School utilizes a program of formative discipline, based on the teachings of the Catholic Church. The intent of this program is to form responsible individuals with values rooted in Christian precepts. The program is corrective in nature rather than being merely punitive. We use the Love and Logic approach. More information on Love and Logic can be found on the STM website under the Parent Information Tab..

STM After Care payments are paid in monthly installments – due the first of each month, September 2021 through May 2022, The cost for this program is \$250 per student monthly. Payments are automatically deducted through Renweb/FACTS. Early Bird Before School care begins at 7:00am. The fee for both Before and After

If you have any questions concerning the STM ASC Program or the fees, please call the school office 713-729-3434. We will be open on Tuesday September 8, 2020.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Parents may help their child celebrate their birthday/un-birthday with their class by bringing small items to share like pencils, stickers, small gift bags, etc. STM is a Food Safe campus, which means that we do not allow food items in the classroom setting except as designated and distributed by the school administration. Please note that no cookies, candies, cakes, etc may be brought to share at any time on the school campus.

Middle School students distribute their items during the lunch period. If your child is a Middle School student (grades 6,7,8), please send enough for their entire grade.

If your child’s birthday/un-birthday falls on the last school day before Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Field Day, an 11:00 a.m. dismissal day, or the final day of school, please choose an alternate day for the celebration.

## BOOKS

All hardback student textbooks that go home must be covered. Textbooks and workbooks may be covered with clear contact paper. Students who lose, misplace or damage a textbook or workbook will be required to replace it at their own expense. If a student is in class without a book or workbook for one week, they will be required to purchase a new book. The replacement cost of a hardback book is between \$50.00 and \$70.00 depending on the subject area and a workbook is \$20.00. If a book is damaged, students will be charged a pro-rated amount to cover the cost of the damage. Books that are so damaged as to be deemed unusable will be assessed the full price of the book. All textbooks and workbooks must be returned to the teacher at the end of the school year or if the student withdraws from school.

## CAFETERIA

The lunch program will be served in the cafeteria (Prinster Hall). This year we have chosen The Simply Fresh Kitchen for our cafeteria needs. The Simply Fresh Kitchen is excited to partner with us to ensure our students get a well-balanced, nutritional meal, 5 days a week.

The School Menu will be provided online and available to order at <https://new.thesimplyfreshkitchen.com>. This easy-to-use system allows for ordering 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The process to sign up is simple and quick. New meal calendars are published online each month for standard or vegetarian meals.

A drink is included with each meal.

Please notify the school office if your child has food allergies to determine if The Simply Fresh Kitchen will be able to accommodate your child's needs. The Simply Fresh Kitchen is a Peanut-free facility. To learn more about The Simply Fresh Kitchen, please visit <https://new.thesimplyfreshkitchen.com>.

## FORGOTTEN LUNCH POLICY

In the event a student has not ordered lunch from The Simply Fresh Kitchen and forgets to bring one, The Simply Fresh Kitchen will provide a **limited** number of extra lunches each day. Parents will be charged for the cost of the lunch through FACTS. Please be conscientious about ordering or sending a lunch as we will only have a few extra lunches available.

## CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

All student phone calls during the school day (7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) must be made from a phone in the school office. Student use of cell phones/smart watches is limited to contacting parents after normal school hours. Student cell phones/smart watches are to be checked into their homeroom teacher during the school day. Any phone/watch found during or after school that has not been checked into their homeroom teacher will be confiscated and will only be returned to the parent/guardian. Subsequent offenses will necessitate a Parent/Teacher conference.

Possession of a cell phone/smart watch during school hours will result in immediate confiscation and a \$20 fine. Subsequent offenses will result in immediate confiscation, a \$50 fine and additional punitive action.

ALL COMPUTERS NOT ISSUED BY THE SCHOOL MUST BE REGISTERED WITH THE COMPUTER TEACHER.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

The Texas Family Law Code requires that any person who has cause to believe that child abuse has occurred must report it. A person who fails to report child abuse is subject to penalty by law. A person who reports child abuse based on a factual foundation is immune from either civil or criminal liability. School personnel must report to the principal:

1. any verbal disclosures from a student involving physical, sexual or emotional abuse
2. any possible situations in which personnel suspects that some form of abuse has taken place without disclosure from the child

The reportee, principal or her designee will report the incident to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services: Child Protective Services (CPS).

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between parents and teachers is essential to a strong educational program. There are various ways to communicate with the faculty of St. Thomas More School. Parents may:

- E-mail their child's teacher - addresses for Faculty and Staff may be found on the school website.
- Send written notes either through the school office or with the student. All written communications must be conveyed in a sealed envelope.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences - Two general conferences are scheduled throughout the year and noted on the school calendar. All parents are invited to attend these conferences and may see any teacher. Private conferences may be scheduled at other times by emailing a particular teacher or calling the school office or using any of the other means of communication to request a conference.

Staff members are prohibited from discussing a student with anyone other than the Parent or Legal Guardian unless an "Authorization to Discuss Form" is on file in the school office.

The Archdiocese has contracted with a company called Immediate Response Information System (IRIS) to deliver emergency information to the area Catholic schools. The individual schools may also use the program to disseminate information to their parents. Depending on the importance of the information, you will be contacted by home phone, e-mail or cell phone.

### **CONDUCT**

Please refer to the Formative Discipline Section for explanations.

### **CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

Parents are required to provide the school office with a copy of a current Court Order or Decree relating to the custody/conservatorship of any student. In the case of joint custody, the school will furnish progress reports and report cards to both parents. It is the parents' responsibility to request this information and to furnish the school with both mailing addresses.

## DRESS UNIFORMS

For complete uniform guidelines, please refer to the Uniform Regulations pages found in the Student Section of this handbook. ALL STUDENTS MUST OWN A COMPLETE DRESS UNIFORM WHICH MUST BE WORN TO MASS AND ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS. Please note that grandfathered items may not be worn on Mass days.

## **DROP OFF/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

### Morning Drop-Off:

❖ In order to ensure a safe and orderly process for dropping off your children in the morning, STM has a fully developed plan for morning drop-off. All students in grades K-8 must be dropped off utilizing the carpool line (excluding those students who walk to and from school).

❖ Parents/Guardians will enter the parking lot and line up in the carpool line, as done for afternoon pick-up. At 7:30 a.m., the teachers on morning carpool duty will open the doors of the new gym, and your children will be escorted into the gym. Do not let your children out of the car until a staff member has opened the gym doors. Students will proceed directly to their homerooms/first period class. The gym doors will remain open for drop-off until 7:55 a.m. After that time, parents are asked to park and walk their child/ren to the front office.

❖ This procedure has been instituted for several reasons, the primary one being that of student safety. We are able to ensure the supervision of your children at all times, and they will be able to wait for the school day to begin in a safe, temperature-controlled, environment. Additionally, parents have the convenience of dropping off their children as early as 7:30 a.m. Our morning care program opens at 7:00 a.m. and is available for parents who require an earlier drop-off time.

❖ Tardy Bell rings at 8:00 a.m. A student is tardy if he/she is not in homeroom when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings.

### Dismissal:

All families are required to complete the Dismissal form that was sent home in your child's beginning of year packet. Additional forms can be found on the school website under Parent Information/Downloadable Forms. This will notify the school office and homeroom teacher/school which dismissal procedure your family will follow. If this form is not on file, your child MUST utilize carpool dismissal.

Families may use the carpool line, or parents may walk up to the side walkway by the "old gym". Students who walk home, must have permission on file in the office and will dismiss from the front door of the school.

1. The Classroom/Hallway: Carpool students are dismissed by carpool number and exit the building through the front doors.

At the beginning of the school year, every family will be issued two laminated carpool signs listing the student's last name and family carpool number. This carpool sign must be clearly displayed on the passenger side of the windshield of any car going through STM's carpool line. If another STM family has permission to pick up your child, your child's last name and carpool number must be written on their laminated card (remember to use a whiteboard/washable marker that can be erased). If you have permanent carpool arrangements, please contact Kathy Prado in the school office and she will issue one number for all students/families in your carpool. No student will be allowed to get into a car in the carpool line without their name being displayed on that car's windshield. All students will be seated in the classroom/hallway until called for the carpool line.

If additional carpool signs are needed contact Kathy Prado in the school office. Parents/drivers, please do not park and attempt to walk up and retrieve students from the gym. Students will only be released to persons not in carpool line through the school office after the carpool dismissal is complete.

## 2. Walk-up (by Old Gym)

Parents who park in the neighborhood and walk up to meet their child/ren must present their "family carpool sign" to the dismissal teacher at the walkway by the "Old Gym" to pick-up their child/ren.

Family pets are not allowed on the school property. We have students who are allergic to pets or who may be fearful of animals.

*\*Be aware that City Ordinances state: Cars may not park within 20 feet of a crosswalk (\$40 fine) or 15 feet of a fire hydrant ( \$105 fine).*

## 3. Main Front Door

Neighborhood walkers will exit out the main front door. All walkers must live within a reasonable walking distance and have a signed permission to walk on file in the front office.

Please note all students not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be taken to the After Care Program and parents will be charged accordingly.

## **ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

All electronic equipment is subject to the STM Technology Acceptable Use Policy. iPads and iPods are not allowed. Faculty members will confiscate any iPad or iPod that is seen during the school day. St. Thomas More School cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen cell phones, smart watches, iPads, iPods, or other electronic devices brought to school.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

In case of inclement weather, the general practice is: STM will close when HISD schools in southwest Houston close and/or other Catholic Schools in our area close.

Please tune your radio/TV to the following stations for this announcement:

KNUZ 1230AM KPRC Channel 2

KHOU Channel 11

KTRK Channel 13

Parents are cautioned to exercise their judgment in situations which may only affect their local neighborhoods (such as flooding). In such instances, children can be released to parents early to insure their safe arrival home. Parents will also be informed through the IRIS system of STM closings.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION CLINIC EMERGENCY CARD**

At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Clinic Emergency Card to facilitate the school being able to locate parents in the case of a student illness or accident. The information on this card enables the school to contact your family physician if a parent or legal guardian cannot be reached in the event of an accident or emergency. This information is on FACTS and must be filed out every year.

It is an absolute necessity that the school be able to contact at least one parent at all times. All parents are required to update their family's emergency contact information at the beginning of each school year. In the event that any of the emergency information changes during the school year, please use the "Change of Emergency Information" form found in the Addenda section of this handbook to inform the school office.

The emergency numbers on this card will also be used by the Principal's designees to contact parents/legal guardians in the event an emergency/crisis situation arises concerning the school (i.e. flooding, fire, etc.).

If both parents are going to be out of town during the school year, please contact the school nurse with the names and phone numbers of the adults who will be responsible for your child/children in your absence. In the event of an emergency, valuable time can be lost trying to contact parents who are unavailable.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students are encouraged to be active participants in all extracurricular activities, which may include sports, academic rallies, speech tournaments, etc. To participate in an extracurricular activity a student must not have an F, or more than one grade below 77. A student must be successful in the management of his/her conduct in each subject area with no N's or U's at any time. Parents and students must sign the Standards of Extracurricular Activities form. Students participating in extracurricular activities, representing St. Thomas More Parish School, whether on campus or off campus are bound by the standards of behavior found in the "Formative Discipline" section of this handbook. The principal reserves the right to immediately and permanently remove a student from any extracurricular activity for a reason she deems serious.

Students who are absent for the length of the school day may not participate in any after school sport or other extracurricular activity.

Notification of sign-up for specific extracurricular activities will be given in the Principal's memo.

Siblings of students participating in extracurricular activities may not be present at practices; these students must be picked-up at dismissal time. **NO STUDENT MAY ATTEND SPORT GAMES OR ANY EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY WITHOUT PARENTAL ARRANGED SUPERVISION BY AN ADULT.**

### **FAX NUMBER**

The school FAX number is 713-721-5644.

### **FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITIES**

Field trips provide a valuable educational or cultural experience for students. These trips are privileges and any student can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements. Preparation for field trips requires the cooperation of parents, support of the faculty, and the personal responsibility of each student. Therefore, each student will maintain a satisfactory grade with all work completed in all subject areas. In addition, each student will exhibit appropriate conduct at all times during the school day. If a student receives an excessive number of discipline infractions, excessive N's in conduct, multiple detentions during the school year, and/or is severely delinquent in school work, the faculty may determine that the student will not attend a particular field trip. Students who have received a suspension within the semester of the scheduled trip will not attend the trip. A suspension in the fall semester MAY negate a field trip in the spring semester.

Field trips will be taken only after proper planning. Each trip is assessed for educational value and correlation with the curriculum for a particular grade level. All field trips must be approved by the Principal. The appropriate number of CMG CONNECT approved chaperones will accompany students on each field trip. Non-chaperone parents may not attend field trips.

The 5th grade field trip to Camp Kappe, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade overnight retreat, are required school activities. Extenuating circumstances for not attending these activities will be taken into consideration on an individual basis.

Permission slips are sent to parents in advance of each field trip/activity which takes students away from the school during the school day. Permission slips must be signed by parents in advance of the field trip. In extenuating circumstances, permission slips may either be scanned or faxed to the school office at 713-721-5644. **A phone call will not be accepted in lieu of signed permission slip.** Students will not be allowed to leave the school for a field trip/activity without a signed permission slip. No student may be picked up early from a field trip without prior arrangements being made with the school office.

### **FORGOTTEN ITEMS**

Students are encouraged to pack all necessary items for school the night before. Should a student forget their lunch, one will be provided through the cafeteria with the appropriate charge to parents. Late lunches will not be accepted in the office.

## FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Although the Archdiocese endeavors to establish a harmonious Christian atmosphere within its schools, it recognizes that misunderstandings or differences of opinion sometimes occur. Ideally, such matters can be resolved informally by a parent or legal guardian meeting with the immediate authoritative person to discuss the matter. If, however, the matter is not then settled to the parent or legal guardian's satisfaction, the parent or legal guardian may institute a formal grievance. A formal grievance must be in writing and must be received in five (5) working days following the occurrence of the event on which the grievance is based. Please contact the principal for a copy of the Diocese's current appeals process/grievance procedure for further details.

Exclusions:

- A parent who has withdrawn their student from the school may not avail themselves of this grievance process.
- During an investigation by local, state, or federal officials, a student will be placed on Student Extended Leave. These absences will be excused, and the student will have an opportunity to complete assignments without reduced credit during the leave. A parent/guardian may not avail themselves of the grievance process when a student is placed on Student Extended Leave.

Please note that the current policy supersedes and replaces all previous policies and statements regarding institution and processing of formal grievances within Archdiocesan schools. Contact the School's Office for forms and procedures.

## FUNDRAISERS

St. Thomas More Parish School relies on fundraising as part of its yearly budget. Listed below are a few of the fundraisers. All Parents/Guardians are expected to support the following parent-driven fundraisers:

**Annual Fund** - See Advancement Plan Section for more information.

**Oktoberfest** - This is a day-long event held the third Sunday in October on STM parish and school grounds. There is something for everyone: international food, exciting rides, games, and live entertainment. This is also an opportunity for STM families to meet and enjoy the day while raising funds for the school. There are many ways to become involved in this event. Look for information beginning in September.

**Steps 4 Students** - This Archdiocesan event is held annually on the third Saturday of February. This 5K Fun Run is a registered marathon and is held to build unity amongst all of our schools and raise awareness of the benefits of Catholic education.

**Parent Auction Gala** - This event is held annually in the Spring and is one of our major fundraisers. The evening begins with bidding on auction items followed by a delicious catered dinner. Items for this gala are donated by businesses and generous STM families. STM students work year round to create special class items for auction too. All proceeds benefit STM School directly.

**Birthday in Lights** - Recognize your child's birthday on STM's Outdoor Digital Display Sign. Your child's first name will be displayed on our digital sign all throughout the day. Students

will also receive a birthday treat and birthday card. Look for an order form in the Forms Section on the school website.

**Donations** – St. Thomas More School is often the recipient of “In Memoriam” donations. To facilitate these donations a link can be found on the school website:

<https://www.stthomasmore-school.org/giving>

## **GIFTS**

Students are discouraged from bringing gifts to other students at school. If a student does wish to give another student a gift for birthday, Christmas, or graduation, etc., he or she should present the gift outside of regular school hours (and preferably off school grounds.)

## **GRADING**

### *STUDENT ACADEMIC REPORTS:*

#### A) FACTS SIS (formerly Renweb)

FACTS SIS is an electronic grade tracking system implemented by St. Thomas More. Teachers will update grades weekly. Parents will be notified by e-mail of updates. Parents and students are encouraged to check Renweb frequently for missing work. Weekly assignments and other pertinent class information are also posted.

#### B) MID-QUARTER PROGRESS REPORTS

At mid-quarter a special report is sent to advise parents of their children's progress. This report is an indication of continued good work and improvement since the last grading periods, or an early alert so parents may counsel or provide closer supervision of their student's work. All students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade receive mid- quarter reports. The first progress report forms the framework for the October Parent-Teacher Conferences.

#### C) REPORT CARDS

Report cards are distributed quarterly. St. Thomas More School uses the approved Archdiocesan grading system/code. Students receiving a final average of D, 76 or below, in a subject area will be recommended for additional help in that subject area during the ensuing summer months. Students receiving an F, 69 or below, for a final average in two or more subjects will fail that academic year and not be promoted to the next grade level. Parents may request a copy of their child's records at any time.

### *PROMOTION AND RETENTION:*

A) Students must successfully complete all areas of study to be promoted to the next grade level.

B) If a child receives a grade of F, 69 or below, the child fails the subject. If two major subjects are failed, the child will fail that academic year and not be promoted to the next grade level. Parents will be informed of the likelihood of their child's academic failure and possible retention before the end of the school year.

**GRADING SYSTEM:**

**Grades PK-K**

A designated evaluation code is to be used in all subject areas for PK-K.

Evaluation Code:	<b>E</b>	Exceeds Expectations
	<b>S</b>	Satisfies Expectations
	<b>N</b>	Needs Improvement

**Grades 1 - 8**

A numerical grade is to be given for religion and all subjects considered major subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, social studies). A numerical value is posted on the Permanent Record Card. A letter grade will be given to middle school students for ancillary classes.

Evaluation Code:	<b>A</b>	93-100	<b>D</b>	70-76
	<b>B</b>	85-92	<b>F</b>	<70
	<b>C</b>	77-84		

A designated evaluation code is to be used in all ancillary subjects for grades 1-5. A letter value is posted on the Permanent Record Card.

Evaluation Code:	<b>E</b>	Exceeds Expectations	93-100
	<b>S</b>	Satisfies Expectations	77-92
	<b>N</b>	Needs Improvement	70-76
	<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory	< 70

**BEHAVIOR/STUDY TRAITS:**

All students will meet the behavioral expectations set forth in the "Student Guidelines" section of the handbook.

Parents will be notified of their child's behavior using the following codes:

- E - Exceeds Expectations
- S - Satisfies Expectations
- N - Needs improvement
- U - Unsatisfactory

**HEALTH INFORMATION**

**IMMUNIZATIONS** - Please refer to the Health Program Section in this Handbook.

**MEDICATIONS** - See the Health Program Section. Please note that a physician's signature and a parent's signature is required for school personnel to give ANY medication at school. Students may not keep any type of medication, prescription or non-prescription, on their person in backpacks, lunch boxes, purses or lockers.\*\* All medication must be brought to the clinic by parents/guardians.

\*\* In certain cases, it may be possible for a student with asthma or a severe, life- threatening allergy to carry and administer their own medication while at school. (See Procedure Regarding Medications at School.) IF permission is granted by the school, the student's self-administration will be monitored. If there is cause, the school nurse or principal can limit or revoke the self- administration of medication.

#### **STUDENT HEALTH HISTORY FORM**

Parent/Guardians are responsible for providing the school with current health information regarding allergies as well as current medications and health conditions. The Student Health History Form must be completed for every student in the family at the beginning of each school year. Information on this form enables the school nurse to assess the student's needs and to develop an appropriate individualized plan of care to maintain the student's optimal health and continued school attendance. Specific individualized plans may need to be developed for students with asthma, diabetes, food allergies, etc.

Parents must inform the school if their child has a serious or life-threatening health need. It is the parents responsibility to inform the school if any new health need arises (i.e. asthma, anorexia nervosa), or a change in a known health condition (i.e. medication change for ADHD) occurs during the school year.

#### **HOMEWORK**

Although class learning procedures constitute a large part of the school educational process, it is still generally true that a student's classwork is only as good as his or her home study and homework. Written homework is only a part of the home learning process. More important for success are reading of assigned and related materials and consistent review of previous material. Most students in grades 5-8 need a minimum of one hour of undistracted and undisturbed home study each school night to maintain a scholastic average that reflects true ability. Students on the primary level should read aloud to a parent at least twenty minutes each evening.

Minimum suggested time to be spend in study outside classroom time

Grades 1-2	10-20 minutes
Grades 3-4	30-40 minutes
Grades 5-6	50-60 minutes
Grades 7-8	70-80 minutes

The actual amount of time a student spends on homework may be affected by personal ability, grasp of information, pacing and diligence of the individual. The suggested times are for assignments specifically given as homework; additional time may be needed to finish work not completed in class or to begin work on a long term assignment.

In grades 1-7, students who turn in homework on the day it is due will receive full credit (100%). Homework turned in the next day will receive 80% credit, and 50% credit for the day

after. After that, a grade of zero will be entered. In 8th grade students who turn in homework on the day it is due will receive full credit. Homework turned in the next day will receive 50% credit. After that, a grade of zero will be entered.

### **HONOR ROLL**

Each quarter STM recognizes the academic excellence of our students by publishing an Honor Roll.

Students are awarded Honor Roll certificates for their grades in core classes in the following manner:

#### Academic Honor Rolls

Principal's Honor Roll:  $\geq 93$  and E's  
Faculty Honor Roll:  $\geq 85$  and E's and G 's

#### Conduct Honor Rolls

E's and no more than 2 S's

### **LIBRARY**

S.T.M. school library will adhere to the following procedures:

- Checking out books: A student may check out one book per week. Students may check out two books per week only with the approval of the library manager and/or teacher. Books may be borrowed individually at any time or during the respective class library periods.
- Returning books: Books can be returned directly to the library manager/volunteer, or placed on the book cart in front of the librarian's desk.
- Replacing lost books: If a book is reported lost, the fines on it will be stopped and the book card marked "reported lost." The student will be given ample time to find the book. If, at the end of the quarter, the book is still missing, the student is required to pay for it.
- Fines: A 10-cent fine per day, excluding weekends and holidays, is charged for each overdue book. Notice of overdue books and unpaid fines is given on a regular basis. Students will not be allowed to check out books until fines are paid.
- Volunteers: Those interested in working in our library program as volunteers, call the library manager at 713-729-3434.

The STM Library is often the recipient of "In Memoriam" donations to be used for the purchase of books.

### **LITURGICAL AND PARALITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**

The K-8<sup>th</sup> grade school community, including faculty and staff, will participate in liturgical celebrations every Tuesday, Holy Days of Obligation, and specific Church/school celebrations as noted on the school calendar. Since S.T.M. is a parish school, it is possible that a parish activity may disrupt the publicized Mass schedule. Students will be notified should the Mass day or time be changed. The calendar on the school website should be consulted weekly.

In an effort to help students become more aware of the Liturgical Calendar of the Church and important feasts, there will be occasional departures from the schedule. Mass days are noted on the school calendar beginning in August. It is the student's responsibility to be attentive to Mass days and come in dress uniform to school (no shorts or red shirts for students in K-8).

In addition to weekly attendance at Mass, students will participate in paraliturgical services. These prayerful times are intended to help students focus and understand the mystery of a particular liturgical season such as Advent or Lent.

### **LOCKERS**

All middle school students are assigned lockers during the first week of school. Students will be assigned a particular locker for which they are responsible.

Students may NOT change lockers. See the Assistant Principal if there is a problem.

Students are responsible at all times for the contents of their lockers. Items of value should not be left in lockers.

Students are responsible for the appearance of their lockers. No tape may be used to attach schedules, pictures, etc. to the inside of the lockers. Magnets (only) may be used. All decorative items must be removed from the outside by dismissal on Fridays.

Only school-issued combination locks may be used. Locks are generally unnecessary as students are expected to respect the property of others.

The Administration has a legal right to inspect lockers at any time or to revoke the privilege of using a locker if that privilege is abused. The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the student's locker is a safe place for his/her property. If a theft occurs, the student should notify the Assistant Principal promptly. Measures will be taken to correct the situation and to recover the property. However, the school does not assume responsibility for losses from lockers, and students will be accountable for books lost in this manner.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The student must mark his/her name on all articles of clothing, lunches, school supplies, etc. Each classroom will have a Lost and Found area. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO LOOK FOR HIS/HER LOST ARTICLES. AT THE END OF EACH MONTH, ITEMS NOT CLAIMED WILL BE DONATED TO THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY.**

### **PARENT COOPERATION**

Parental cooperation is key to the success of the students and of the school. Parents are expected to adhere to behaviors that are consistent with good moral principles and do not interfere with the operation of, or reflect adversely, on the school. Parental behavior detrimental to the school environment, student body, faculty, staff, students or physical plant will not be tolerated and may result in the expulsion of the student.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

See COMMUNICATION heading

### **PARTIES FOR TEACHERS OR STUDENTS**

Only parties approved by the administration may be given for students or teachers during the school day. To protect the feelings of children, invitations for parties may not be passed out at school unless ALL the children in the class are invited.

## **P.E. UNIFORMS**

Please refer to uniform regulations section.

## **PRINCIPAL'S MEMO**

This notice is issued on most Tuesdays. This memo will contain calendar revisions, reminders, requests, or up-to-date information which parents need to know. The Principal's Memo is e-mailed to parents.

## **PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE HOURS**

The Principal is available to conference with parents during regular school hours. Parents are asked to call the office to arrange an appointment.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

Students in all grades, PK3 through 8, are to be in their homerooms by 7:55 a.m. The first bell rings at 7:50 a.m. and the tardy bell at 8:00 a.m. Dismissal for grades PK3&4 is at 3:10 p.m., K through 8 is 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**PARENTS PLEASE NOTE:** The safety of your children is a primary concern of ours. Arrival and drop-off times will be **STRICTLY ENFORCED**. Students may not be on campus prior to 7:30 a.m. Students may not remain on campus after 3:45 p.m. unless they are involved in a supervised activity.

Students who are not picked up by 3:45 p.m will be sent to the ASC Program and parents will be charged a fee.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

St. Thomas More School is a co-tenant of all desks and lockers. The school reserves the right to search/inspect lockers, desks or any item brought on campus at any time.

## **SERVICE HOURS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS**

St. Thomas More community takes pride in who we are and what we stand for. In 2016, the requirement for Middle School students to perform Service Hours for our school and parish was enacted. Such opportunities enrich the students' lives and enhance our community. Giving of oneself is a great gift indeed. Throughout the inaugural year, we realized there were many areas of need. To gain hours, students may check with teachers to offer after school assistance. We also offer service opportunities at Saturday campus clean-up and Prayer Garden maintenance. Students should see their religion teacher or the Assistant Principal to sign up and volunteer.

Note that the Service Hour Log Sheets are on the STM website under the Student Life tab. Students **MUST** turn in any service hours immediately upon completion. Hours are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the service performed. A faculty member must sign off on the student's log sheet. With big events like Oktoberfest and Steps-for-Students, STM will have a sign-in sheet at the event.

Requirements:

8<sup>th</sup> grade – 8 hours – 5 hours must be completed on campus

7<sup>th</sup> grade - 7 hours - 5 hours must be completed on campus  
6<sup>th</sup> grade - 6 hours - 5 hours must be completed on campus

Serving Mass as an altar server or usher is not considered service hours. If you are not sure what constitutes service hours, please see your religion teacher, the Assistant Principal, or the Principal.

### **SKATEBOARDS/INLINE SKATES**

Archdiocesan and parish regulations prohibit skateboards, inline skates and heelys from being used on the parish/school grounds at any time.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS AND REFERRAL**

Consistent with the contents of the Church document, To Teach as Jesus Did, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, Persons with Disabilities, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the need of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special need students. However, St. Thomas More Parish School and the other Catholic schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of special needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability (for St. Thomas More, the local district is Houston ISD). This "Child Find" process must be conducted in consultation with private schools representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as "parentally placed private school children with disabilities," and the benefits available to them differ from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently called "Section 504), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, St. Thomas More and other Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs or lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students.

All psychological and educational evaluations/reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local public schools, persons, or agencies are forwarded to St. Thomas More Parish School, upon request. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the Principal, the Assistant Principal, the Counselor, and any other appropriate staff member working with the student. Parents may view their child's record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular student, the school will review the child's ability to meet the school's academic, behavioral, and physical

qualifications. Each Catholic school determines its ability to meet the need of the student applicant. Consideration will be given to the following:

- Student's demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- Record of student's ability to follow school rules and regulations; and
- Students' ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

#### ST. THOMAS MORE'S SERVICES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS

**New Students** – When the Admissions Director or the principal is notified that an incoming student may have special learning needs, the principal and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the principal and Intervention Specialist will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student's needs. If an admission is determined, the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic Accommodation Plan.

**Currently Enrolled Students** – If a teacher (or parent) is concerned about a child's academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he/she will discuss concerns with the RTI Team, and then meet with the parent/guardian as soon as possible. We will work as a team to do what is best for the child and will discuss:

- The student's current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the student and the results;
- Documentation of recent vision and hearing screenings;
- Updated general health history inventory; and
- Other information provided by the parents or teachers.

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist us in educating the student. The Principal and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referral to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent's choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The principal or Counselor will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept on file. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic Accommodation Plan.

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their children. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his/her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changes in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies may be referred for special assistance with the Counselor after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations. (Curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular objectives.) The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the Assistant Principal, Counselor, tutor, Principal, and classroom teacher after all available information has been reviewed.

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These accommodations should be provided on a weekly basis through the classroom teacher. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the Counselor. Any adjustment made on the standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on the appropriate form.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS TESTING**

In keeping with State and Federal Guidelines, local public school districts must notify all parents that their child may be eligible to be referred for special needs testing through their home school district. Please contact the school office for additional information regarding this program.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Students in Kindergarten - Eighth Grade take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills each year in the Spring semester. Testing results are used primarily to guide instruction and materials.

### **STUDENT RELEASE FROM SCHOOL**

No student will be released to a parent, legal guardian, or parent designee if the school staff or After School Care staff has cause to believe the person picking up the child is impaired (i.e. alcohol or drug consumption) and therefore unable to care for the child. The school staff will contact a family member or other person listed on the student's Emergency Card to pick up the student.

### **STUDENT TELEPHONE USE**

Students will be permitted to use the telephone in the clinic to notify parents that a scheduled game or activity has been canceled unexpectedly. STUDENTS MAY NOT USE THE PHONE FOR PERSONAL REASONS, SUCH AS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO ATTEND A HOME GAME OR TO GO TO A FRIEND'S HOUSE AFTER SCHOOL.

## **STUDENT TRANSFERS/WITHDRAWALS**

If it becomes necessary to transfer a student from St. Thomas More to another school, parents must give written notification to the Principal as soon as possible. Students will take with them a Transfer Notice signed by the Principal (completed only if the student is transferring during the school year), the student's latest report card, health record, and personal belongings. The receiving school will request and be sent a copy of the permanent record card which indicates the student's academic performance and lists the scores of standardized tests.

## **SUBSTITUTES**

The school is in constant need of substitute teachers. If you are interested in being a substitute teacher and have a college degree or some college work, the application can be downloaded from the Archdiocesan website [www.archgh.org](http://www.archgh.org) All substitute teachers must complete the Catholic Mutual Group Safe Environment (formerly Virtus) training. Individuals may register online at <https://galvestonhouston.cmgconnect.org/>

## **TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY**

St. Thomas More School's Telecommunication Policy is found at the end of the Student Information Section. The Parental Consent Form and Student Form is to be signed and returned to the school office for NEW STUDENTS ONLY. Previously enrolled students have a signed form on file in the school office.

## **TUITION**

All tuition payments are made through Facts Tuition Management Program. The FACTS program works in conjunction with the financial/accounting systems required by the Archdiocese. St. Thomas More School reserves the right to hold the Honor Rolls, report cards and/or transcripts of any student whose family has not met their financial obligation to the school. Extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the principal and will be handled on an individual basis.

## **SAINT OF THE MONTH AND VIRTUES THEY DEMONSTRATE**

In an effort to further promote a close relationship with Jesus by imitating his life, St. Thomas More Parish School will incorporate a Saint of the Month program. This program will provide students with a diverse collection of saintly examples as well as the virtues they demonstrated during their earthly existence. The saints of the 2021-2022 school year are:

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>SAINT</b>	<b>PATRONAGE</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>VIRTUE GUIDANCE LESSON</b>
August	St Edith Stein  Feast Day 8/9	Europeans, Students, Professors, Philosophers, against the death of parents, for conversion to the fullness of the faith, for courage in living out the faith	1891-1942, German, Edith Stein was a German Roman Catholic philosopher and nun. Born into a devout German Jewish family, Edith Stein has baptized a Roman Catholic on January 1, 1922. Killed in the gas chambers at Auschwitz for her faith.	Courage to do the right thing and live your faith no matter what
September	St. Jerome  Feast day 9/30	Archeologists, Archivists, Bible Scholars, Librarians, Libraries, School Children, Students	347-420 AD, Italy Doctor of the Church is best known for his translation of the bible into Latin and his commentaries on the Gospel of the Hebrews. His list of writings is extensive.	Taking responsibility for one's actions/ admitting mistakes
October	St John Paul II  Feast Day 10/22	Archdiocese of Krakow, World Meeting of Families, World Youth Day, Young Catholics, Families, Swidnica, Polish-Ukrainian Reconciliation, Labor	1920-2005, Poland, Saint John Paul II, known as John Paul the Great, was born Karol Wojtyla in Poland Yet before his 21st birthday, his whole family had died. He studied for the priesthood in secret during the Nazis and then Communism control of Poland. He was secretly ordained in 1946. He became the first non-Italian Pope of the Catholic Church. He traveled to over 100 countries, was a prolific writer, and was loved by youth worldwide. He survived an assassination attempt in 1981 and even forgave the assassin. He is the second longest reigning Pope.	Humility
November	St. Catherine of Alexandria  Feast Day 11/25	Unmarried girls, Craftsmen who work with a wheel, Philosophers, Students	282-305AD, Africa, Saint Catherine of Alexandria also known as St. Catherine of the Wheel, was both a princess and a noted scholar, who became a Christian at 14. She converted hundreds including the Emperor Maxentius's wife. He was so incensed at her success that he ordered her tortured and executed by the "breaking" wheel. When she touched it, the wheel shattered. Catherine was then beheaded. St. Joan of Arc identified Catherine as one of the saints who advised her in her vision.	Piety/ Reverence

December	St Francis Xavier Cabrini  Feast Day 12/22	Immigrants	1850-1917 Italy, America Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, M.S.C., also called Mother Cabrini, was an Italian Religious Sister, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic religious institute which was a major support to the Italian immigrants to the United States. She was the first citizen of the United States to be canonized by the Catholic Church	Charity
January	St. Ita of Killeedy  Feast Day 1/15	Roman Catholic Diocese of Limerick, Ireland. Healing, Vocations	480-570, Ireland Ita (Birth name Deirdre) was a chieftain's daughter in 6th century Ireland, Devoted herself to the education of young boys. Known as the Foster Mother of Saints. She taught St Brendan the Navigator. Many extravagant miracles are attributed to her She dedicated herself to prayer, fasting, simplicity and cultivating a gift for spiritual discernment.She founded a convent in a district where there was none,	Prudence
February	St. Josephine Bakhita  Feast Day 2/9	Sudan, Human Cruelty and slavery survivors and victims, Those that work to end slavery	1869-1947 Africa, Saint Josephine grew up in a happy and prosperous family in Darfur, Sudan. At 9, she was kidnapped and bought and sold numerous times into slavery.. In 1883, Josephine was sold to the Italian Vice Consul and brought to Italy,.Through the guidance of the Canossian Sisters of Venice, she learned about God and entered the Church.. In 1896, She became a sister of the Canossian Daughters of Charity, assisting her community and teaching others about God. She forgave and even thanked her kidnappers because it was through them she came to know God. The people of Sochi regarded her as their protector during WWII.	Forgiveness
March	St. Oscar Romero  Feast Day 3/24	El Salvador, the Catholic Diocese of San Salvador, Caritas International., Social justice	1917-1980 El Salvador, Saint Oscar Romero, beatified in 2015 and declared a martyr by Pope Francis, was assassinated while saying Mass. He spoke out against human rights violations, El Salvador's civil war victims and in solidarity with the poor. The United Nations honors him on March 25th, the International Day for the Rights to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims.	Fairness and justice
April	St. Isadore of Seville	Internet	560-636 AD, Spain, St. Isador of Seville , Born into a family of Saints, three of his siblings are also saints. He was a believer in strong education as a child and adult.	Fortitude

	Feast Day 4/4		Isidore realized that if he kept working at his studies, his efforts would eventually pay off in great learning. Doctor of the Church Considered to be the most learned man of his age.	
May/June	St Anthony of Padua  Feast Day 6/13	Lost Items,American Indians, animals,, Brazil	1159-1231 Portugal,St. Anthony of Padua is one of the Catholic Church's most popular saints. He was a powerful Franciscan preacher and teacher. He's typically portrayed holding the child Jesus, a lily, a book, or a combination of all three. Many Miracles associated with his life.	Faith

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

All visitors must report to the office before entering the classroom area during school hours. Visitors must sign-in and receive a special Visitor's badge. This badge is a sign to teachers and students that the wearer is one who has permission to be in the school. Permission must be secured from the Principal or her representative in the office before a visitor is allowed to speak to a student or teacher.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are invited to volunteer for a variety of support activities within the school community. Should written communication of any type be necessary in a volunteer position, this communication must be approved by the Principal, prior to its distribution. All volunteers are required to complete the CMG Safe Environment training.

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

Any written communication sent to parents as part of "school business" must be approved by the principal. This may include, but is not limited to: flyers for bulletins, communications of volunteers, sports schedules and information, extracurricular activities, etc.

## ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Texas Catholic Conference Department of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Department of Health Services and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston help govern our school health policies and program. The laws and policies developed by these agencies provide for the effective prevention and control of communicable diseases, the provision of health education in such areas as drug abuse prevention, child abuse prevention and specific health screenings.

The Catholic Schools Office provides assistance in planning and implementing the total health programs for the school. Their office provides information and guidelines through employee in-services and disseminates pertinent local and state health service information and requirements to the school.

At St. Thomas More School we believe that good health is essential for optimum growth, development and academic achievement. Health education is integrated into the student's academic curriculum in the classroom and on an individual basis in the clinic as the student's need is identified. Teachers, school nurse, appropriate health professionals and community resources are used to provide health education to students. The goal is for students to develop positive, responsible health behaviors, which will optimize their growth and development. Please help your child get off to a good start every day by providing them with breakfast before school and supplying them with lunch or lunch money every day.

A professional, registered nurse oversees our health program and staffs the clinic daily. Please feel free to contact the school nurse by telephone, email or in writing as the need arises during the school year. In the nurse's absence, school personnel (non-licensed persons) or parent volunteers designated by the principal will care for students, give required medications and contact parents/guardians in case of illness or injury.

To effectively maintain our school health program, the following information and parent/guardian guidelines have been developed.

### IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

1. All students MUST be in compliance with all required immunizations as designated by the Texas Department of State Health Services in the Texas Administrative Code. Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Students can be found at: [www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school)
2. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston schools will not accept "Reason Conscience" Immunization Exemption Affidavits from the Texas Department of State Health Services
3. The ONLY immunization exemption accepted by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston schools is a physician documented MEDICAL EXEMPTION. A medical exemption requires a written letter signed by a Texas licensed

physician. The physician's letter must clearly state why the vaccine(s) are not medically recommended for the health of this child and must include the period of time for this exemption.

4. The Archdiocese of Galveston Houston requires that all students MUST be screened for tuberculosis. New students will be screened using the "Student Tuberculosis Screening Questionnaire" and will be referred for further medical evaluation as needed. Students already enrolled in the school will have a previously documented TB screening tool (a TB skin test, a chest x-ray or a completed Student Tuberculosis Screening Questionnaire) on file in their health record.

5. A student registering in the school for the first time MUST submit an immunization record from a physician or public health clinic verifying that all immunizations required by the Texas Department of State Health Services have been received. It must be stamped with the clinic or physician's name or signed by the physician. A copy of the immunization record will be filed in the student's health record in the clinic. Students who do not meet the immunization requirements will not be allowed to start school until the required immunizations have been obtained.

6. Parents/guardians must provide updated immunization records to the school clinic as immunizations are obtained during school enrollment.

7. In the event state immunization laws require additional immunizations during the student's enrollment, parent/guardians will be notified in writing of the needed immunizations. Students who do not meet the immunization requirements in the specific time frame will be EXCLUDED from school attendance until the required immunizations have been obtained and the school receives proof of immunization(s). Students absent for this reason will be unexcused and will not be allowed to make up missed schoolwork.

#### EMERGENCY/HEALTH INFORMATION

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are required to fill out a Student Emergency Information Card and Health History Form for each student. Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the school and keeping all information on these forms up to date during the school year. (Please refer to the Parent Information Section for additional information). Pertinent student medical information will be shared with school staff to facilitate optimum health care for students and school.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

1. The school follows the written Texas Department of State Health Services Guidelines for A Communicable Diseases in Schools and Child- Care Centers@ to help control the spread of communicable diseases between students and school staff.

all students MUST remain at home to prevent the spread of infection to other students and school staff and to allow their bodies to adequately recover from the stress of acute illness. Students with fever (over 100F), nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, eye drainage, skin rashes, sore throats, bad cold with nasal drainage and frequent coughing must remain at home. Students MUST be fever free without the use of temperature reducing medications (i.e Tylenol [acetaminophen], Motrin [Ibuprofen] for 24 hrs. before returning to school. Students sent home from school with fever or vomiting will not be permitted to return to school the NEXT day.

2. Parents MUST report communicable diseases such as swine flu, chicken pox, measles, meningitis, etc. to the school nurse/office as soon as possible. The school will contact the appropriate local/state health departments as specified in the Texas Department of State Health Services Reportable Communicable Disease Chart. If it is determined that a student has a communicable disease, the parents/guardians of other At risk students@ in the school will be notified by the school nurse/school office if deemed medically appropriate.

## MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT ILLNESS OR INJURIES AT SCHOOL

If a student becomes ill or injured while at school or during school sponsored activities, the student is expected (if able) to notify the supervising teacher.

During school hours, the teacher will send the student to the clinic or have the nurse come to the student if the student's condition warrants this action. If away from school, the supervising teacher/staff member/coach will contact the student's parents/guardians, the school nurse/office, and/or emergency medical services (911) as necessary.

Basic first aid care (i.e. bandages, ice packs) will used to treat minor injuries.

In the event of an acute, serious illness or injury, assistance from the Emergency Medical Service of the Houston Fire Department (911) will be requested. The school nurse or principal designee will contact Parents/guardians of ill or injured students as soon as possible using information on the Clinic Emergency Card.

Ill or injured students may not remain at school. Due to the limited clinic space, parents/guardians are expected to pick up the student within 45 minutes of being contacted. Parents/guardians should make contingent plans with family/friends in the event they are unable to pick up the student.

In the event a parent/guardian is unable to pick up the student; the parent/guardian must call the nurse or school office with the name of the person who will be picking up the student from school. Parent/guardian designated persons may be asked to present picture identification when picking up the student and will be asked to sign the student out on the clinic sign out sheet.

School personnel will provide basic supportive care until the parent/guardian, parent designee or emergency medical personnel arrive.

In the event a parent/guardian or parent designee cannot be contacted or cannot arrive at school prior to the student's transportation via ambulance, a principal

designee will accompany the student to the hospital. This action does not relieve the parent's/guardian's responsibility to the student, but is done to help reduce the student's anxiety.

Student Accident Insurance is provided through the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston for students who are injured at school during the regular school day, at Extended Day, or during a school-sponsored event off campus and require medical care. This policy is a supplemental policy for students covered by family insurance. If the student is uninsured, the policy serves as primary insurance with specified limits. Parents/guardians will be given the Notification of Injury Form@ after Part I has been completed by school personnel. Parents are responsible for completing Part II and filing the report with the insurance company within the specified time frame to be eligible for payment benefits. A copy of the Student Accident Insurance Brochure is available from the school nurse and on the school website.

### HEALTH SCREENING

Health screenings are conducted in accordance with the Texas Department of State Health Services requirements:

Vision screening: Grades PK 4, K, 1,3,5,7 and any new student. Hearing screening: Grades PK 4, K,1,3, 5 7 and any new student. Scoliosis screening: Grade 8 (boys) and grades 5-7 (girls)

Texas Risk Assessment for Type 2 Diabetes (AN screening): Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, and any new student

Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of potential problems detected at the time of screening.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for following through on the screening referrals and returning the completed medical referral evaluation form(s) to the clinic following the student's appointment.**

### MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

St. Thomas More School Administration acknowledges that some students may have health conditions that require medication administration (i.e. ADHD, asthma, etc.) or monitoring of specific health needs (i.e. blood glucose monitoring for diabetes, etc) to help ensure daily school attendance and optimum health. Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston adhere to the Texas Education Code on the administration of medications by school personnel. School personnel may dispense a medication to a student only if the following requirements are met by the parent/guardian requesting the medication administration.

1. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule the administration of student medications so that medication administration at school is kept to a minimum. Physicians may be able to prescribe medication three times a day so that it can be given before/after school and at bedtime.
2. Medication is considered to be all substances that can be bought with a written physician order or any item that can be bought over the counter without a physician's orders. This includes topical ointments and external preparations, cough syrup, sore throat lozenges, inhalers and commonly used drugs such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) Advil or Motrin (ibuprofen), etc.

3. A physician, dentist, podiatrist, certified nurse practitioner and physician assistants licensed in the State of Texas may prescribe medications for students.
4. Prescription or over-the-counter medication may be administered to students only upon written request by parent/guardian and physician. The request MUST state the student's name, name of medication, prescribed dosage, route, time/s of administration, beginning and ending dates the medication is to be given, liability release, signature of the parent/guardian and prescribing physician/dentist.  
\*\*PLEASE NOTE: Any medication which was to be administered at home but was forgotten and not ordered to be given at school (i.e. Adderall @ 7:00 am) CANNOT be given by school personnel.
5. According to the Archdiocesan policy the following medications will not be given by any school personnel: Narcotic analgesics, Sedatives, Experimental drugs or experimental dosages, Herbal preparations, dietary supplements or any other medications not approved by the FDA (this includes vitamins)..
6. Nebulizer treatments (used to treat respiratory conditions) can only be given by a licensed nurse (RN or LVN). Non-licensed principal designees may not administer nebulizer treatment. Parents may come to the school to give treatments.
7. Any special treatment or monitoring request must be ordered and signed by the physician and parent. Required information is the same as for medications, but MUST also include details how to perform the treatment/monitoring and circumstances under which specific medications may be required and when to notify parents.
8. Medication Permission Forms are in the Family Handbook, can be obtained from the school nurse or printed from the "Downloadable Forms" on the school website.
9. All medications (prescription and non-prescription) MUST be brought to the school clinic by the parent/guardian or designated adults. For the safety of all students, **students cannot transport medications to and from the clinic.**
10. All medications (prescription and over the counter) MUST be in its original container and be properly labeled in ENGLISH. Proper prescription labeling includes a printed pharmacy label stating the student's name, medication name, prescribed dosage and route, times to be given, physician name and date prescription filled. Non-prescription medication MUST be in the original container, include factory label showing medication name and directions for use and be labeled with the student's name. **Medication sent in "baggies" or unlabeled containers will not be given.**
11. If there is a medication order discrepancy that might be injurious to the student, the school nurse or principal designee has the responsibility to question the order and may refuse to give the medication. The school nurse or principal designee must document any consultations with the student's physician, parent/guardian, and/or Archdiocesan health coordinator regarding the discrepancy in the student's health record.
12. All medication will be stored locked in a cabinet in the school clinic unless refrigeration is required.
13. It is the student's responsibility to report to the clinic to take his/her medication. Students are NOT permitted to carry medications on their person, in their backpack, purse or locker. Please DO NOT put medication in the student's lunch box.
14. In certain circumstances, it may be possible for a student with asthma or life-threatening allergies to carry and self-administer prescription medications while on school property or at a school sponsored event if requested by parents and the physician. The school nurse, principal, parent/guardian, physician and student will

decide this student situation on a case-by-case basis. Additional individualized specific consent forms MUST be completed in this case. If there is cause, the school nurse and/or principal can limit or revoke the self-administration of medications. Parents will be informed as soon as possible if this is necessary. A spare will still need to be kept in the clinic.

15. The school nurse is primarily responsible for administering medications to students during school hours. In the school nurse's absence or after school hours, the principal designee will administer medications to students.

16. If a medication error occurs, the parent/guardian and principal will be informed.

17. If a student needs medication during an off-campus event, the principal will designate a school employee to carry and administer the required medication IF the written medication request by the parent/guardian and physician is on file in the school clinic.

18. All medications, special treatments and/or monitoring will be recorded in the student's health record by the school nurse or principal designee.

19. At the end of the school year, all medications and any special monitoring equipment will be returned to the parents. Any medication not picked by parents will be discarded in an appropriate manner.

### SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS

Parents/guardians must inform the principal/school nurse if their child has a serious and possibly life-threatening chronic illness, allergy or other special health condition, which may require specific care during the school year.

Students who have specific allergies (foods, insects) or health conditions (asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, attention deficit, etc) should be knowledgeable about what specific help or care they may need. Parents, please help students know about their health care needs. For example, what are they allergic to, what reaction they can have, what to do if they are exposed to the allergen and when to ask for help.

An appropriate individualized plan of care for the student may be developed with input from the parents/guardians, physicians, school nurse, principal and teachers (as needed) to maintain the student's optimal health and continued school attendance. Students with known Life- Threatening Allergies, Asthma and Diabetes will require Individualized Health Care Plans and medication forms. Please contact the school nurse for additional guidelines and required forms if this applies to your child. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school/school nurse regarding any medical conditions.

### **S.T.M. PRE-KINDERGARTEN CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The S.T.M. Preschool Program believes a Christian foundation provides the basis for all learning. Our primary goals for the children are to develop in them a positive self-image and to foster in them independence and a spirit of cooperation. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston curriculum is used and includes Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. On special assigned days students will have Art, Music, Library, and Physical Education. The entire curriculum is developed to provide children with a strong foundation as they prepare to enter S.T.M. Kindergarten. Teachers in the S.T.M. Preschool Program are enthusiastic, experienced, and highly qualified in Early Childhood Education. All teachers have a degree in Early Childhood Education and have extensive classroom experience. The staff and administration participate in the Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children, The National Association of Education of Young Children, the

National Catholic Education Association, and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Early Childhood Association.

PK3 Students must be 3 years old on or before September 1st. Options:

1. 3K MWF HALF day 7:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
2. 3K MWF FULL day 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
3. 3K M-F HALF day 7:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
4. 3K M-F FULL day 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

PK4 Students must be 4 years old on or before September 1st. Options:

- a. 4K M-F HALF day 7:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
- b. 4K M-F FULL day 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF FORMATIVE DISCIPLINE**

Many times the term “discipline” is taken as a negative; that is, it is usually related, in practice, to a student’s violation of a rule and the punishment of that student for breaking the rule. In taking a positive approach to discipline and to the development of self- discipline and self-direction, “discipline” is placed in the category of a learning experience.

St. Thomas More Parish School utilizes a program of formative discipline, based on the teachings of the Catholic Church. The intent of this program is to form responsible individuals with values rooted in Christian precepts. The program is corrective in nature rather than being merely punitive. It is modeled after the sacramental life of the Church, in particular the sacrament of reconciliation. In this sacrament, a faith-filled person acknowledges and takes responsibility for the wrongful actions he or she has chosen, atones, and makes a sincere effort to do better. Similarly, in the formative discipline program, a student is challenged to acknowledge and to take responsibility for the wrongful behavior, learn from this mistake, make amends and strive to avoid this behavior in the future. All parties involved in the disciplinary process firmly believe that with effort from the individual student, God's grace will lead him/her to a fulfilling Christian life.

Catholic education is a gift, and not one to be taken for granted. To that end, there are certain responsibilities critical to its success. The following are necessary for our students, their parents, and ourselves:

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES to contribute to a positive learning environment at school and any school-related activities shall include:

- Attend all classes, daily and on time
- Complete assignments on time
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments
- Deliver all school/home communications in a timely manner
- Follow the acceptable use policy while using computers to access the Internet, class project files, etc.
- Accept personal responsibility

- Exhibit respect toward adults: teachers, staff, visitors, etc., and other students
- Refrain from behavior or expressions which may be interpreted as harassment, badgering, or a threat
- Maintain honesty in words and actions
- Obey all school rules, classroom rules/expectations, and safety rules
- Use appropriate language/vocabulary at all times (no vulgarities/avoid slang)
- Be supportive of fellow students and refrain from making negative comments or gestures after another student makes a mistake or is corrected for behavior
- Promote a genuine concern for the well-being and good name of others, especially within the school community
- Report actions which may be destructive to an individual, group, or the Christian image of the school
- Follow regulations for uniform and hair
- Do not use school name or uniform on web pages or texts. Accept personal responsibility for everything you post on social media.
- Keep cell phone turned off and in homeroom during school hours (possession of a cell phone and/or other electronic devices during school hours will result in immediate confiscation, a \$20 fine, and a call to the parent. Repeated offenses will result in immediate confiscation, a \$50 fine, loss of the device for an extended period of time, and additional Consequences.)
- Register all electronic devices not issued by the school with the Assistant Principal
- Submit a signed statement that they understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined in the handbook

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES to contribute to a positive learning environment at school and any school-related activities shall include:

- Support all school policies
- Stay informed of all school-related information by reading all communication from the school, such as calendars, memos, Renweb, etc.
- Check Renweb on a regular basis and discuss concerns with their student (and teacher, if necessary)
- Be sure their child attends school regularly, and is prompt both coming to and leaving the campus
- Encourage and lead the child to develop proper study habits at home
- Cooperate with school administrators and teachers
- Require their child to take responsibility for his or her own actions
- Demonstrate and model respect of others through their interaction with teachers, other parents, and students.
- Follow proper channels when seeking clarification in school policies or regulations.
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's progress and welfare
- Maintain confidentiality of parent-teacher discussions and correspondence
- Avoid personal correction of the behavior of any child under a teacher's direct supervision
- Be sure their child is appropriately dressed for school and school-related

functions.

- Discuss report cards and assignments with their child -- emphasizing positive areas.
- Promote a genuine concern for the well-being and good name of others, especially within the school community. Accept personal responsibility for everything you post on social media.
- Submit a signed statement that they understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined.

TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES to contribute to a positive learning environment at school and any school-related activities shall include:

- Adhere to the school and class schedules
- Begin classes promptly with prayer and prepare for each class with appropriate materials
- Inform parents regarding their child's academic and behavioral status
- Deliver school communications to students in a timely manner
- Respect the individuality of each student
- Encourage each student to take responsibility for his or her own actions
- Make copies of materials during your prep periods or after school. Copying should be completed before 7:40am. Students should not be sent to the office to ask for additional copies.
- Demonstrate and model respect of others through their interaction with parents, students, and colleagues. Accept personal responsibility for everything you post on social media.
- Work toward the success of each student
- Update Gradebooks weekly (each Tuesday before 5:00pm) at a minimum
- Address inappropriate student behavior in any area on campus in a professional manner
- Maintain confidentiality of parent/teacher/school discussions and official school business
- Promote a genuine concern for the well-being and good name of others, especially within the school community

STM has adopted the Love and Logic philosophy school-wide to establish an atmosphere throughout the school in which children feel safe, happy, and, in addition, have the maximum opportunity to learn. Our ultimate goal is to teach students to choose responsible behavior based on Catholic morals and values, thus raising their self-esteem and increasing their academic success. Love and Logic® is a method of working with students which was developed by educational expert Jim Fay, child psychiatrist Foster W. Cline, M.D. and Charles Fay, Ph.D. Love and Logic has many tools that promote healthy parent/teacher and teacher/student relationships and positive school-wide discipline.

Love and Logic helps educators, administrators, and counselors:

- Set limits in the classroom without anger
- Provide underachievers hope and willingness when the going gets tough
- Build strong connections between home and school
- Manage disruptive students
- Make teaching and learning more fun and productive
- Immediately handle disruptive students
- Build positive student-teacher relationships
- Help students own and solve their own problems

- Diffuse power struggles, and handle difficult people

### St. Thomas More Parish School - Our Love and Logic Core Beliefs

- We believe that every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity and respect of the teacher, student and property.
- We believe that students should be guided and expected to solve the problems they create without making problems for anyone else.
- We believe that students should be given the opportunity to make decisions and live with the outcome. Decisions may result in formative consequences.
- We believe that students should have the opportunity to tell their point of view (due process hearing) privately, respectfully, and at an appropriate time, when they feel consequences appear to be unfair.
- We believe that misbehavior should be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world.
- We believe that there should be a logical connection between behavior and resulting consequences.

Student behavior should reflect the Catholic values of St. Thomas More Parish School. The following are expected behaviors:

#### RESPECT FOR GOD:

Every student is expected to practice the Catholic faith through:

- Active participation in liturgies,
- Sharing of oneself through community activities, and
- Reverence to God through his/her actions.

#### RESPECT FOR SELF:

Each individual is a child of God. A student's behavior will reflect this self-respect through:

- Propriety in dress
- Use of proper body language, including posture and facial expressions
- Responsible and appropriate use of oral and written language to include all internet and electronic venues, and fulfillment of all student responsibilities

#### RESPECT FOR OTHERS:

Each student, parent, teacher, staff member, and visitor will be treated as a child of God. A student's behavior will reflect this respect for others through:

- Cooperation with students, parents, teachers, staff members, and visitors
- Treatment of others with kindness in word and actions
- Modulation of one's voice
- Promptness
- Preservation of the privacy of others, and preservation of another's personal space (that is, compliance with the "hands-off" policy).

#### RESPECT FOR PROPERTY:

Every student is expected to utilize facilities and materials properly through:

- Use of school property and equipment in the manner for which it is intended during class time and non-classroom time

- DO NOT use other students' names, the STM school name, logo, or uniform on web pages or texts
- Preservation of all areas of the school campus by keeping them clean, neat, and tidy (such as cafeteria, restrooms, hallways, playground, etc.), and
- Compliance with the "hands-off" policy which extends to the personal property of others (such as backpacks, purses, lockers, lunches, supplies, books, and zipper bags).

*\*The Principal retains the right to amend these expected behaviors at any time for just cause.*

STM will assist students in achieving academic and behavioral success and to create an orderly and productive atmosphere where all students may learn. Teachers will spend time at the beginning of the school year discussing with students these expected behaviors and informing them of their responsibilities at their grade level. Furthermore, each teacher prioritizes and posts on a chart in the classroom the behaviors most necessary for success in that class.

When a student chooses not to follow the prescribed expectations, teachers will assist the student in identifying the behavior, discuss the inherent problems the behavior causes, and focus on what the student can do to prevent a recurrence. The primary goal is not to find fault, but rather to help the student improve his or her behavior and do well in school.

Below is a partial list of some unacceptable behaviors. These have been broken into levels. The severity of the behavior will be determined by the Principal/Faculty. Discipline will be administered according to individual circumstances and according to the grade level of the student. Keep in mind that consequences are logical and not arbitrary. For example, a student shall not miss class time, recess, or lunch as a consequence for forgetting an assignment.

**Level I** infractions may result in visual warning, student-teacher conference, change of seat, conduct report, recovery time, email, parent phone call, or detention. These behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- inappropriate behavior in church, prayer time, hall, class, etc.
- uniform (or non-uniform) violations
- chewing gum
- tardy to class
- disrespect of another's personal space or property

**Level II** infractions may result in a conduct report form from the teacher, recovery time, phone call to parent, detention before or after school, and/or suspension. These behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- repeated or severe offenses of Level I infractions
- switching locks or lockers without permission
- lying, insults
- disrespect of another's personal space or property
- inappropriate behavior in church, prayer time, hallways, class, etc.

*Level III and Level IV involve infractions that are more serious. These are referred to the Administration.*

**Level III** infractions may result in detention or suspension issued by the Assistant Principal or Principal. These behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- repeated or severe offenses of Level I and II infractions
- verbal abuse to a student/teacher/supervising adult
- absence from any class, assembly, etc. without express permission of the teacher
- violence or threat of violence
- altering grades or forging a parent's signature
- theft
- misuse of electronic devices
- profanity in language or gesture

**Level IV** Parents will receive notification that requires the parent to come to the school for a conference. These behaviors may result in detention to be served on more than one day, suspension, meeting by the Non-academic Disciplinary Committee, or expulsion. These behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- repeated or severe offenses of Level I, II, or III infractions
- profanity in language or gestures
- violence or threat of violence\*
- theft
- defamation of character
- vandalism\*
- possession of pornography, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, weapons, fireworks, explosive devices, or gambling\*
- misuse of electronic devices
- leaving class, campus, or events without permission

*\*Constable may be called in such events*

## HARASSMENT/BULLYING

Harassment and bullying behaviors are not acceptable for any reason. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Students who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

**KEY TERMINOLOGY** – asterisks (\*) indicate items which must be signed by parents and returned the next day.

\*Conduct Report – A written report sent to parents to apprise them of the student's repeated inappropriate behavior or serious offense.

\*Detention – This is given as a consequence for inappropriate behavior and/or inattention to academics. Written notification is sent to parents one day in advance. This notice indicates a more severe level of behavior than does a conduct report or time-out. Repeated detentions may result in Saturday detentions, forfeiture of field trips, pep rallies and/or extra-curricular activities. Chronic problems may result in suspension or dismissal from St. Thomas More.

Non-Classroom Time Conduct Grade – Non-classroom time is given a conduct grade on Report Cards students in Middle School. Non-classroom time includes time between classes, recess time, cafeteria time, before or after school, and Mass time. Consequences for electronic infringement against the school or persons at STM whether written or posted during school time or after school hours is also reflected in this grade.

Recovery Time – in the case of classroom misbehavior for students in 3rd - 8th grade, a student is removed to the counselor or to the office. The student reflects on the specific inappropriate conduct and considers ways to improve and prevent recurrence of the behavior. Once the student collects himself and fills out an exit ticket, he/she may return to class. If Recovery is frequent during the day/week, an alternative course of action may be deemed necessary.

Time Out - in the case of classroom misbehavior for students in PK3-2nd grade, a student is re-directed to a time-out, or “thinking” chair to allow time for a cool-down period. Once the student collects himself, he may return to class. If Time-Out is frequent during the day/week, an alternative course of action may be deemed necessary.

Student Extended Leave - During an investigation by local, state, or federal officials, a student will be placed on Student Extended Leave. These absences will be excused, and the student will have an opportunity to complete assignments without reduced credit during the leave. A parent/guardian may not avail themselves of the grievance process when a student is placed on Student Extended Leave.

\*Suspension – A severe behavior infraction will warrant a suspension for up to four days issued by the Administration. A suspension lasting more than four days requires the approval of the Assistant Superintendent. Parents are notified by phone as soon as the decision has been reached and by a letter which requires verification of receipt. Any student who receives a suspension is placed on behavioral probation. The student is not permitted to be on campus (except in the case of an in-school suspension) or to participate in extracurricular activities on the day(s) of the assigned suspension. Further participation in activities is at the Principal's discretion. The student is responsible for all missed work and will receive no credit for daily work and no more than 50% for major grades. Suspension days count as absences.

#### Means of Correction

Formative discipline shall be utilized in order to assist the student in identifying and correcting unacceptable behaviors and improving conduct. The philosophy behind formative discipline ensures that the means of correction will be appropriate to the

grade level of the student. Discipline management techniques utilized may include, but are not limited to:

- visual warning
- verbal comment/correction
- teacher-student conference
- recovery time/time-out
- lunch detention - only given for behaviors occurring at lunch
- recess/playtime activities limited, but not taken away completely
- email/Renweb communication
- telephone conference followed by an email for documentation
- parent-teacher conference
- school community service
- detention (15 to 60 minutes)
- Saturday detention (\$10.00 fee assessed to parents)

When further action is necessary, the following options are available:

- formal teacher-parent conference
- behavioral probation
- suspension
- expulsion

*Parents are usually not notified for infractions that result in a visual warning, verbal reprimand, timeout, or student-teacher conference. For infractions which are not rectified through use of the above techniques, the parents may be notified through the use of Uniform Infraction Form, Conduct Report Form, or, Detention Form. These forms necessitate parental signature and their return to the teacher. Teachers may opt to write a note or letter to the parent, make a telephone call, send an e-mail, or, request a personal conference.*

When a student receives a suspension, additional restrictions may be imposed by the Principal for a designated time. These restrictions may include, but are not limited to, meeting with a Remediation Team and suspension from the privilege of representing the school in activities such as sports, cheerleading, choir, student council, speech tournaments, academic competitions, all clubs, weekday liturgy leadership, field trips, and assemblies other than Mass. All missed work must be completed.

Immediate expulsion may be necessary to protect the health and safety of the school community at St. Thomas More. Immediate expulsion may take place for possession, sale, distribution, or verbal promotion of harmful substances or containers for such substances; for possession of a weapon; for assault that results in serious physical injury to a student or school personnel; or, for misuse of social media/defamation of character. A student's disregard of his or her responsibilities or lack of respect for God, for self, for others, or for property are considered unacceptable behaviors.

ENGAGING IN ANY CONDUCT WHICH INTERFERES WITH THE LEARNING ATMOSPHERE OF ANY CLASSROOM, DISRUPTS THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT, OR DOES NOT REFLECT THE CATHOLIC VALUES OF ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL IS CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR.

### **BEHAVIORAL PROBATION**

Any student who fails to achieve success in conduct, is sent to recovery repeatedly, or is involved in a serious infraction may be placed on behavioral probation by the Principal.

The student will meet with the Assistant Principal, Principal, and/or teacher, to discuss a plan of success. The student will report daily to a teacher, Assistant Principal, or the sponsor of the extracurricular activity in which the student is involved. If the Principal deems that significant improvement has not been demonstrated, the student will be removed from extracurricular activities.

A student who is involved in a serious infraction, which results in his/her suspension, will automatically be placed on behavioral probation and suspended from extracurricular activities. Students may also be suspended from extracurricular activities for behavior if they receive an N in conduct on their report card or progress report. If the student is placed on probation, he/she will be required to meet with the Assistant Principal or Principal to discuss a plan for success. The student's behavioral record will be monitored closely by the Assistant Principal. Infractions following a suspension will be considered more serious. The student may be reinstated into extracurricular activities at the discretion of the Principal once the required standards have been met. If standards are not met, the student may be excluded from field trips, be placed on a formal contract, or be denied readmission. In the course of the school year, parents may be asked to seek another school for their child.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Academic eligibility must be maintained for participation in extracurricular activities and sports teams. Students will be placed on probation using their progress report and report card grades. Any student with a grade below a 70 or N or two or more grades below 77 will be placed on probation. Grades and conduct will be checked at the midpoint of the grading period – approximately every two weeks. If no improvement is demonstrated, the student may be removed from extracurricular activities and/or be required to seek tutoring. The tutoring may be in the form of another student who is a part of the Beta Club tutoring program or an adult tutor outside the school.

The student may be reinstated into extracurricular activities at the discretion of the Principal once the required standards have been met.

### **REMEDATION TEAM**

The purpose of the Remediation Team is to develop a plan of success for a student having behavioral difficulty. The team's primary goal is to assist the student in identifying and correcting specific behaviors thereby becoming a successful student.

The Remediation Team will be composed of teachers within the student's level, the school counselor, the Assistant Principal, and the Principal. The team will identify a maximum of three specific areas (or objectives) which the student needs to improve. The team will also develop positive and negative consequences for meeting or failing to meet the objectives.

The Remediation Team will meet with the student and present him or her with a contract. The contract will outline the objectives and consequences the team developed. One teacher will monitor the student's contract on a daily basis. This teacher or mentor will assist the student in developing strategies to achieve the objectives. The mentor will act as a liaison with the other teachers.

After the length of time stated in the contract, the team will reconvene. The team may then decide to release the student from the contract, to renew the contract with the same or revised objectives, or to follow a different course, such as presenting the case to the Non-academic Discipline Committee.

The Remediation Team will notify the parent(s) of the plan developed and implemented, as well as any decision concerning the course of action.

### **PROCEDURES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE INFRACTIONS**

Non-academic Discipline Committee: The purpose of the Non-academic Discipline Committee (NDC) is to deal with any discipline situation, the results of which could be actual expulsion from school.

The NDC will be composed of four (4) members:

1. The Principal of St. Thomas More School, who will serve as committee chairperson
2. The Pastor of St. Thomas More Parish, or his designee from among the priests in the parish
3. The Assistant Principal
4. The school counselor

The committee should be convened as soon as the Principal, as Committee Chairperson, feels that all pertinent data is available for presentation to the committee. The Chairperson should present the facts of the situation, and recommend an appropriate disciplinary action. This recommended disciplinary action must be agreed to by a majority of the Committee, and shall therefore be considered as the Committee's decision on the matter.

The Committee will notify the parent(s) and the student(s) involved as to the decision of the Committee. All proceedings of this Committee will be confidential.

### **APPEAL**

Parents wishing to appeal the decision of the Non-academic Discipline Committee must do so in writing to the Chairperson of the NDC (Principal) within five days of the decision.

### **FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Although the Archdiocese strives to establish a harmonious Christian atmosphere within its schools, it recognizes that misunderstandings or differences of opinion sometimes occur. Ideally, such matters can be resolved informally. If, however, the matter is not settled to the parent or guardian's satisfaction, the parent or guardian may institute a formal grievance.

A formal grievance must be in writing and must be received in five (5) working days following the occurrence of the event on which the grievance is based. Please contact the Principal for a copy of the Archdiocesan current appeals process/grievance procedure for further details.

### **ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL UNIFORM REGULATIONS**

Uniforms are to be purchased through Mills Uniform Company (either online or at the 3465-A W. Alabama location) and they are to be regarded as the primary supplier of

uniform items to be worn by St. Thomas More students. Mills specifies which items are required/optional and when you have a choice of styles.

**DRESS UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:**

Grade Level	Girls	Boys
K - 3	Peter Pan blouse with red piping* Plaid bib jumper with STM logo** Black modesty shorts	White oxford shirt with STM logo Khaki pull-on or button pants
4-5	White oxford blouse with STM logo Plaid box-pleat skirt Black modesty shorts	White oxford shirt with STM logo Khaki flat-front or pleated pants Brown or black leather belt
6-8	White oxford blouse with STM logo Plaid box-pleat skirt Red sweater vest with STM logo Black modesty shorts	White oxford shirt with STM logo Khaki flat-front or pleated pants Brown or black leather belt Navy/Red STM tie (Mills only)

\*3rd grade girls may wear white oxford blouse

\*\* The red polo shirt may NOT be worn under the girls plaid bib jumper.

**CASUAL UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:**

Grade Level	Girls	Boys
Pre-K	Red polo with STM logo Plaid skort Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo	Red polo with STM logo Khaki pull-on shorts Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo
K-2	Red polo with STM logo Plaid skort Khaki pull-on or button pants Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo Black modesty shorts	Red polo with STM logo Khaki pull-on or button shorts Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater vest with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo
3-5	Red polo with STM logo Plaid skort Khaki pants with black/brown belt Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo Black modesty shorts	Red polo with STM logo Khaki flat-front or pleated shorts Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater vest with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo Brown or black leather belt
6-8	Red polo with STM logo Plaid skort	Red polo with STM logo Khaki flat-front or pleated shorts Red sweatshirt with STM logo

	Khaki pants with black/brown belt Red sweatshirt with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo Black modesty shorts	*Red cardigan sweater with STM logo *Red cardigan sweater vest with STM logo *Black fleece jacket with STM logo Brown or black leather belt
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\*Khaki pants may be purchased at either Mills or J.C. Penny's ~ Izod Brand ONLY

**SHOES & SOCKS – ALL GRADES**

Dress or tennis (all shoes must be closed) – solid black or solid white ONLY (white or black logo branding – i.e. Nike swoosh - allowed). Tennis and athletic shoes must have non-marking or white soles.

Topsiders – Tan leather

Shoes may be purchased at Mills Uniform Company or other retail locations.

Unacceptable: Hi-tops, boots, cleats, sandals, individual toe/barefoot running shoes, heelys or any shoe with an inline wheel

Socks must be all white or all black crew (white or black logo allowed) socks and clearly visible one inch above the ankle.

\*Coats and jackets (non-uniform outer covering) may be worn but must be removed when in the classroom and at school functions, e.g. Mass, assemblies, field trips (weather permitting).

***ALL PIECES OF UNIFORM MUST BE MARKED AND PROPERLY IDENTIFIED WITH THE STUDENT'S NAME. ITEMS THAT ARE PLACED IN LOST AND FOUND AND ARE NOT IDENTIFIED WITH STUDENT'S NAME WILL BE GIVEN TO CHARITY.***

**P.E. UNIFORMS**

P.E. uniforms are worn by students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade only and are purchased through the P.E. coaches. Price: \$20.00 for the set. Charges for P.E. Uniforms will be added to your FACTS Tuition Account. Do not send cash or check with your student(s). The P.E. uniform may not be worn under the uniform shirt or blouse.

**HAIR/MAKE-UP/ACCESSORIES**

Hair must be clean, combed, well groomed and not a distraction to other students. Hair styles should reflect that of a serious student body and not be faddish in color or cut. Hair color must be a student's natural color. No hairstyles should impede the sight of the student. Hair length for male students' should not extend past the eyebrows, touch the top edge of the shirt collar, or cover the ear canal. No Mohawks, pompadours (shaved sides), man-buns, ponytails or mullets. Female students may wear simple hair ribbons, barrettes, and headbands (no scarves). Female students' hair should be kept out of their faces.

In grades PK – 5 no make-up of any kind, including nail polish, may be worn.

In grades 6-8, female students may wear discrete, natural make-up. Heavy make-up, such as dark eye shadow, eyeliner or mascara, face/eye/body glitter is NOT acceptable. Only clear nail polish is permitted. Jewelry should be simple and in keeping with the school uniform. Female students only, may wear small earrings on the earlobe. No hoop or dangling earrings. Male students must be clean shaven at all times.

The administration and faculty reserve the right to ask a student to alter his/her hair style or remove make-up deemed inappropriate. Tattoos, permanent or temporary, are unacceptable. Body graffiti of any kind is not permitted.

### **SPIRIT DAYS**

Students may wear the red or black school-sanctioned spirit shirt, current year Oktoberfest shirt, the red STM hoodie with uniform bottoms, uniform socks, and uniform shoes.

### **JEAN'S PASS DAY**

On a designated Jeans Pass Day students may wear long blue jeans (no overly tight jeans) or uniform shorts with the designated shirt for the day. Shoes must be of a closed style. Unacceptable: Open shoes of any kind, including sandals, clogs, mules, "jellies", boots (including cowboy, work, or hiking); CROCS, barefoot running shoes; any shoe with an inline wheel.

### **NON-UNIFORM DRESS DAYS**

Occasionally, students are permitted to wear clothing other than uniforms. These are special days for all students. On non-uniform days, students must dress appropriately. ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE MODEST IN CUT AND FIT AS IS BEFITTING OF CATHOLIC VALUES. If the student is in doubt of the appropriateness of the attire, it should not be worn.

### **Guidelines:**

*Bottoms:* Pants and shorts are to be worn on the waist with no mid-riff showing between the pants and the shirt. Capris are acceptable. Only STM uniform shorts may be worn. Unacceptable: non-uniform shorts; ripped, torn, dirty, unkempt jeans/pants. Any pant worn below the waist or too tight may not be worn.

*Tops:* Shirts must cover the shoulders and mid-riffs and should have modestly cut necklines. T-shirts with writings or logo must be appropriate. No snug-fitting or sheer tops. Unacceptable: Tank tops, crop tops, halter tops, see-through tops, tight fitting tops or any top that does not fully cover the shoulders or midsection, and t-shirts whose writing is inappropriate/offensive.

*Dresses/skirts:* Dresses/skirts must be of modest length (no more than 1 inch above the knee) and modest cut/fit. Unacceptable: Mini-skirts/dresses, any dress that does not fully cover the shoulders (spaghetti straps); any dress or skirt which is too tight or not modestly cut.

*Hats:* Baseball caps or hats may not be worn in any of the school's buildings and are, therefore, discouraged.

*Shoes:* Shoes must be of a closed style. Unacceptable: Open shoes of any kind, including sandals, clogs, mules, jellies, boots, CROCS, barefoot running shoes, or, any shoe with an inline wheel.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ASK A STUDENT TO CALL A PARENT TO HAVE HIS/HER UNIFORM BROUGHT TO SCHOOL IF THE NON-UNIFORM ATTIRE IS DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE.

St. Thomas More offers a variety of extracurricular activities to include clubs and competitive academic teams and sports for both boys and girls. Some of these include: Beta Club, chess, art, robotics, speech, student council, Spanish Club, academic teams, volleyball, soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, cheerleading, and track. These programs fall under the jurisdiction of the School, and are administered by the Principal, full and part-time teachers, coaches, and parent volunteers. A fee is charged per sport to help cover the cost of the program.

**Clubs & Activities:** Usually clubs require no fees. Attendance should be regular to be considered part of the club. An attendance log will be kept by the club sponsor. Academic teams have entry fees. St. Thomas More pays these fees. If a student withdraws or no-shows the activity, the student is then required to reimburse the school.

**Sports:** STM is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA), a competitive league. Usually, there are two practices and two games during the week, Monday through Thursday. Most sports require mandatory tryouts to select the team. All students trying out need to have a physical each year (after June 1) with completed and signed forms turned into the school nurse before they can try out.

#### Eligibility and Commitment of Students

Students in 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade may participate in student council. There are a variety of clubs available for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade. STM offers robotics, chess, gardening, crafting, and additional clubs chosen by teachers.

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to participate in athletics. At this time, students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade may participate in track and soccer. There are developmental teams for our Intermediate grades.

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students earn the privilege of participating through hard work, dedication, desire, and self discipline. If students are on academic or behavioral probation, students must obtain permission from the Principal to try out. In addition, participation requires a commitment by the student to attend all meetings, practices, and games with the exception of illness. For sports, parents must call the coach in the event a student is ill and will miss a practice or game.

#### Attendance

Students with an unexcused absence or absence due to illness on the day of an activity, game, or practice, MAY NOT participate in the activities that day.

#### Sportsmanship

Any student or parent whose conduct, dress, public or private remarks, or other display of behavior of unsportsmanlike/inappropriate conduct that discredits the

reputation of this school, may be declared ineligible for academic or athletic competition or participation. Such decisions are made by the sponsor or coach in consultation with the Principal and/or Assistant Principal and are final.

### Expectations

Students are expected to follow club/team rules set by the sponsor/coach. These may include attire, grooming, practice attendance, warm-ups, transportation, punctuality, uniforms, sportsmanship, and behavior before and after the event, etc.

### Leaving an event

The student must leave with his/her parent (or guardian) from any event. If other arrangements are made, the coach or sponsor must receive written instructions from the parent BEFORE the event.

Students are expected to be picked up immediately at the activity or game's conclusion with definite plans prearranged. A 10-minute grace period for students will be allowed prior to late fees of \$1.00 per minute being assessed. This procedure adheres to general school policy for late pick-ups. If the student is taken to ASC, a \$20 drop-in fee will be assessed.

### Academics/Behavior

Students will maintain an average 78% or higher in every subject. If a student fails to do so, the student will be placed on academic probation for a period of time designated by the Principal, Assistant Principal, coach/sponsor and/or remediation team. In addition, students will maintain E's and a minimum of S's in conduct in every subject and during non- classroom time. The Principal, Assistant Principal, coach/sponsor, and/or the remediation team have the right to place a student on behavioral probation for N's in conduct. Grades and conduct will be checked every two weeks. An F or more than one D will suspend a student from play for two weeks. Receiving an N at any time will put a student on behavioral probation.

Students with any N's or U's in conduct are ineligible for running for ANY club/sport leadership role. STM feels these students should be positive role models; therefore conduct should be of high caliber.

If a student is placed on academic or behavioral probation, the student may be suspended from participation in the extracurricular activity during the probationary period. This is at the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

### Injuries

It is the responsibility of parents to provide insurance coverage for their child. The school provides supplementary insurance for each student. (Contact the school nurse for information.) The school nurse must be notified in the event of any injury. If a student is injured at a school event after school, the coach must be notified so that they can fill out an accident/injury form and then notify the nurse.

### Financial Obligations

Students must be in good standing on all financial obligations to the school, including tuition, fees, etc. Students will be required to pay an athletic fee for each sport in which they participate. Athletic fees are non-refundable.

## Extracurricular Activity Code

### The Sponsor / Coach's Code:

- Emphasize the academic progress of all participants by a regular, documented check of their academic standing.
- Treat students based on what is best for the education, general welfare, and health of the student.
- Show professional loyalty to other coaches/sponsors.
- Show fairness, willingness to motivate, helping and improving students' skills through constructive criticism that's true and fair to philosophy of the athletic program.
- Provide open communication with parents and students.
- Adhere to policies which do not force students to specialize or restrict them from participation in other clubs or sports.
- Allow students to participate in one school club or sport without requiring, as a prerequisite, participation in another school club or sport.
- Avoid any coaching practice which would endanger the welfare or safety of any player.
- Assign a team parent to arrange phone trees, email lists, driving schedule, etc. Scheduling games and practices to avoid unnecessary loss of study or class time. Utilizing the best and most current teaching, coaching, and training methods through affiliation with professional associations and publications.
- Abstain from any practice that solicits teachers to modify a student's grade for eligibility purposes.
- Disallow the use of performance enhancing drugs by athletes and informing the school administration upon knowledge of such drug use.

### The Student's Code:

- Maintain good grades and good conduct.
- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community.
- Hold true and fair to philosophy of the academic and athletic program.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the teaching/coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a courteous manner following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your event. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all the people at the event. Dedicate self to strong effort for improvement of skills, team spirit, and sportsmanship.
- Maintain a Christian behavior/attitude at all times.

## The Spectator's Code:

- Remember that you are at the contest to support and cheer for your classmates and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.
- Remember that school athletics and competitions are learning experiences and mistakes are sometimes made.
- Praise students in their attempt to improve as students, as competitors, and as people as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
- Learn the rules of the competition/game and the Sports Association (GHCAA), so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches/sponsors, spectators, and support groups. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your own home.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of event officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- Be a positive role model at events through your own actions.
- Respect the buildings and property of the facilities that are used by controlling children, picking up trash, and following rules as displayed.
- Ensure the safety of children who are spectators by supervising them inside and outside the facilities you are using.

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SPORTS

**Team Selection:** The head coach is responsible for the team selection process for the individual sport/activity. Expectations for participation will be explained to students prior to tryouts being conducted.

**Team Meeting:** All coaches will hold pre-season meetings. Attendance of at least one parent is mandatory. This requirement must be met prior to the student being allowed to participate in competition as the philosophy of the school and season guidelines are discussed. Students will be provided with a copy of the Athletic Handbook, fee requirements, practice schedules, game schedules, and game maps.

**Practices/Games** Students are expected to attend all practices, games, and meetings called by the coach. Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to/from all games and practices. Once on a team, the student is required to attend all practices and games. A student will be excused only for a death in the family, illness, or prior approval of the coach. Students who miss practices, games, or meetings may lose playing time in future games. Students are not guaranteed playing time in every game. In order to have a successful team, play time and position played will be at the coaches' discretion.

Students are expected to be on time for every practice and game. Habitual tardiness to or from practice or a game may result in suspension of play time. Students who do not go home or do not have a parent with them prior to their game are to stay in an area designated by the coach until their game begins. Students waiting for their game to start will watch the previous games according to the school's code of conduct. Students must communicate with their coach before game or practice days

if they will not be able to attend. STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE USING CELL PHONES AT THIS TIME. CELL PHONES SHOULD BE CHECKED IN WITH THE COACHES. PHONES SHOULD ONLY BE USED WITH A COACH'S PERMISSION.

Parents are expected to volunteer for a specified number of days to supervise study hall prior to practices. In addition, parents are also expected to volunteer for concessions and check in for games and tournaments.

Students are expected to be picked up immediately at the end of practice or game's conclusion with definite plans prearranged. A 10-minute grace period for athletes will be allowed prior to late fees of \$1.00 per minute being assessed. This procedure adheres to general school policy for late pickups. If the student is taken to ASC, a \$20 drop-in fee will be assessed.

## **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (TAUP) AGREEMENT AND PERMISSION FORM**

St. Thomas More Parish School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, each year all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement. Should a parent prefer that a student not have e-mail and Internet access, use of the computer is still possible for more traditional purposes such as word processing. Students in grades K - 3 will be assessed a \$25 technology fee. Older students' fees are addressed later in this document.

### Internet, E-mail, Cell Phones/IPhones

Access to Internet and e-mail will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other Internet users around the world. FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE. While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweighs the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow for access.

### What is expected?

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see. Under no circumstances are students to access any sites that are sexual in nature.

### What are the Rules of Appropriate Use?

**Personal Safety and Personal Privacy** - Students will not post personal contact information about themselves. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including websites that solicit personal information.

**Social Networking** - Accessing social networking websites, blogs, video sites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Friendster, tagged, etc., except those used for educational purposes) are off-limits on school property. The use of circumventors to get around school network security is prohibited.

**Illegal copying** - Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks. Nor should students copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., State, Board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is

prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening, violent, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Inappropriate materials or language – No profane, abusive or impolite language should be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Use of technology resources for gambling, chain letter communication, unauthorized email, chat or instant message, blogs, and discussion forums, is also prohibited. A good rule to follow is never view, send, or access materials, which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately. Use of cell phones/I phones to transmit unacceptable language and/or images that are harmful to self, other students, and/or to other people are prohibited.

### Succinct Advice

These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of technology privileges at school.

1. Do not use technology to harm self, other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the network or any technology resource in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the network or computer operation by installing any form of software or permitting the spread of computer viruses.
4. Do not violate copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send or display offensive messages or pictures.
6. Do not share your password or in any way obtain another person's password.
7. Do not waste technology resources such as disk space or printing supplies.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
9. Do notify an adult immediately, if by accident, you encounter materials, which violate the Rules of Appropriate Use.
10. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.
11. STM has the right to inspect any device at any time. There will be periodic checks on all Chromebook.

## **ONE-TO-ONE CHROMEBOOK AGREEMENT FORM Grades 6, 7 and 8th**

### **I. Purpose**

The focus of the middle school Chromebook initiative is to prepare students for their future, a world of digital technology through the ability of 24/7 anywhere connectivity. As we enter the twenty-first century, excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future and the individual use of Chromebooks is a way to empower students to learn at their full potential and to prepare them for the real world of college and the workplace. Chromebooks encourage students to solve problems and think critically by stimulating analytical thinking. Learning results from the continuous dynamic interaction among students, educators, parents and the extended community. Technology immersion does not diminish the vital role of the teacher. To the contrary, it transforms the teacher from a director of learning to a facilitator of learning any time and any place.

### **II. Ownership**

St. Thomas More School shall be deemed to have retained title to the Equipment at all times, unless St. Thomas More School transfers the title. The student shall hold no security or ownership interest in the equipment. Likewise, the student shall hold no security or ownership interest either in the licenses to the installed software included with the equipment or in the licenses to any other software that St. Thomas More School may from time to time install on the Chromebook used by the Student.

Each Chromebook is the property of St. Thomas More School and is issued as an educational tool and should only be used in that capacity. Failure to comply with the school's guidelines will result in loss of Chromebook privileges and may result in disciplinary action against the student. St. Thomas More School reserves the right to demand the immediate return of the Chromebook at any time.

### **III. Liability**

Each student will be assessed a Technology fee to help defray the cost of routine maintenance and software upgrades. The fee for intermediate students (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade) is \$75.00. For middle school students (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>) the fee is \$100.00. This fee does not cover damage or neglect.

If the Chromebook or AC Adapter Power Cord assigned to your child is lost, stolen or damaged through negligence, vandalism, or failure to follow the proper care guidelines, then you are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

Replacement costs are as follows:

Chromebook (\$300), screen repair (\$125), keyboard replacement (\$75), and the AC adapter (\$55). If the Chromebook is lost or stolen when outside of school grounds, it should be reported to the local police authorities and St. Thomas More School personnel immediately.

Students are responsible for all material sent by and/or stored on the Chromebook loaned to them. Students accept responsibility for keeping their Chromebook free from all pornographic material, or files dangerous to the integrity of the St. Thomas More School network, equipment, or software.

St. Thomas More School is not liable for any material sent by and/or stored on Chromebooks issued to students via the One-to-One Chromebook Agreement.

St. Thomas More School reserves the right to monitor or access the Google Accounts and/or hard drives of its Chromebooks if it suspects or is advised of possible breaches of security, harassment, or other violations of other school policies, rules, regulations, directives, or law, or evidence exists which demonstrates to the school that its Chromebooks may contain information, data, or other intellectual property that belongs to another person.

#### IV. Terms of Chromebook Loan

All Middle School students enrolled in St. Thomas More Parish School will be issued a Chromebook. The Chromebook will be assigned to individual students and serial numbers will be recorded. The student will retain possession of the Chromebook for the remainder of the school year in which it was issued, or until the student withdraws from school.

Students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are responsible for bringing the Chromebooks to school, taking them home each day, and ensuring they are charged for use the following day.

Chromebooks assigned to students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will not go home and are to be stored in the charging stations located in the student's homeroom.

The Chromebooks are not to be left unsupervised at home or at school in unsecured locations.

#### V. Software Issued

Chromebooks run on Chrome OS as its operating system. The Chromebooks are designed to be used primarily while connected to the internet. In addition to the filters set by Google for Education, St. Thomas More installs web -filtering and anti-virus services. Software, APPS, Extensions and Add-ons will only be installed by authorized personnel. The software installed by the St. Thomas More School must remain in usable condition.

**STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ADD SOFTWARE OF ANY KIND.**

## VI. Chromebook Care Guidelines

- For prolonged periods of inactivity, you should shut the computer down completely before closing the lid. This will help conserve the battery. Dimming the LCD brightness of your screen could extend the battery run time.
- Please be aware that overloading the backpack or case WILL damage the Chromebook. Take precaution when placing the case on a flat surface. When using the Chromebook, keep it on a flat, solid surface for air to circulate. For example, using a Chromebook while on a carpet or bed can cause damage due to overheating.
- Liquid, foods, and other debris can damage the Chromebook. You should avoid eating or drinking while using the Chromebook. DO NOT keep food or food wrappers in the Chromebook case.
- Take extreme caution with the screen. The screens are susceptible to damage from excessive pressure or weight. In particular, avoid picking up the Chromebook by the screen or placing your finger directly on the screen with any force.
- Never attempt to repair or reconfigure the Chromebook. Under no circumstances are you to attempt to open or tamper with the internal components of the Chromebook. Doing so will render our warranty void.
- Take care when inserting cords, cables, and other removable storage devices to avoid damage to the Chromebook ports.
- Do not expose your Chromebooks to extreme temperatures, direct sunlight, or ultraviolet light for extended periods of time. Extreme heat or cold may cause damage to the Chromebook.
- A label has been applied to your Chromebook for ID purposes. Please do not place additional stickers/items on the computer. Remember the Chromebooks are the property of St. Thomas More School.
- Keep your Chromebooks away from magnets and magnetic fields, which can erase or corrupt your data. This includes, but is not limited to, large speakers, amplifiers, transformers, vacuum cleaners, and older television sets.

## VII. Cleaning Your Chromebook

- Always disconnect the Chromebook from the power outlet before cleaning.
- Clean the screen with a soft, lightly dampened, lint free cloth, or use LCD approved anti-static screen cleaners or wipes.
- Wash hands frequently when using the Chromebook to avoid buildup on the touch pad. Grease and dirt can cause the cursor to jump around on the screen.

## VIII. Screen Care

- Do not pick up the Chromebook by the screen.
- Avoid touching the screen with fingers, pens, pencils, or any sharp instrument.
- Do not lean on top of the Chromebook.
- Avoid placing excessive pressure or weight on the Chromebook screen
- Be careful not to leave pencils, pens, or papers on the keyboard when closing the screen.
- Clean the screen with a soft, dry cloth, or anti-static cloth.
- NEVER clean the screen with glass cleaner.

## IX. Carrying the Chromebook

All Chromebooks and components are to be carried to school daily. Do not place the Chromebook in your backpack at any time.

## X. Students Responsibilities

1. Students must bring a fully charged device to school every day and bring their devices to all classes unless specifically advised not to do so by their teacher. If a student does not bring his/her device to school or his/her device is not fully charged, the student will be subject to the classroom teacher's policy regarding coming to class unprepared. Repeated offenses will result in disciplinary action designated by the Assistant Principal.
2. Students must not remove or damage the equipment identification labels.
3. Students must not lend the equipment to anyone.
4. Transmitting or creating any material in violation of federal, state, or local laws and ordinances is strictly prohibited.
5. Use of equipment during the school day is governed by teacher classroom expectations.
6. Students in Grade 7 & Grade 8 must take equipment home each night. Students in Grade 6 will not be allowed to take their Chromebooks home. The 6 Grade students will turn in their equipment at a predetermined location at the end of each school day and pick it up at the start of the school day. Equipment should not be left in lockers.

## XI. Files and File Management

1. Students are responsible for maintaining cloud-based file storage through their Google account. St. Thomas More is not responsible for the loss of any data or files while using this equipment or during the time when the computer is checked, repaired, or serviced.
2. Students must exercise good judgment with regard to content and information shared on the Internet as outlined in our One-to-One Chromebook Program Handbook.
3. All students receive a login and password to be used only by the student. If a student suspects that a password has been compromised, he/she must notify Mrs. Felton so that a new password can be created.
4. Students must not share login information or protected information with anyone.
5. Students are not permitted to add, delete, or modify other Student accounts in any way.

## XII. Consequences of Violating This Agreement

1. A violation of the above terms and conditions may subject the violator to restriction in the use of technological resources and/or other discipline under Student Information & Guidelines as outlined in the Family Handbook.
2. In cases of extreme or illegal violations, legal action may be taken against the student and/or other participants under the law.

## XIII. Chromebook Guidelines for Students and Parents

This information will be discussed with your child during Middle School Orientation. A paper copy will be sent home for your review and your signature.

This document provides detailed information to parents and students about how to care for the technology being entrusted to them.

### 1. Receiving a Chromebook

- a. Parent Signature: Parents are expected to sign the St. Thomas More Parish School's (STM) One-to-One Technology Responsible Use Policy prior to the student receiving a school-issued device.
- b. Returning Student Distribution: Students who are receiving an STM device will attend a device orientation meeting during the first week of school.
- c. Transfer/New Student Distribution: All transfers/new students will be able to pick up their Chromebooks from the Computer Lab.

### 2. Returning the Chromebook

- a. End of Year: At the end of the school year, students will turn in their Chromebooks and charger. Failure to turn in a Chromebook and charger will result in the student being charged the full replacement cost of the missing item(s). St. Thomas More may also file a report of stolen property with the local law enforcement agency.
- b. Transferring/Withdrawing Students: Students that transfer out of or withdraw from STM must turn in their Chromebooks and charger to the school office on their last day of attendance. Failure to turn in the Chromebook will result in the student being charged the full replacement cost for each missing asset (Chromebook and charger). Unpaid fines and fees of students leaving STM may be turned over to a collection agency. STM may also file a report of stolen property with the local law enforcement agency.

### 3. Taking Care of the Chromebook

Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook they have been issued by the school. Students with Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must take the device to the Computer Lab as soon as possible, so that they can be taken care of properly. St. Thomas More- owned Chromebooks should never be taken to an outside computer service for any type of repairs or maintenance. Students should never leave their Chromebooks unattended, except in a locked classroom.

#### a. General Precautions

- No food or drink should be next to Chromebooks.
- Cords, cables, and removable storage devices (e.g. thumb drives) must be inserted carefully into appropriate port on the Chromebooks.
- Chromebooks should not be used or stored near pets.

- Chromebooks should not be used with the power cord plugged in when the cord may be a tripping hazard.
  - Chromebooks must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, and labels.
  - Objects should never be placed on top of Chromebooks.
  - Chromebooks should never be loaned to another student or individual at any time.
- b. Carrying Chromebooks
- Always transport Chromebooks with care. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
  - Students should always hold the Chromebooks (cover closed) with two hands.
  - Never lift a Chromebook by the screen.
  - Never carry a Chromebook with the screen open.
- c. Opening the Chromebook
- Open the Chromebook only when it is resting on a flat surface, such as a table or desk.
  - To open the Chromebook, use one hand to hold the keyboard against the table. Use the other hand to open the screen by grasping the screen's edge (in the middle) and gently moving the screen to the open position. (Figure 1. Opening a Chromebook.)
  - The hinge of the screen will only allow the screen to be open to a slight angle. Do not attempt to open the screen beyond this stopping point as the screen will break if forced.
- d. Closing the Chromebook
- Before closing the screen, make sure there is nothing on the keyboard to prevent the full closure of the device. Obstacles on the keyboard could cause broken screens or damaged hinges.
  - Close the screen only when the Chromebook is resting on a flat surface such as a table or desk.
  - Close the Chromebook using two hands--one at either corner of the screen (Figure 2. Closing a Chromebook.)
  - Close the screen gently.

**Figure 1: Opening A Chromebook**



**Figure 2: Closing A Chromebook**



e. Screen Care

- The Chromebook screen can be damaged if subjected to heavy objects, rough treatment, some cleaning solvents, and other liquids. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure.
- Do not put pressure on the top of a Chromebook when it is closed.
- Do not store a Chromebook with the screen open.
- Do not place anything in the protective case that will press against the cover.
- Make sure there is nothing on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, or disks).
- Never lift the Chromebook by the screen.
- Clean the screen only with a soft, dry microfiber cloth or anti-static cloth.

f. Asset Tags

- All Chromebooks will be labeled with a STM asset tag.
- STM asset tags may not be modified or tampered with in any way.
- Students may be charged up to the full replacement cost of a Chromebook for tampering with a STM asset tag or turning in a Chromebook without an STM asset tag and/ or may receive disciplinary action.

g. Chromebook Cases

Students will be responsible for providing their own carrying case. Chromebooks will not be issued to students until they have brought in their case. The carrying case must be the appropriate size for the device. Oversized laptop cases are not recommended.

4. Using Chromebooks

a. Media

- Inappropriate media (pictures, music, movies, etc.) may not be used as Chromebook backgrounds or themes. The presence of such media will result in disciplinary action.
- Inappropriate media (images, videos, etc.) may not be stored on or accessed on the Chromebook. The presence of such media will result in disciplinary action.

b. Audio

- Sound must be muted at all times, unless permission is obtained from a teacher.
- Headphones or earbuds may be used at the discretion of the teachers.
- Students will be required to provide their own personal headphones and/or ear buds (for sanitary reasons) and are expected to bring them every day.

- c. Printing
  - Students are allowed to print directly from their Chromebooks at school.
  - Students may set up their home printers with the Google Cloud Print solution to print from their Chromebooks at home. Information about Google Cloud Print can be obtained here: <http://www.google.com/cloudprint/learn/>.
- d. Network Access and Security
  - Students will log into their Chromebooks using their school issued Google Apps for Education account.
  - Students should never share their account passwords with others, unless requested by an administrator.
- e. Managing and Saving Digital Work with a Chromebook
  - The majority of student work will be stored in Internet/cloud based applications and can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection and from most mobile Internet devices.
  - Some files may be stored on the Chromebook's hard drive.
  - Students should always remember to save frequently when working on digital media (although many cloud-based applications, including Google Docs, automatically save work).
  - St. Thomas More will not be responsible for the loss of any student work.
  - Students are encouraged to maintain backups of their important work on a portable storage device or by having multiple copies stored in different Internet storage solutions.

## 5. Student Responsibilities

### a. Following Classroom Guidelines

Students are responsible for following school and classroom specific guidelines and expectations

for use: This means following instructions, guidance, and protocols regarding when and how to use the technology in the instructional setting.

### b. Bringing the Chromebook to school

Students are expected to bring a fully charged Chromebook to school every day and bring their

Chromebooks to all classes, unless specifically advised not to do so by their teacher.

### c. If a student does not bring his/her Chromebook to school

- Not having the device in class will be treated the same as if a student did not bring his/her textbook or homework to class.
- Students should indicate to their teacher that they do not have a Chromebook with them.
- Loaners are available for students who forget their Chromebooks at home provided it is either obtained prior to the start of the school day, or a teacher has given permission for the student to leave class to obtain one.

### d. Chromebooks being repaired

- Loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when their school-issued Chromebook is being repaired.
- A student borrowing a Chromebook must check out the loaner device and will be responsible for any damage to or loss of the loaned device.
- Chromebooks on loan to students having their devices repaired may take the loaner home at the discretion of STM staff. (Students will receive an e-mail notice when their computer is ready. The loaned computer must be turned in to receive the repaired Chromebook.)
- Loaner devices must be treated with the same respect as any other device as outlined in this document.

- e. Charging Chromebooks
  - Chromebooks must be brought to school each day with a full charge.
  - Students should charge their Chromebooks at home every evening.
  - Charging will not be available in the classrooms, but will be available in very limited locations.
  - An uncharged Chromebook indicates a lack of preparation on the student's part and may result in a reduction in points earned towards a daily or weekly grade
- f. Using a Chromebook Outside of School
  - Students are encouraged to use their Chromebooks at home and other locations outside of school. A WiFi Internet connection will be required for the majority of Chromebook use; however, some applications can be used while not connected to the Internet.
  - Students are bound by the St. Thomas More Technology Acceptable Use Policy, Administrative Procedures, the Chromebook agreement, and all other guidelines in this document wherever they use their Chromebooks.

## 6. Operating System and Security

Students may not use or install any operating system on their Chromebooks other than the current version of Chrome OS that is supported and managed by St. Thomas More.

### a. Updates

The Chromebook operating system, Chrome OS, updates itself automatically. Students do not need to manually update their Chromebooks.

### b. Virus Protection

- Chromebooks use the principle of "defense in depth" to provide multiple layers of protection against viruses and malware, including data encryption and verified boot.
- There is no need for additional virus protection.

## 7. Content Filter

The St. Thomas More utilizes an Internet content filter that is in compliance with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Chromebooks will have all Internet access provided by St. Thomas More filtered, protected and monitored by the St. Thomas More. If an educationally valuable site is blocked, students should contact their teachers to request the site be unblocked.

## 8. Software

### a. Google Apps for Education

- Chromebooks seamlessly integrate with the Google Apps for Education (GAPE) suite of productivity and collaboration tools. This includes, but is not limited to Google Docs (word processing), Spreadsheets, Presentations, Drawings, Forms, and Google Classroom.
- All work is stored in the cloud.

### b. Chrome Web Apps and Extensions

- Students will have the ability to download only school approved apps and extensions from the Chrome Web Store.
- Students may be asked to download apps or extensions as part of class work. Students are expected to follow instructions and be prepared for class by having apps or extensions that have been indicated by their teachers.
- Some web apps or extensions will be available to use when the Chromebook is not connected to the Internet.
- Apps are also subject to internet filtering.

## 9. Printing Policy

Students may use printers before/after school and during class with a teacher's permission.

## 10. Chromebook Identification

St. Thomas More will maintain a log of all Chromebooks that includes the Chromebook serial number, asset tag code, and name and ID number of the student assigned to the device. Chromebooks will be checked in and out to the students in a very similar way to when library books are checked in and out.

## 11. Repairing/Replacing Chromebooks

- a. All Chromebooks in need of repair must be brought to Computer Lab and given to the Technology Coordinator as soon as possible.
- b. The Technology Coordinator will analyze and fix the problems that can be fixed onsite. Chromebook problems that required offsite repairs, such as a cracked screen, will be handled by the school office. A loaner machine will be issued to the student while his/her machine is being repaired.
- c. Students are liable for all Chromebook damages due to by misuse, abuse, or accidents.

## 12. Vendor Warranty

- a. Chromebooks include a one year hardware warranty from the vendor.
- b. The vendor warrants the Chromebook from defects in materials and workmanship.
- c. The limited warranty covers normal use, mechanical breakdown, and faulty construction. The vendor will provide normal replacement parts necessary to repair the Chromebook or, if required, a Chromebook replacement.
- d. The vendor warranty does not warrant against damage caused by misuse, abuse, or accidents.

## 13. No Expectation of Privacy

Students have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to any usage of a Chromebook, regardless of whether that use is for St. Thomas More-related or personal purposes, other than as specifically provided by law. St. Thomas More may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use of student Chromebooks at any time for any reason related to the operation of St. Thomas More. By using a Chromebook, students agree to such access, monitoring, and recording of their use. Teachers, school administrators, and the technology department staff may use monitoring software that allows them to view the screens and activity on student Chromebooks.

## 14. Changes to Guidelines

Changes and/or additions may be made to these guidelines during the school year as needed. Students will be notified of any changes and are responsible for adhering to said changes

## Student Google Accounts for Education, Grades 4-8

St. Thomas More School has implemented "Google Accounts for Education" for students and teachers. All students will have accounts allowing for their documents, presentations, and projects to be stored online and accessible from home, school, and anywhere there is an Internet connection. Students can access Google Drive at: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and click on "Drive." Students and teachers will have access to Google Calendar, Google Drive, and Google Sites. Students will also have training on how to use Google Drive for Education.

Please note that students will be given a working email address. The School email accounts must comply with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student emails will be filtered, just as Internet access at school is filtered, to ensure student safety online. Every email sent and received from a school email account (whether from any home, school or public computer or mobile device) goes through filtering software that scans for language and images. Student email addresses will have restrictions on what can be received. St. Thomas More School uses very powerful filtering tools and makes every effort to block inappropriate content; however, technology is ever-evolving. If a student receives any inappropriate emails, they should be reported immediately to an adult and forwarded to Mrs. Felton at [jfelton@stmorenews.com](mailto:jfelton@stmorenews.com).

### Responsible Use Guidelines

Teachers will make every reasonable effort to monitor student conduct related to class content in order to maintain a positive learning environment. All participants will respect the teacher's time and professionalism by supporting the same positive approach. All participants will be respectful in their postings and comments.

1. All rules, regulations, and guidelines already covered by the district's Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) document, as well as all local, state, and federal laws still apply to use of this system. Nothing illegal, immoral, or otherwise deemed inappropriate by all other school policies and outside laws may be entered into or displayed via the Google system.

2. This Google Account is for school projects. Students or staff members using the Google Account for their own purposes are cautioned that St. Thomas More School offers no guarantees to the safety or permanence of ANY data in its Google system. Google files or sites should not be created unless assigned by a teacher or after specific permission by a school employee.

3. When sharing a document, spreadsheet, presentation, sites, or other files with other users, one agrees that:

- all users are agreeable to receiving an invitation to collaborate,
- all users must report any violations of any school policies or government laws immediately,
- all users must be treated with respect, and
- all users are expected to contribute fairly, citing sources whenever necessary, and following all rules, laws, and guidelines.

4. Deliberate destruction or vandalism of other users' data or shared data is prohibited.
5. Nothing should be deleted without the permission of the person who created it.
6. The Google Account will not be used to post any information for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political advocacy, nor will it be used to post any obscene, discriminatory, or offensive material.
7. St. Thomas More School reserves the right to monitor all postings and activities in the Google Account.

***\* Each student in fourth and fifth grade will be assessed a \$75 Technology fee to help defray the cost of routine maintenance and software upgrades. This fee does not cover damage or neglect.***

In addition to the Terms and Conditions noted in this letter, students must comply with St. Thomas More School's Technology Acceptable Use Policy. Access to and use of the student's Google account is considered a privilege. St. Thomas More School maintains the right to terminate the access and use of their Google account when there is reason to believe that violations of law or Archdiocesan policies have occurred. The alleged violation will be directed to the Assistant Principal and addressed according to the procedures outlined in the student handbook.

Google and St. Thomas More School take student privacy very seriously. We must comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). If you would like more information on Google's privacy policies please visit:

<http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtm>

## ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL SCHOOL BOARD

### ARTICLE I: NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of this organization shall be the ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

### ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The St. Thomas More Parish School Board (the "Board") is established in accordance with Archdiocesan policy to assist the Pastor and Principal in the governance of St. Thomas More Parish School. The Board will be an advisory and consultative body; that is, the members cannot act individually or apart from the Pastor. In addition, the Board cannot make decisions binding on the Parish School without the approval of the Pastor. Consultation also means the following:

1. The Principal of the school will give due consultation to the advice of the Board with respect to those matters which are the responsibility of the Board.
2. The Principal will not act contrary to the advice given by the Board without an overriding reason which is promptly communicated to the Board.

The Board will be responsible for the following areas:

#### Section A: Policy Formation/Enactment.

The policies of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston are the policies of St. Thomas More Parish School. The Board shall formulate and adopt any additional policies deemed necessary for operation of the school, provided such policies do not conflict with the Archdiocesan policies.

#### Section B: Planning

The Board and School Administration shall prepare a long-range (5 year) plan. The plan shall set forth a statement of goals. The plan shall be prepared after due consideration of information received from the Pastor, administration, parents and faculty. The plan shall be reviewed, refined and updated by the Board and Principal on a yearly basis.

#### Section C: Finance

The Principal and Board Finance Committee shall prepare an annual budget which reflects the long-range plan for the school and which incorporates sound financial strategies. The annual budget shall be presented to the Board at the January meeting. The budget will be finalized and approved by the Pastor by June 15<sup>th</sup> of current school year. After such approval, the budget shall be presented to the Parish Council for approval of the subsidy at the February Parish Council meeting. Fiscal policy shall include the coordination and implementation of efforts to seek appropriate additional revenue sources to supplement tuition and subsidy payments.

#### Section D: Principal.

In the event of a vacancy in the position of the Principal, the Superintendent of the Catholic Schools office will be notified by the Pastor. The process of selecting a new Principal will be subject to the Catholic Schools Office procedure policy of selecting Principals for the Archdiocesan Schools. Once candidates have been identified and

processed by the Catholic Schools Office, the Pastor will be notified as to the possible candidates to be considered for an interview by the Parish interview committee. The President, in consultation with the Pastor, shall establish a search committee consisting of: (i) not less than three members of the Board; and (ii) such other committee members as the Pastor may be appropriate or as may be required by Archdiocesan policies.

The search committee shall interview suitable nominees and make recommendations regarding such nominees to the Pastor for selection and hiring, such selection shall however be at the discretion of the Pastor.

#### Section E: Development.

The Board shall encourage and support long-range planning that reflects and supports the philosophy and mission of the school and that provides for the financial viability of the school. The Board shall take such action as may be appropriate to make its development efforts known to the school, parish, alumni and community-at-large.

#### Section F: Evaluation.

In February of each year, the Board shall have input in assisting the Pastor in evaluating the Principal's performance and administrative implementation of policies. In addition, in May of each year, the Board shall evaluate its own performance over the preceding year and, as part of such evaluation, determine whether the goals and plans formulated by the Board are being satisfied.

### ARTICLE III: DECISION MAKING

The decision making process of this Board shall be by consensus whenever possible. If the Board is unable to reach a consensus, the decision shall be made by a majority of the members present at a duly held meeting at which a quorum is present. All Board decisions must have the approval of the Pastor

### ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Membership will consist of nine members, seven of which shall be appointed (pursuant to Article V below) members. The other two members shall be the Pastor and the Principal as ex-officio, non-voting members. The Pastor and the Principal may from time to time appoint a delegate to represent him or her at any meeting of the Board. Additionally, the Pastor and/or the Principal may at any time designate an assistance to assist him or her at any meeting of the Board.

Persons in the following categories may NOT be considered as candidates for the Board:

- Employees of the Parish and school, whether teaching or non-teaching personnel;
- Spouses, children or siblings of employees of the Parish/school;
- More than one member of an immediate family at a time.

## ARTICLE V: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

### Section A: Nominating Committee.

A nominating committee comprised of the Board President and at least two other Board members, shall be established each year at the March Board meeting. This committee shall compile a slate of candidates who meet the eligibility conditions outlined under Article V, Section B below. A complete slate of candidates shall be presented at the April Board meeting. The process of discernment should be used to select new members of the board. All new members must have the approval of the Pastor in consultation with the Principal.

### Section B: Eligibility.

Prospective nominees must meet the following criteria:

1. No Nominee may be a member of the nominating committee or a spouse of a nominating committee member.
2. Nominees must meet one or more of the following: (i) have one or more children in pre-school through 8th grade at the time of appointment; or (ii) be an active member of the St. Thomas More Parish.
3. All of the requirements contained in Article IV above.

## ARTICLE VI: TERM OF OFFICE/VACANCIES/REMOVAL

### Section A: Term.

Term of office for each member shall be three years beginning immediately after the May regular Board meeting following their respective appointment continuing until the conclusion of the regular Board meeting in May of the third year following such appointment. No member shall be appointed to more than two consecutive terms. A member shall not be eligible for re-appointment for at least one year after the end of his/her second consecutive term.

### Section B: Vacancies.

In the event of a vacancy on the Board, the unexpired terms may be filled by an appointee chosen by the remaining members on the Board with the Pastor's approval in consultation with the Principal at the time the vacancy occurs. The appointee must meet the qualifications outlined under Article V, Section B: Eligibility.

### Section C: Failure to Meet Eligibility Requirements.

Any member shall be automatically removed from the Board by the Pastor (without any action on the part of the Board) if such member ceases to meet the eligibility requirements set forth for nominees in Article V, Section B, Part 3 above. In such event, the Board may fill the vacancy created by such removal pursuant to Section B of this Article.

#### Section D: Removal.

Any member may be subject to removal by the Pastor in consultation with the Board members and the Principal for any reasonable cause, including, by way of example, the failure to attend three or more meetings in a twelve-month period. Such member will be notified by the President prior to any such decision and shall be given an opportunity to respond.

#### Section E: Training/Orientation.

Members shall participate in at least one training session during their service that is specifically designed by the Galveston-Houston Archdiocesan School Council for local boards. The Board President must provide an orientation detailing the work of the board for all new members.

### ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

#### Section A: Officers.

1. The officers of the Board shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board may with the approval of the Pastor also elect one or more Assistant Secretaries and/or Assistant Treasurers. No person (other than an Assistant Secretary or Assistant Treasurer) shall hold more than one office. All officers shall be elected (or appointed) members of the Board.

2. The Board may appoint with the approval of the Pastor such other officers and assistant officers as it deems necessary or appropriate. Such officers shall hold their offices for such terms, exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board by resolution not inconsistent with these bylaws.

3. The President shall have at least one year prior experience as a Board member. All other Board members are eligible for the remaining offices.

4. Any vacancy occurring in any office by resignation or otherwise shall be filled by the Board with the approval of the Pastor.

#### Section B: Election/Term of Office.

The Board officers shall be elected by the Board with the approval of the Pastor prior to the June regular Board meeting. Term of office for each officer begins upon election and continues until the conclusion of the May regular Board meeting following such election. A vacancy in any office may be filled by appointment by the Board with the approval of the Pastor and the officer appointed to fill such vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of such office.

## Section C: Duties.

1. President. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, enforce the bylaws, follow the meeting agenda, and ensure participation of all Board members. The President in consultation with the Principal shall appoint ad-hoc committees and be ex-officio member of these committees. The President shall perform other duties as designated by the Board with the approval of the Pastor. The President will work with the Principal to prepare the agenda prior to all meetings and the appointment of all committees unless specified by the Board or the Pastor.
2. Vice President. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence. The Vice President shall also perform such other duties and have such other authority and powers as the Board may from time to time prescribe, or as the President may from time to time delegate.
3. Secretary and Assistant Secretaries. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and record all of the proceedings of the meetings in a minute book to be kept for the purpose. The Secretary shall also perform similar duties for the standing committees when required. The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board or the President. The Secretary shall publish all minutes of regular Board meetings prior to the next succeeding Board meeting. The Secretary will also be responsible for all correspondence and preserve all records and documents of the Board. The Assistant Secretaries, in the order of their seniority unless otherwise determined by the Board, shall, in the absence or disability of the Secretary, perform the duties and have such other powers as the Board may from time to time prescribe or as the President may from time to time delegate.
4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall work with the Principal to prepare a financial report to the Board regarding the school's revenue and expenditures. The Assistant Treasurers, in the order of their seniority unless otherwise determined by the Board, shall, in the absence or disability of the Treasurer, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Treasurer. They shall perform such other duties as approved by the Pastor and have such other powers as the Board may from time to time prescribe or the President may from time to time delegate.

## ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

### Section A: Regular Meetings.

The Board will meet in its regular meetings on the first Tuesday of every month excluding July, unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the Board and provided that such change shall be communicated to the parents of the students of the school by reasonably effective means (such as posting on the school website, notices from the Principal sent home with the students, etc.). No meetings will be postponed without good and sufficient cause. All regular Board meetings shall be open to the public, except that portion of such meetings dealing with personnel or other confidential matters. Nonmembers of the Board may address the Board with the approval of the President and Principal as described in Section E below.

## Section B: Special Meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the Pastor, Principal, President, or a majority of the Board, as necessary, upon reasonable notice to all Board members.

## Section C: Quorum.

A majority of the voting Board members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of a majority of the voting Board members at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the Board, unless otherwise specifically provided by these bylaws.

## Section D: Voting.

Only elected members of the Board (and members appointed to replace such members) are eligible to vote.

## Section E: Presentations to the Board.

A person may address the Board provided a written request is given to the Principal and Board President ten (10) working days prior to a scheduled meeting and is accepted for inclusion on the agenda. Presentations to the Board should:

1. Have a time limit;
2. Nothing of a confidential nature should be addressed, such as discipline problems or personnel issues. (The Pastor, Principal or Board President may at any time stop the presentation if it is of a sensitive nature.)
3. No discussion with the presenter will follow the presentation.
4. A written response from the School Board President will be sent to the presenter within five (5) working days of the presentation.

## ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

### Section A: Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Principal. The duties of the Executive Committee shall plan the agenda for all regular Board meetings, with input from all Board Members.

### Section B: Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee shall consist of the President, Treasurer, Principal, parish Finance Chairman, and Pastor (or the Pastor's delegate). This committee and the Principal shall prepare and present a recommended budget to the Board each year.

### Section C: Ad-hoc Committees.

The President in consultation with the Principal may from time to time designate such additional committees as may be necessary or appropriate. Such committees shall consist of at least one member of the Board and such other committee members as may be designated by the President. Any ad-hoc committee shall have and may exercise such powers as the President may determine and specify. A majority of all

the members of any such committee shall determine its action, unless the President shall otherwise provide.

The President in consultation with the Principal shall have the power at any time to change the number and members of any such committee, to fill vacancies, and to discharge any such committee. The actions and recommendations of the ad-hoc committees shall not be binding on the Board except as specifically provided by the Board.

#### ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

The bylaws may be amended by a vote of at least five of the Board members and must have the approval of the Pastor. The amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Board 30 days prior to consideration.

These by-laws amend, supersede, and completely restate all prior bylaws of the Board. These by-laws will become effective after the following:

1. The restatement of the by-laws are submitted in writing at a meeting of the Board.
2. The bylaws are approved at a subsequent meeting by a vote of at least five of the voting members of the Board and the Pastor.

*\*Approved as of September 1, 2012 by Rev. William Oliver*

## **POLICIES OF THE ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

1. The policies of the St. Thomas More Parish School Board are those of the Archdiocesan Board of Education and any additional policies deemed necessary for the operation of the school. These additional policies shall not conflict with or contradict any Archdiocesan Board of Education policy. The Archdiocesan Board of Education policies shall control to the extent these additional policies conflict with the Archdiocesan policies.
2. The curriculum offerings at St. Thomas More Parish School shall be those prescribed by the Archdiocesan School Office and the State of Texas.
3. All children attending St Thomas More Parish School shall follow the prescribed educational and religious curriculum.
4. St. Thomas More Parish School shall maintain acceptable standards and provide for the needs of the students in accordance with accreditation standards.
5. St. Thomas More Parish School shall abide by state and diocesan requirements regarding admission. Such requirements shall be made available to prospective families. Admission requirements shall be administered in a manner which does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, or national origin.
6. Tuition rates shall be set by the St Thomas More Parish School Board with the approval of the Pastor. Any departure from the rates set by the Board shall be on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Pastor. All financial obligations to the School shall be current, or otherwise provided for, in order to insure continued enrollment in the current or succeeding school year. If all financial obligations are not paid or provided for by June 1st, the student's reservation may be canceled.
7. All school-sponsored extracurricular activities and field trips shall have an educational or religious purpose.
8. Insured carriers which are licensed to carry school groups shall be utilized for the transportation of students for field trips. Students shall be allowed to leave the school premises for field trips only when accompanied by a faculty member. Students shall be allowed to attend field trips only with a signed permission slip from their parent/ guardian. Arrangements for transportation to and from extracurricular activities shall be made by the parents.
9. Students shall adhere to the School's Code of Conduct and shall be subject to its disciplinary measures.
10. A uniform dress code shall be established for the students.
11. Students shall have an acceptable excuse from a parent or guardian for any absence.
12. Students shall be supervised at all times during school hours by a faculty member or other designated adult supervisor.
13. Regular performance appraisals shall be conducted with all staff and faculty members and written records of such appraisals shall be retained.
14. Professional and personal references shall be checked (unless otherwise checked by the Archdiocese) before making offers of permanent employment. All professional staff shall be employed under written contracts promulgated by the Archdiocese. The School shall adhere to the ethical and personnel policies of the Archdiocese.
15. All faculty and staff shall adhere to all applicable child abuse reporting laws. Such laws shall be reviewed annually with the faculty and staff.

16. Divorced and separated parents shall notify the School regarding custody arrangements of their children. These policies supersede all previously formulated policies by past Boards.

*\*APPROVED this 2nd day of June, 2004 by Rev. William L. Young III, Pastor.*

## SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: 2021-2022 School Year

James Peery
Eric Meyer
Travis Warden
Rita Touma
Heather Gallagher
Christopher Felan
Kurt Kelly
Fr. Clark Sample - Pastor
Carolina Bowman - Principal

In addition, the School Board will occasionally create ad hoc committees to investigate or address specific issues under the Board's governance. These committees are generally comprised of current Board members and are usually temporary in duration.

## Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

St. Thomas More is more than a school! It is a community of families who care for each other and for their children. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) brings this community together in family-oriented events, as well as supporting the efforts of teachers and school staff to make St. Thomas More School an enriching environment for the students. The success of the PTO depends on each family contributing their time and their skills to support our students and our school. It is this involvement that allows the school to provide an excellent education while keeping tuition rates down.

Volunteering is a great way to support your child and his/her education, get to know other parents, the teachers and the environment in which your child spends so much of his/her time. It also gives you the opportunity to promote the type of educational environment you would like for your child. As we teach by example, our children learn the importance of giving back to the community.

As our busy schedules change from year to year, it is important to plan to volunteer. Some tasks take a great deal of time, others very little, but please put forth the effort. It will not go unnoticed, and you'll feel great knowing that you contribute to making S.T.M. a better place for our children. NOTE: Volunteers must complete the Catholic Mutual Group Safe Environment training (formerly Virtus). Please contact the school office for further information.

Contacts for the following Parent Teacher Organization activities and services noted here are listed at the end of this section.

**Auction Night** - Volunteers have the opportunity to assist with a variety of tasks, which include decorating, obtaining donated items, assisting at the event, etc. More information about this event will be sent to parents at a later date.  
**Commitment** - from as little as one hour to numerous hours, depending on your availability.

**Oktoberfest** - Numerous volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks to help support this event. Help with raffle tickets, sponsoring or working a booth, making crafts, assisting with setup and teardown are a few examples. **Commitment** - varied depending on your availability.

**Educational Assistants** -- Volunteers assist with presentations and/or projects as requested by teachers. Volunteers serve as speakers, providing manipulatives or hands-on learning tools to enhance the presentation of specific subjects in the curriculum. **Commitment** - anything from one time to short term to ongoing depending upon the application and your availability.

**Library Assistants** -- Volunteers assist with checking out books, reading to students, cataloging and shelving books, and other library related projects. **Commitment** - ½ day once a week during the regular library time (7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.) You can commit to one or both semesters!

## Support Services:

**Homeroom Volunteers** -- Volunteers call each parent for your child's class to introduce yourself and request emergency phone numbers. Throughout the year it may be necessary to contact each family regarding schedule changes or special class functions. Volunteers provide assistance to the teachers as needed.

Homeroom Volunteers arrange for homeroom parents to provide cake and goodies for the birthday celebration of teachers and staff personnel. Homeroom Volunteers work with homeroom parents in organizing All-Saints, Christmas, and Valentine celebrations for your child's class. They also provide food or arrange for homeroom parents to provide food for various receptions throughout the school year (i.e., Parent's Coffee, Teacher Appreciation Luncheon). They help organize and host one function for a class, other than your child's class (thereby permitting you to enjoy a function with your child while another class provides hostesses). Homeroom Volunteers organize and arrange for homeroom parents to help at one activity for Field Day. Detailed instructions for each activity will be provided. Commitment - continuous throughout the school year.

Responsibilities to organize and host functions are as follows

- Grade K T-shirts design for Field Day ;8th Grade Retreat Dinner
- Grade 3 Host First Communion Reception
- Grade 4 Setup First Communion & 8th Grade Graduation receptions
- Grade 5 8th Grade Graduation Reception (May), Host La Posadas
- Grade 7 8th Grade Graduation Dance (May)
- Grade 8 8th Grade Winter Dance

**Office Assistants** - Volunteers assist with clerical work as well as duplicate and collate material for teachers. Commitment - ½ day once a week.

**Traffic Safety Patrol** - Volunteers help direct and patrol traffic, and assist students getting from their cars before school. Commitment - school days 7:30 - 8:00 A.M. one or more days each week as you are available.

**Field Day** - Volunteers coordinate the overall event with Room Mothers and other parent volunteers providing the workforce for games and booths. Commitment - efforts generally start in February; the event is held one half day during the last week of school.

**Newcomer Buddies** - Volunteers assist with the orientation of new families joining our school for the first time. Commitment - One brief meeting and occasional phone conversations to answer questions as needed throughout the year.

**Family Night Out** - Family Night Out is a fun night for parents and kids. Volunteers are needed to supervise the evening, coordinate refreshments, and be on hand to sign the children in and out. Commitment - one or two evenings a year.

**Social Events Committee** - Volunteers help plan, coordinate refreshments, and set up for Parent Teacher Organization meetings and socials including Back to School Coffee, Back to School Dance, and, Grandparents' Day . Commitment - occasional, as meetings or events are scheduled throughout the year.

Used Uniform Sale - The Coordinator notifies parents of the date selected for the sale of used uniforms in good condition. Uniforms are priced by the parents selling them and proceeds are returned to the parents after the sale. Commitment - A few volunteers are needed to assist in organizing uniforms by size and collecting payment the day of the sale. Sales are held in August before school begins and during the year as the need arises and assistance is available.

## **St. Thomas More Parent-Teacher Organization By-Laws and Preamble**

We, the members of the St. Thomas More Parent-Teacher Organization, believe that God has a unique plan for each of our children and we share in Christ's work by developing their God-given character, individual abilities, and talents.

We, the members of the St. Thomas More Parent-Teacher Organization, desire to promote a profound appreciation of the highest moral standards and ideals of Catholicism in students, parents, teachers and administrators. St. Thomas More School must embrace and project these Catholic values not only with its students but with the parish community and the community at large.

### Article I: Name

The name of the organization shall be the St. Thomas More Parent-Teacher Organization, hereinafter referred to as the PTO.

### Article II: Objectives and Responsibilities

#### 1. The objectives of the PTO Shall be to:

- Enhance cooperation and communication among parents, faculty, administrators, School Board members, and the Pastor in order to secure for every student the spiritual, physical, emotional, and academic opportunities available at St. Thomas More School.
- Support parents in educating their children in the home by providing information on educational and parenting methods.
- Affirm, promote and enhance a positive image of St. Thomas More School within our parish community and the community at large.
- Assist as required by the Pastor, in scheduling and coordinating school fund raising and other related events.

2. The PTO shall work cooperatively with the Pastor, the Principal, the faculty, and the School Board to execute the objectives of the PTO as set forth in Article II (1) of these by laws.

3. The PTO shall make recommendations to the Pastor, the Principal, the faculty and the School Board regarding matters relating to the objectives of the PTO.

4. The Pastor has the responsibility and final authority in all matters connected to the PTO and the PTO shall function in cooperation with him.

5. The work of the PTO shall be carried on by the PTO officers and through appointed Standing Committees and Special Committees.

6. The decision making process of the Executive Board and the PTO Officers, as both groups are defined in Article VI, shall be by consensus whenever possible. If the Executive Board of the PTO Officers are unable to reach a consensus, decisions shall be made by a majority of the members present at the Executive Board meeting at which a quorum is present.

### Article III: Membership and Dues

1. The PTO general membership shall include all parents or guardians of children attending St. Thomas More School, the Pastor, the Parish Priests and Deacons, the Principal, and all members of the St. Thomas More School faculty.
2. The dues for family membership shall be determined annually by the PTO Officers and approved by the Executive Board prior to registration for the following school year.
3. The Pastor, the Parish Priests and Deacons, the Principal, and all St. Thomas More School faculty shall be members automatically without payment of dues.

### Article IV: Meetings and Quorums

1. The Executive Board shall meet as needed, but no less than two (2) times per year.
2. A quorum for the transacting business at a PTO Officers meeting shall be at least three PTO Officers, one of which must be the President or Co-President.
3. General PTO membership meetings shall be set by the PTO Officers. Such meetings shall occur no less than three (3) times per year.
4. A quorum for the transacting business at a general PTO membership meeting shall consist of those members present.
5. A general PTO membership meeting shall be held each Spring for the purpose of introducing the incoming PTO Officers and the presenting of annual reports of the Executive Board and the Standing and Special Committees.
6. A quorum for transacting business at an Executive Board Meeting shall be at least the PTO President, one Faculty Representative and two other PTO Officers
7. All meetings of the Officers, Executive Board and the general PTO membership shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, when not inconsistent with these bylaws.

### Article V - Duties of the Executive Board and PTO Officers

1. The Executive Board shall have full responsibility for the PTO's leadership and direction and shall set PTO procedures and establish long term goals. The Executive Board shall consist of the Pastor (ex- officio), the Principal (ex- officio), a minimum of two Faculty Representatives, the President, the Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, the President Elect, and the Volunteer Coordinator.
2. The President or Co-Presidents shall:
  - Represent the PTO at the School Board Meetings - (in years with Co- Presidents, one President will be designated)
  - Be responsible for coordinating all committees c. Serve as ex-officio members on all committees
  - Convene Executive Board and general PTO membership meetings as required by these bylaws as necessary
  - Report and make recommendations to the Executive Board
  - Preside over Executive Board and general PTO membership meetings
  - Communicate with Pastor, Principal and School Board on behalf of the PTO
  - Set Officer, Executive Board and general PTO membership agendas

3. The President Elect shall:
  - Attend all PTO meetings in order to have the knowledge of the position of President and to maintain informed regarding all issues.
  - Represent an active role in the PTO with suggestions and information
  - The President-elect shall assume position of President in next school year.
4. The Vice President shall:
  - Report to the other PTO Officers and the Executive Board on the activities of the committees with reporting responsibility to the Vice President
  - Coordinate recommendations regarding changing or amending these bylaws
  - Chair the Nominating Committee
  - Fulfill the duties of the President in his or her absence.
5. The Secretary shall:
  - Record the attendance and minutes of all Executive Board meetings and general PTO membership meetings.
  - Be responsible for all written communications to the general PTO membership.
  - Conduct the correspondence of the PTO
  - Maintain the PTO's files
6. The Treasurer shall:
  - Be responsible for membership dues collection
  - Report financial status of the PTO and make recommendations regarding such to the Executive Board and the general PTO membership.
  - Assume financial reporting responsibility for all PTO sponsored fund raising activities
  - Prepare the Annual Budget
7. The Volunteer Coordinator shall:
  - Attend PTO meeting
  - Oversee and coordinate the annual tear-sheet process. This includes coordination of the receipts of all offers of assistance, matching volunteers appropriately and the acknowledgment of each volunteer's offer of help.
  - Recruit volunteers as needed for multiple activities throughout the year. d. Interact with Room Mother coordinators as necessary
  - Coordinate information and volunteers to provide articles for the Promotor as appropriate.

#### Article VI: Term of Office, Vacancies and Removal

1. The term of office for the PTO Officers shall commence the day after the last day of school.
2. PTO Officers shall serve a term of one year. No Officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive years. An Officer shall not be eligible for re-election or appointment for at least one year after the end of his/her second or third consecutive term. A first year officer may elect to run for President-Elect.
3. In the event any Office or Offices of the PTO becomes vacant, the remaining Officers of the PTO shall make the necessary appointment or appointments as soon as practicable. Such appointments shall be made by a unanimous vote of the remaining Officers of the PTO.

4. Any Officer of the PTO may be removed for reasonable cause from that Office by the unanimous vote of the other Officers. Such voting shall be done in good faith while considering the objectives of the PTO, as set forth in Article II (1) of these bylaws.

#### Article VII: Nominations and Elections

1. The Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee at least sixty (60) days before the Annual Election in the Spring for the purpose of nominating qualified people to serve as PTO Officers. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Vice President, acting as Chairperson, a Faculty Representative, one other PTO Officer, and one person from the general PTO membership.
2. The Nominating Committee shall present a proposed slate of nominees who have consented to serve as Officers, if elected, consisting of at least one nominee for each PTO officer position.
  - The Nominating Committee shall present the proposed slate to the PTO Officers for majority approval at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Election in the Spring. The President-elect shall assume position of President in the next school year. Positions to be filled each year would be President elect, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. In the event that the President-elect cannot assume the position, then the President-elect will be on the ballot as well.
  - Additional nominations of the PTO members may be made providing those nominees' consent have been attained and said names have been submitted in writing to the Nominating Committee at least five (5) days prior to the distribution of the ballots.
3. Prospective nominees must meet the following criteria:
  - No nominee may be a spouse of another nominee.
  - No nominee may be an employee of the school.
  - Nominees must have one or more children in Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade at the time of election.
  - Nominees may not serve concurrently on the Parish Council or the School Board during their term of office.
4. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for the following:
  - Preparing the official ballots. The nominees' position on the ballot shall be based on a random drawing by the Nominating Committee.
  - Distributing two ballots to every family with children in Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade two weeks prior to the Annual Election.
  - Providing a sealed ballot box in the school office.
5. The election shall close at 3:00 p.m. on the tenth day after the ballots are issued, and the winners shall be determined by a simple plurality. The ballots shall be counted and recorded by at least two PTO Officers. Such Officers shall not be currently serving on the Nominating Committee. The Officers responsible for counting and recording the ballots shall promptly notify the Executive Board and the nominees of the election results.

#### Article VIII: Special Committees and Standing Committees

1. A Standing Committee is a committee fulfilling a long term, ongoing objective of the PTO. A Special Committee is a committee fulfilling a specific short term need.
2. The Officers shall establish all Standing Committees and Special Committees and appoint Chairpersons, as necessary.
3. The Officers shall have the power to remove any Chairperson of a Standing or Special Committee for responsible cause. Such removal shall be done in good faith while considering the objectives of the PTO, as set forth in Article II (1) of these bylaws.
4. All Standing Committees and Special Committees shall report their findings and recommendations to the PTO Officers as requested by the Officers.

#### Article IX: Amendments and Changes to these bylaws

1. Proposed amendments and changes to these bylaws shall be submitted in writing to the Vice President for submission to the PTO Officers.
2. If the proposed amendments or changes to these bylaws are approved by at least two Officers of the PTO, they may then be presented to the general PTO membership.
3. The proposed amendments or changes to these bylaws may be adopted at any general PTO membership meeting scheduled with sufficient written notice to the general PTO membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members returning the ballot.

*\*Approved March, 1996.*

**PTO BOARD MEMBERS  
2021-2022 School Year**

President	Karen De La Torre
VP/President-Elect	Tammy Mouton
Past President	Stephanie Lester
Secretary	Bernadette Titus
Treasurer	Christie Booth
Volunteer Coordinator	Sammie Mansueto
Events Coordinator	Roni Kentner
Communications/Social Media	Hannah Collins
At Large Pre-K	Jasmin Lazo
At Large K-3	Hilary Sullivan
At Large 4-5	Lauren Ladwig
At Large 6-8	Charli Carnes

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