



*St. Thomas Aquinas School*

# Parent/Student Handbook

**St. Thomas Aquinas School  
1100 Hood Road  
Rio Rancho, NM 87124  
505/892-3221**

Policies are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Pastor, Principal,  
and the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.  
Until such notice is given, however, policies are to be adhered to as written.  
Should clarification be needed, please see the principal.

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# **Mission Statement and History of St. Thomas Aquinas School**

*Empowering each other as educated Catholics  
to build the Kingdom of God today and forever.*

St. Thomas Aquinas School opened August 14, 2000 and was established as a co-educational parish school. It was accredited through the North Central Accreditation Agency (NCA) in April 2001, reaccredited in October, 2005 and last reaccredited in March, 2010. Recently, the school underwent an accreditation process with Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) and received accreditation from 2018 through 2024. Through limited class enrollment in Grades PreK through 8 and a variety of teachings styles, the school strives to meet the needs of our students and develop their innate abilities. Its programs encompass quality experiences in the arts, sciences, and humanities, as well as encouraging self-expression and creativity.

Our school is an integral part of the ministry of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. We share its mission of giving greater honor and glory to God and seeking the salvation of souls. We are in total commitment and absolute obedience to our Lord, Jesus Christ, in full communion with His Holy Catholic Church and all her teachings. Thus, we seek to educate and empower our students with a traditional Catholic view; which recognizes the sacred dignity of each individual and equips our students to grow personally in holiness and to influence the world in a truly Christian manner.

St. Thomas Aquinas School provides a Catholic, family-like atmosphere and a holistic educational experience for its students, consistent with the vision of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and the Religious Teachers Filippini. It teaches Gospel values, models Catholic ideals, fosters academic excellence, enhances self-worth and develops leadership. Members of diverse cultures and socio-economic groups benefit from this experience.

The Faculty, Staff and Administration of St. Thomas Aquinas School welcome you into our school.

*Be it known to all who enter  
St. Thomas Aquinas School  
that Christ is the reason for this school.  
He is unseen,  
but is ever present in its classes.  
He is the model of its faculty  
and the inspiration of its students.*



## Discretionary Statement

Acceptance and attendance at a Catholic School is a **privilege**. The pastor and Principal reserve the right to dismiss students and/or families who abuse the responsibility associated with this privilege. Responsibility includes respect of all administrators, faculty and staff members. The pastor and Principal have the right to amend the handbook for just cause, with parents being given prompt notification if changes are made. Notwithstanding any other provision or provisions contained herein, the pastor and Principal of the school retain the right to interpret and apply any and all provisions contained in this handbook at their sole and absolute discretion. The Principal or the Principal's designee, reserves the right to modify the policy based on individual need.

## Contract

This handbook is a **contract**. It exists between the school and the students/parents. Enrollment in the student body of St. Thomas Aquinas School indicates the acceptance of these policies and regulations by the students and their parents. Those students and/or parents who register and find that they are unable to abide by the contract as outlined in any part of this handbook will be asked to leave the school. **The handbook is accepted as agreed to upon enrollment through FACTS acknowledgement during the enrollment process.**

## Philosophy

St. Thomas Aquinas School, conducted by the Religious Teachers Filippini, is a parochial school. We follow the policies of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe while serving the needs of Catholic education in St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. It is dedicated to creating and preserving an educational environment conducive to learning and to true human and Christian growth.

True to its distinctive Catholic academic nature, St. Thomas Aquinas School has a commitment to studies, which involve the whole person. Thus, the educative process is not carried out through academic activity alone, but through participation in common religious, cultural and recreational events within the framework of both school and community. Inspired by the vision of the Church, which reaches out to embrace all people, St. Thomas Aquinas School fosters and sustains dialogue with people of different beliefs while maintaining the Catholic character of the school. Within this climate, the student should attain academic and vocational goals, an understanding and acceptance of a personal role in society, an appreciation and implementation of Christian values, and a capacity to adapt to a future-related direction.

# Objectives

St. Thomas Aquinas School is uniquely endowed with an atmosphere which contributes to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural, and aesthetic growth of our students.

The objectives of our school are:

- To foster knowledge of the Roman Catholic Church, its teachings, values and mission and to maintain the vision of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and the Religious Teachers Filippini;
- To provide students with opportunities for faith experiences directed toward a realization of Christianity as a way of life permeating their values, judgments, decisions and actions;
- To promote a reverence for the home and the sacredness of the family unit;
- To foster genuine love, respect, and understanding of life and all its aspects and to encourage compassion for others and devotion to the cause of social justice;
- To assist students in achieving self-confidence by developing individual potential, powers of critical thinking, initiative, and creativity;
- To foster the knowledge and skill needed for a lifetime of intellectual growth and academic excellence;
- To promote an appreciation of the Arts as the most enduring expression of the human spirit and to encourage individual creativity to that end;
- To provide programs, which promote and maintain healthy living and emotional maturity and which develop leadership qualities, responsibility, and good sportsmanship;
- To promote good communication skills necessary for effective interpersonal relationships and to nurture the ability to work constructively in a group setting;
- To help students become aware of socially useful and satisfying vocations; and
- To foster respect and cooperation among the students, families, faculty, staff, and administration, by addressing individual and group needs, recognizing individual and group accomplishments and promoting professional growth and development.

# **Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic School Policy Manual**

*The Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic School Policy Manual governs all Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school. (ASF/CSPM#1300)*

## **Admission Policies Statement**

*All Catholic preschools, elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall admit only those students who sincerely seek a Catholic education.*

*For admission purposes, preference is given to students who are practicing Catholics, who have a basic knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, and who are registered members of a parish or mission within the Archdiocese.*

*By applying for admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school, parents or legal guardians acknowledge and agree that their student will participate in religious instruction and formation in the Catholic faith. By applying for admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school, parents or legal guardians acknowledge and agree that they will support the philosophy and mission of the Catholic school and all Catholic teachings. No student will be refused admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school because of race, color, national origin, or gender.*

*Each school shall have a written admissions policy in its Parent/Student Handbook that shall include the following:*

- A. All students must be in compliance with the minimum age requirements of the State of New Mexico in order to enroll; students entering Kindergarten must be 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup>.*
- B. Locally set admission priorities and/or preferences including:
  - 1. Dates for application, registration, testing, admission acceptance and parent/student commitment procedures and deadlines;*
  - 2. An interview with the parent or legal guardian and student, when possible; and*
  - 3. A statement regarding application, tuition and other fees.**
- C. If a student applies to transfer from one Parish/Regional school to another (except in the case of a student who is entering high school), the Principal/Preschool Director of the school to which the student wishes to transfer may request that the parents or legal guardians of the student provide a reason for the requested transfer.*
- D. If a student applies to transfer from one Parish/Regional school to another (except in the case of a student who is entering high school), the Principal/Director of the school to which the student wishes to transfer should confer with the Principal/Preschool Director of the school from which the student wishes to transfer.*

### Home-Schooled Students

- A. Parents or legal guardians who seek admission to a Parish/Regional school, or the Archdiocesan high school for children who have been home-schooled shall provide proper documentation to the school that will allow the school to properly evaluate and place the student. Such documentation shall include, but not be limited to: immunization records, samples of student work, report cards (if applicable), recommendation from the leadership of the home school, copy of curriculum used by the home school*

*with the student, and grade level/subject testing. At the school's discretion, the student may be required to undergo standardized testing or admission testing prior to admission. In the event of such testing, and if it is administered by a third party or agency, the parents or legal guardians of the student may be asked to pay for the testing. The school reserves the right to place the student in the grade or course that the school deems appropriate.*

### Admittance Of Non-Catholic Students

- A. *Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school may admit a student who is not Catholic, provided that this student will not displace a Catholic student, and provided that the student and his/her parents/legal guardians clearly understand that the student will be required to participate in Catholic religious instruction and school activities related to the Catholic identity of the school. Parents/legal guardians of non-Catholic students acknowledge and agree that students will participate in religious instruction and formation in the Catholic faith. By applying for admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school, parents/legal guardians acknowledge and agree that they will support the philosophy and mission of the Catholic school and all Catholic teachings. (ASF/CSPM#2000)*

Acceptance and attendance at a Catholic School is a **privilege**. By registering at St. Thomas Aquinas School, students and their parents indicate their intention to accept the philosophy of the school and observe the school's regulations and policies. Acceptance and continued enrollment will be based on mutual satisfaction.

## New Students

The school accepts applications from families who wish to pre-register up to 6 months in advance of the desired starting year. To reserve a position for a grade, complete an online application form where a \$70 non-refundable application fee per child will be paid online. Pre-registration or application does not guarantee placement in the school.

In the event that an opening is not available for the required grade, the \$70 non-refundable fee must be paid to place your student on a waiting list. Please contact the school registrar for more information. Phone – (505) 892-3221 x 37 or email - registrar@stasnm.net.

Children must be 4 years old by Sept. 1st to begin Pre-Kindergarten and 5 years old by Sept. 1st to begin Kindergarten. All students registered for Kindergarten may be given a screening test to check for school readiness. This testing is generally done in March and April. The Principal may request placement tests for older students transferring from other schools. The Principal may also request an interview with the student and parents. There is currently no assessment for incoming PreK students.

Students transferring from other schools to St. Thomas Aquinas must take placement tests in math and reading. The placement tests are administered throughout the school year. The registrar will schedule a testing date. Students entering mid-school are required to visit the school for a day. The placement tests will be administered during the visit. The Principal may also request an interview with the student and parents.

If a student is transferring from another Archdiocesan elementary school, the Principal will request that the parents provide a reason for the transfer. In addition, the Principal will confer with the Principal of the school from which the student wishes to transfer.

A non-refundable registration fee is due once a student has been accepted for enrollment. Tuition rates and other fees are posted on the school's website, [www.stasnm.org](http://www.stasnm.org), under the Admissions tab. For more information about admissions, deadlines, and tuition policies, visit the website.

## **Returning students**

Re-admission of students for the following year is dependent upon the approval of the administration. St. Thomas Aquinas School also reserves the right to refuse re-admission to students who have been dismissed for any reason during the past or present school year.

Consideration will also be made with regards to the following:

### **Parent**

- Completion and submission of the online Re-Enrollment Contract and non-refundable registration fee.
- Regular attendance at Mass with children (Catholic families).
- Participation in sacramental preparation with children.
- Participation in parish and/or school volunteer programs.
- Financial support of school by timely payment of fees and tuition costs through FACTS.

### **Students**

- Evidence of maintaining school regulations in all areas.
- Satisfactory completion of work for each school year.
- Conduct / effort grade average of at least 3.

Students who do not meet the above requirements may be placed on probation during the first quarter.

## **Right to Learn**

Please note that St. Thomas Aquinas School recognizes that every student has a right to learn, and any act by a classmate that interferes with that right will not be tolerated. In order to promote a positive atmosphere for learning, St. Thomas Aquinas School reserves the right to deny admission or re-registration to any student whose past school behavior and/or performance clearly demonstrates the following:

1. Need for education programs outside the normal scope of curriculum at St. Thomas Aquinas School.
2. Notable discipline problems or disruptive behavior, which was documented by way of anecdotal records, detention slips, disciplinary reports, etc.
3. Any other characteristics that in the judgment of the Pastor/Principal would jeopardize an atmosphere of Catholic respect or interfere with other students' opportunities to learn.
4. Serious non-cooperation, interference, antagonism on the part of the parent(s)/ guardian(s) which consistently hampers the order and operation of the school.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

### **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION BY ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS**

All schools must publish their yearly statement affirming non-discriminatory policies regarding race and sex (Title IX) in the treatment of students and the employment practices of the school. These statements are to be in accord with the Catholic Schools Office statements of non-discrimination, which are given below and are to be reprinted in their entirety. Original copies of the statements and methods of publication are to be dated and maintained in the administrative school file. These files are to be available to government and Archdiocesan personnel.

### **ASSURANCE STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE PURPOSES OF TITLE IX EDUCATION ACT**

The Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, under the jurisdiction of Archbishop John C. Wester and at the direction of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, attest that none of the Catholic schools discriminates on the basis of sex in its admission policies, treatment of students or its employment practices.

### **NOTICE OF STUDENT NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, under the jurisdiction of Archbishop John C. Wester and at the direction of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, state that all of their Catholic schools admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. Furthermore, Archdiocesan schools admit handicapped students in accord with Archdiocesan Policy No. 2000 concerning student admission. These schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, age, handicap, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, employment practices, scholarship and loan programs or athletic or other school administered programs. (AFS/CSPM#6200)

## Disabilities Statement

St. Thomas Aquinas School does not have a designated program, facilities or certification designed specifically for students with disabilities. Students with identified and verified physical or learning disabilities must be able to have their needs met in our standard academic program using only those accommodations that do not fundamentally change our mission, program, policies, or staffing. St. Thomas Aquinas School strives to create an environment of support for all students and will work within our capabilities to support students who learn differently or need reasonable accommodations.

## Tuition/Fees

The importance of tuition payments to St. Thomas Aquinas School cannot be over emphasized. Your tuition goes directly to day-to-day school operations and salaries. St. Thomas Aquinas School depends on your tuition payment in order to operate.

- All contractual enrollment forms and agreements must be completed online with a non-refundable registration fee for that year.
- If the online process is not completed, then a place will not be reserved for that student and his/her place may be taken by someone on the waiting list seeking admission.
- In addition, there will be a late fee of \$50.00 assessed to families re-registering after the deadline set in the contract.
- Parents are required to enroll with FACTS Tuition Management Co.– an automatic withdrawal program from checking or savings accounts.
- Students will not be permitted to begin the new school year unless their tuition is paid or arrangements have been made with the office. This includes any incidental fees.
- Obligations to FACTS Tuition Management Co. must be current at the beginning of each semester in order for the student to continue to take exams and continue to be enrolled. Two weeks prior to exams, notification of deficits will be issued. Payment for back tuition must be in the form of cash or money order.
- All financial obligations must be met before report card and/or transcripts will be released. This includes, but is not limited to, tuition, subsidy, lunch charges, book fines, and child care fees.
- Parents can expect tuition to increase periodically due to increases in operation costs that impact the school. Parents will be informed of these increases when new contracts are issued each year.
- Parent and student access to **FACTS SIS** may be suspended until tuition is current.
- The family's financial obligation to St. Thomas Aquinas School is for the student's full annual tuition and no refund of tuition can be made by the School for absences, withdrawals, or dismissals except as provided by The Tuition Refund Plan.
- The family's obligation to pay tuition for the full academic year is **unconditional and after July 1**, no portion of tuition paid or outstanding will be refunded or cancelled in the event of a student's absence, withdrawal or dismissal from the School. If a student withdraws during the period July 1 through the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the academic school year, the family is responsible for the full amount of tuition except in the case of medical causes as defined by The Tuition Refund Plan.

A student is subject to dismissal at any time if his/her tuition is delinquent. Should the tuition remain past due until the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the second month, the child is to be dis-enrolled from the school.

## **The Tuition Refund Plan**

The School provides the Tuition Refund Plan as a means to insure each student's **annual** financial obligation. Participation in the Plan is mandatory and the cost is included in the annual tuition rate. This Plan will provide coverage for the tuition payer in the event of withdrawal of a student for medical causes, withdrawal for other reasons as well as dismissal by the School (annual tuition charges, both prepaid and due, are insured).

The Tuition Refund Plan period of coverage becomes effective as follows:

**Medical:** From August 1 through the last day of the academic year.

**Non-Medical/Dismissal:** For the entire academic year after meeting the fourteen-day attendance requirement. (The non-medical coverage (voluntary withdrawals and dismissals) does not become effective until the student has attended fourteen consecutive calendar days (including weekends) commencing with the student's first class day of attendance in the academic year.)

**Late-entering Students** who commence classes after opening day are enrolled within 10 days after starting classes. Medical coverage begins on the date the premium is received from the School. Non-medical coverage is effective after the student has satisfied the fourteen-day attendance requirement.

In signing the Enrollment Contract, the family authorizes the School to process and collect any claim payments the family is entitled to under The Tuition Refund Plan and credit it to their outstanding tuition balance, paying any excess to the family. A copy of The Tuition Refund Plan Benefits and Benefit Formulas is included in each registration packet.

**CLAIMS TO THE TUITION REFUND PLAN MUST BE MADE WITHIN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF SEPARATION.**

## **Financial Assistance Information**

Financial assistance for tuition is available through FACTS tuition aid. FACTS tuition aid allows families to apply for various scholarships provided by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and other organizations. Log on to [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com) to apply for aid. The Catholic Schools Office offers aid through the Adopt-A-Student program. Log on to the Catholic Schools office website [www.csadmin.org](http://www.csadmin.org).



## Withdrawals and Transcripts

*When a student is not making sufficient academic progress at a Parish/Regional school, or is experiencing emotional difficulties or is engaging in uncooperative or disruptive behavior, or if a student's parents or legal guardians are engaging in uncooperative or disruptive behavior (Ref: Policy No. 2470), the school may request that the student withdraw and transfer to another school. (ASF/CSPM#2130)*

Please supply the school office with an official written notice for student withdrawal. All transcripts and records will be forwarded to the next school upon official request. No transcripts can be given directly to parents.

## Student Records

The Archdiocesan Catholic Schools keep the following student educational records:

- Academic data
- Personal data
- Attendance
- Student health records
- Grades
- Standardized test scores

These records are retained based on requirements outlined in the Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools and are kept confidential.

## Change of Address/Telephone

It is extremely important that every student maintains an up-to-date address and telephone number/s record at the school office. Update all changes in Family Portal **immediately** if you have a change of address or telephone number for home/work/or cell during the year.

## Contact Information

St. Thomas Aquinas School shall not publish or use a student's name, picture, voice or likeness in any form of publication or media (including but not limited to photographs, films, motion pictures, audio, DVD, videotape, websites, class pictures, school yearbook, or the school newspaper) unless the Appearance Release and Waiver is signed by the parent or legal guardian.

## Use-Of-Name Policy

*Attaching the school name, logo, or other insignia to an event, activity, or publication implies a close connection with the school, usually sponsorship or endorsement. Involvement by individual faculty, staff, students or parents is not, by itself, sufficient basis to title an activity, program, or event as “school” sponsored. Rather, the activity, program or event must be one for which the school takes institutional responsibility.*

*Faculty members, staff, students, parents, and parish members may use or authorize the use of the school name, logo, or insignia (alone or in conjunction with the name of a specified organization or activity) only with the written approval of the Principal and Pastor/Rector in Parish/Regional schools and the Principal and Superintendent in the Archdiocesan high school.*

*In appropriate cases determined by the Principal and Pastor/Rector or Principal and Superintendent, permission for ongoing events, activities, or publications requiring approval under this policy may be given. (ASF/CSPM#1540)*

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### Curriculum

The curriculum of St. Thomas Aquinas School is based on the curriculum guides and concepts defined by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, State of New Mexico benchmarks and national standards. The curriculum meets the criteria determined by the State of New Mexico, the WCEA and the NCEA and the national standards for mathematics, English, social studies and science. An overview of the curriculum and concepts are presented on each grade level at Back-to-School Night.

### School Supplies

Initial writing supplies are provided by the school. This includes paper, pens, pencils and planners. A required list of supplies to be purchased by parents may be viewed on **FACTS SIS**. It is important for a child to possess all the supplies described on the list. Students are **NOT** permitted to bring additional supplies, including, but not limited to, liquid Wite-Out, Sharpies of any kind, Super Glue, etc., unless directed by the teacher. Additional items brought to school will be confiscated and returned only to parents.

## **Book and Backpack Policies**

Each student is given one set of books on loan. **All books are the property of St. Thomas Aquinas School or the New Mexico Department of Education.** The books are to be covered and clearly labeled, beginning the first week of school and remain covered until the last day of instruction. If covers are torn or missing through the year, they must be replaced promptly. Students may use paper book covers or stretch material covers (as long as they fit properly). Adhesive book covers are only allowed for the workbooks.

If books are lost, the student is responsible for payment of the replacements. If the items are lost or damaged by another student, the individual responsible for the damage must pay for any school, parish, or personal property belonging to another. Damaged items will be assessed for the degree of damage. All fines for lost or damaged books and property must be paid for before a student can take final examinations.

Each student is required to use a backpack. Backpacks must be of an appropriate size. Backpacks with wheels are permitted. However, mid school students – grades 6, 7 & 8 – must be able to fit the backpack into their lockers. Middle School students are asked to bring non-wheeling backpacks. Remember, they must be designed for books.

Backpacks must have the student's name written in the inside of the bag. Please do not attach keys or other items to the backpacks. If the backpack is lost, the keys will be lost as well.

## **Proper Paper Heading**

JMJL	
Name _____	Date _____
St. Thomas Aquinas School _____	Class _____
_____ Title _____	

## Homework

Homework is given on a regular basis throughout the week. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforce classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Homework may include reading, reviewing, memorizing, studying, or writing. Homework is considered in the evaluation process and may be used in determining a student's report card grade. Failure to complete homework will result in a consequence.

Parents can assist their children with homework in several ways:

- It's the parents' responsibility to see that extracurricular activities such as sports, cheerleading, dancing, activities, etc. do not interfere with their children's academic progress.
- Provide a study area for your child that is free of distractions.
- Set aside a specific time during which homework is to be done, preferably the same time each day.
- Do not extend the set homework time if your child has wasted time and for that reason has been unable to complete all of the work. Let your child face the consequences for his/her choices.
- Insist that backpacks be packed and ready for school the night before.
- Allow your child the opportunity to do his/her own homework. Remember that homework is the responsibility of your child. It is your responsibility; however, to communicate with your child regarding daily assignments, long-range assignments, and various other projects that may be required of them.

Remember, learning is a four step process. It takes seeing, hearing, saying and writing or manipulating the task in order for the imprinting to take place. If you write out your child's study guide, for example, you have removed a crucial piece of the learning process; hindering the assimilation of information.

Homework assignments should generally fit the following time frames:

Kindergarten	15 – 30 minutes
Grades 1 and 2	30 – 45 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	45 – 60 minutes
Grades 5 and 6	60 – 90 minutes
Grades 7 and 8	90 – 120 minutes

Beyond assigned homework, students are required to read nightly and drill at grade appropriate levels in math and other related skills.

## **Assignment Planner**

Students will be supported in learning skills to organize assignments and plan for future assessments by using a planner or calendar. Technology such as Google calendar will be used to help support students in learning tools to maintain organization. Students will be supported by their teacher in learning these executive functioning skills to remain organized, plan for the future, and make responsible decisions.

## **Make-Up Work**

Students who are absent due to illness or family emergency are required to make up missed assignments. The student will be permitted one day for each day missed to make up the assignments beginning on the day the student returns to school. Students are encouraged to make up missed work promptly so that assignments do not accumulate.

It is the student's responsibility to find out what work must be made up on the first day when s/he returns to school. The teacher will then discuss the assignments with the student.

Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance for students who will be absent due to family vacation, though, you may be able to arrange for assignments with individual teachers. Teachers are not responsible for re-teaching material covered while a student is on vacation. This becomes the responsibility of the parents.

Parents may request missed assignments when their child is ill by calling the attendance line or the office before 8:00 am of the same day. Requesting the assignments when you call in the absence will help to expedite the collection of assignments. The work will be ready for pick up by 3:00 pm in the office.

## **Student Acceptable Use Policy for Technology - E-Mail, Internet, and Social Media Use**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when utilizing school computer networks and hardware. Permission to use school computers and networks is contingent upon acceptance of the following terms and conditions:

- Use the Internet/Network in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of this school. The downloading, installation, and/or use of any software or game is prohibited.
- Use the Internet Network only with the permission of the responsible teacher.
- Be considerate of other users on the network and use appropriate language for school situations as indicated in the Student Handbook.
- Students must use school approved equipment and remain in their school account using approved school platforms. Access to personal accounts including social media accounts is not allowed on school property.

The following internet use is prohibited:

- Posting any personal contact information such as address, telephone number, etc. without a teacher's and parent's permission.
- Meeting with someone you have met on-line without the approval of parents. If parents agree to the meeting, they will escort the student to a public meeting place.
- Use of e-mail and/or instant messaging, unless under the above stated conditions.
- Cyber bullying
- The posting of school staff, students, or family members without consent on social media accounts or through online messaging.
- Use of the Internet to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography) or that advocates illegal acts or violence toward other people. This includes searches for inappropriate content contrary to school curriculum.
- Degrading or disrupting Internet Network services or equipment as such activity is considered a crime under state and federal law. This includes, but is not limited to, tampering with computer hardware or software, vandalizing data, invoking computer viruses, attempting to gain access to restricted or unauthorized network services, and violating copyright laws. Students and parents will be responsible for reimbursing St. Thomas Aquinas School for any costs associated with above-mentioned behavior.

Student or parent should immediately report any problems or breaches of these responsibilities to the responsible teacher.

Any conduct that is in conflict with these responsibilities is unethical and will result in disciplinary action as follows:

- Suspension of computer privileges.
- Subsequent offenses may lead to school suspension or dismissal.
- Violations in the expected privacy of individuals or cyberbullying may lead to further disciplinary action including dismissal of the student and police investigation.
- Suspension will not relieve the responsibility to complete school work related to technology.
- Suspended student must find off-campus technology to complete course requirements.
- Students may not share accounts or Chromebooks with other students. Students may only log into their own school-assigned device.
- Students who choose to break our technology policy will lose access to Google Apps for Education at St. Thomas Aquinas School.

**Completion of online registration documents signifies acceptance of the above stated policy.**

## **Testing/Assessments**

*All Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall follow the basic program of standardized testing determined by the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office. In elementary schools, grades three through eight shall be assessed yearly. Each school is responsible for ordering tests, providing teacher in-service regarding test administration, maintaining test security, recording the results, utilizing test scores for instructional improvement, and reporting results to parents. Additional achievement and/or diagnostic testing may be done at the recommendation of the teacher and/or at the discretion of the Principal.*

### **Achievement Testing**

*The Catholic Schools Office will make public each year the Archdiocesan average test scores.*

*The Catholic Schools Office will not make available individual school or classroom results to anyone except other appropriate officials of the Archdiocese.*

*Individual student's test scores will be made available to their parents and teachers. Individual schools may publish their own test scores as part of their marketing initiatives. School test scores may only be compared to published Archdiocesan average test scores or public school scores.*

*The Catholic Schools Office will use an individual school's test scores for the purpose of monitoring and improving instruction within that school.*

*ESL students will be tested; however, accommodations may be made to assist them in taking the test in their own language.*

*All students will participate in the assessment program and all students will be included in the class and school averages. Accommodations for test taking for students with accommodations may be made at the discretion of the local school Principal. (ASF/CSPM#4430)*

Various forms of assessment take place in the classroom, which include written reports or tests, oral presentations, group projects, individual initiatives, and class preparation. Portfolios are kept on each student from year to year and are available for parent review.

Progress reports and report cards are clear indicators of each student's progress. Classroom work, discussions, projects, homework, long-term assignments and reports form the basis of the assessments on each level.

In addition to the classroom assessments in each subject area, St. Thomas Aquinas School utilizes the following testing programs:

- Assessment of Catholic Religious Education for grades 5 and 8 annually. (ACRE)
- STAR Testing – Math / Reading quarterly.
- STS High School Placement Test (SPX Entrance Exam 8<sup>th</sup> grade).
- ESL or other accommodations may be made to assist students in testing.

# Grading System

The following interpretive scale is used in evaluating students in grades 1 through 8 (Specific to St. Thomas Aquinas School):

98 – 100 = A+	4=Exemplary
93 – 97 = A	3=Meets Expectation
89 – 92 = B+	2=Below Expectation
85 – 88 = B	1=Needs Improvement
81 – 84 = C+	
76 – 80 = C	
73 – 75 = D+	
70 – 72 = D	
69 or below=F	

## **Standards Scale**

4	Exemplary Mastery of Standards- Student independently demonstrates advanced mastery of the standard
3	Mastery of Standard- Student consistently demonstrates understanding of the standard
2	Approaching Mastery of Standard- Student demonstrates an emerging mastery of the standard with support
1	Minimal or no understanding of the Standard- Even with support, student does not demonstrate mastery
0	No evidence to assess progress of the Standard
NA	Not Assessed

# Honor Roll

## **Honor Roll Requirements for Grades 4 – 8**

- **Principal's Honor Roll** - Grade average: 98% – 100%
- **1<sup>st</sup> Honors** - - Grade average: 93% - 97%
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Honors** - - Grade average: 89% - 92%



**Subjects included when calculating the averages are:**

- Religion
- Reading
- Language Arts /English
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Spelling

**Any grade, below an 81%, disqualifies a student from Honor Roll consideration.**

**This includes the core subjects above and the following subject areas:**

- Art
- Computer
- Music
- Physical Education
- Spanish

**Study Habits and Conduct Requirements:**

- Students must not have more than two (2) ratings of three (3).
- Students who receive a rating of 1 are not eligible for honor roll.

**Attendance Requirements:**

- Students must not have more than three (3) unexcused tardy days per quarter.

**Honor Roll Awards**

Students are always encouraged to strive towards excellence. It is intrinsic motivation that is the cornerstone for continued academic achievement and exemplary conduct. Students will be recognized by their teachers and administration through honor roll awards distributed at school.

**National Junior Honor Society**

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is the nation’s premier organization. It is established to recognize outstanding middle school students.

More than an honor roll, NJHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of:

- Scholarship
- Leadership
- Service
- Character
- Citizenship

These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since their beginnings in 1921 and 1929.

**Scholarship:** Students, who have a cumulative grade point average of at least 90%

or equivalent standard of excellence, meet the scholarship requirements for membership. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, citizenship and character.

**Service:** This quality is defined through the voluntary contributions made by a student to the school or community, done without compensation and with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.

**Leadership:** Student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, promoters of school activities, ideal contributors, dependable, and exemplify positive attitudes about life. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school or community activities while working with or for others.

**Character:** The student of good character upholds principles of morality and ethics, is cooperative, demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others, and generally maintains a good and clean lifestyle.

**Citizenship:** The student who demonstrates citizenship understands the importance of civic involvement, has high regard for responsible freedom, justice, and democracy, and demonstrates mature participation and responsibility through involvement with such activities as scouting, community organizations, and school clubs, activities, sports, etc.

Membership in the NJHS at St. Thomas Aquinas School will be encouraged among all middle school students. Invitations and applications will be given to those students who meet the high standards in school, at home, and in the community. A copy of the St. Thomas Aquinas National Junior Honor Society Bylaws can be read on the FACTS SIS site. The bylaws further explain membership.

## **Promotion/Retention**

Promotion and retention are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social and emotional growth. At the end of the school year in grades Pre-Kindergarten through eighth, there are three options available dependent on a student's mastery of essential competencies:

- The student has successfully mastered the essential competencies and is promoted to the next grade level.
- The student has not mastered the essential competencies and may participate in an appropriate summer program to further develop skills. Upon certification that the student has successfully mastered his/her areas of deficiency, s/he shall enter the next grade level.
- The student has not mastered the essential competencies and retention is advised. Plans will be discussed between the parents and school in order to decide what is in the best interest of the student.
- Every effort will be made to maintain the student in his or her age-appropriate grade level. School administration will work with the family and teacher to document all efforts made to help the child master

the appropriate skills. The Principal will make all final decisions for retention based on input from the teacher and the family.

- Ongoing conferences for retention will be held during the first, second, and third quarters. Decisions should be made regarding retention within the third quarter.
- Students who have successfully completed a grade level will not be sent back to a previous grade level.

## **Graduation**

*Graduation exercises from either elementary or secondary schools shall take place no earlier than one week preceding the closure of school.*

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A. *Graduation from elementary school should be kept appropriately simple and inexpensive. A Eucharistic liturgy shall be central to the graduation ceremony and should be followed by a simple, dignified exercise that recognizes the unique value of the Catholic education just completed.*

B. *A student must meet the minimum requirements established by the school, as set forth in the parent/student handbook. An elementary school may withhold a student's diploma until that student or the student's parents or legal guardians satisfy their educational, financial and/or disciplinary obligations to the school. A student's participation in graduation exercises is a privilege, not a right.*

C. *Notice*

*Parish/Regional schools shall notify a student's parents or legal guardians in writing if a student is in danger of not graduating. Such notice shall be given as soon as reasonably possible, but at least prior to final examinations.*

D. *Exclusion From Graduation Exercises*

*Parish/Regional schools may exclude a student from participating in graduation exercises for reasonable cause (i.e. discipline, failure to meet financial obligations) even if the student is to receive a diploma. The Principal shall have the discretion to exclude a student from participation in graduation exercises after consultation with the Pastor/Rector and the Superintendent of Schools. (Excerpts from ASF/CSPM#2600)*

## **Summer School**

Summer school and/or tutoring for the student will be either required or recommended. All summer school or tutoring must be provided by a qualified (licensed) professional. Those students who were required to attend summer school, must present verification and evaluation of their accomplishments before final registration or re-registration can be complete.

## Academic Probation

*Probation refers to the careful supervision and evaluation of the student's conduct or academic progress for a specified period, at the end of which a determination is made concerning whether the student has corrected the misconduct or made appropriate academic progress.*

*A student may be placed on probation by the Principal/Preschool Director.*

*Probation may be imposed in accordance with rules established by the school. Probation shall include an agreement in writing between or among the student, parents or legal guardians and the school administrator addressing the student's misconduct or academic deficiencies, duration of probation, corrective measures to ensure compliance with applicable rules or requirements and the consequences of any violation of the terms of the probation. Parents must be notified in writing when the probation is terminated or if it is to be extended.*

*Subject to compliance with the terms of the probation agreement, a probationary period shall not exceed two semesters. (ASF/CSPM#2440)*

When a student begins to show signs of non-performance, the following steps will take place:

- A student will be placed on Academic Probation by the Principal and the Assistant Principal. This means the student is given a quarter (report card period) to improve academically.
- A conference will be held with the student, teacher and parents/guardians concerning the probation and the possibility of withdrawal if the student's academic average is without evidence of improvement.
- Students receiving a 'D' average in a subject must have 16 hours of tutoring from a certified instructor, approved by the Principal. The grade obtained for the tutoring hours will be noted on the transcript, without credit. The 'D' will remain on the permanent record.
- Students receiving an 'F' must attend summer school or have 30 hours of tutoring from a certified instructor, approved by the Principal. The tutor must confer with the teacher for the material to be covered. For each hour of tutoring, there should be 2 hours of homework. In addition to the exam given by the tutor, the school reserves the right to evaluate student progress by administering its own exam. Successful completion of summer school will be recorded in the student's file.

## **Uniform Provider**

P3 Printing and Graphics

1400 Jackie RD, STE 102

Rio Rancho, NM 87124-1518

Phone: (505) 250-4862

Online: <http://nmprepwear.com/>

## **General Uniform and Grooming Policies**

- Uniforms must be the appropriate size, clean, neat, in good repair.
- All pieces of the uniform must be labeled with the student's 1<sup>st</sup> initial and last name.
- All trousers/shorts/gym pants must fit and be worn at the waist.
- Shirts/blouses must be tucked in with the waistband/belt clearly visible.
- Only white t-shirts/personal undergarments may be worn under blouses and shirts.
- All buttons on shirts/blouses must be buttoned.
- Skirts/jumpers must be worn 2" below the knee cap with the waistband at the waist.
- Shoes may up to a 1" sole or heel, closed toes and heels, must be black with matching shoelaces – laced in the traditional way.
- White/black – crew socks for boys.
- White tights, white/maroon knee-hi socks and white crew socks for girls.
- Hair – must be clean, combed, neat in appearance, and out of the eyes. Hair should not be colored or highlighted. Boys must have a traditional haircut and be off the collar and above the ears.
- Facial hair is prohibited.
- Jewelry – a watch – a single religious medal on a small gold/silver chain
- Girls may wear one small stud earring in each earlobe, flush against earlobe. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.

ALL other types or excess jewelry will be confiscated and returned to parents.

- Tattoos are prohibited.
- No makeup or nail polish.
- Outer jackets/coats/backpacks should be simple and without labels for sports teams or inappropriate logos of any form.
- Baseball caps/hats may only be worn outside.

- All clothing and equipment (ie. lunch boxes, backpacks, wallets, crayons, glasses cases, etc.) must be clearly marked with the child’s name. Use permanent marker to print the child’s first initial and last name.
- Perfume or cologne is prohibited.

Noncompliance with any of the above regulations will result in the issuance of a uniform violation, notifying the parents that the infraction must be corrected by the next school day.

## **Student Dress Code**

St. Thomas Aquinas School believes that standards of dress are necessary. It is our professional belief that a direct relationship exists between dress, grooming, behavior, and performance.

All students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Eight are required to wear the regulation school uniform. The teachers will check uniforms on a daily basis. The regular uniform is to be worn at all times unless otherwise directed.

- Faculty members and staff will issue ‘Uniform Code Violations’ (written on Discipline Reports Forms) to those students in violation of St. Thomas Aquinas’ Dress Code Policy.
- These forms must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned the following school day with the violation corrected.
- If a student accumulates two (2) violations, s/he will be assigned an after school detention on that same day.

## **Identification**

Be sure all uniform pieces and personal items are labeled with your child’s first (1<sup>st</sup>) initial and last name on the inside of each item.



# ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL

## DRESS CODE

All students are required to wear the regulation school uniform. Students are not permitted to wear nail polish or make up. Jewelry is not permitted unless for religious reasons. Dangling earrings are prohibited; however girls may wear small earrings that are flush against the earlobe. Hairstyles are to be neat and are not to interfere with the students' vision. Boys' haircuts are to be short and modest. Earrings for boys are prohibited. The coloring of hair is prohibited.

### Boys

Shirt	Short or long sleeve: WHITE button-down with collar or WHITE polo shirt.
Pants	Gray Uniform Pants (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Sweater (K - 6th)	Maroon cardigan or vest required to be worn over white shirt (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Blazer & Tie (7th & 8th)	Maroon Blazer & Tie with white button-down shirt.
Socks	WHITE or BLACK ankle or crew socks. "No-show" socks are prohibited.
Shoes	All BLACK; no colored markings, soles, or laces; buckle or tie shoes. No sneakers, tennis shoes or boots.
Belt	Black belt required.
<b>Summer Option Shirt</b>	<b>Allowed only in Aug., Sept., &amp; May:</b> Maroon polo (P3 Printing & Graphics).
<b>Summer Option Shorts</b>	<b>Allowed only in Aug., Sept., &amp; May:</b> Gray Uniform Shorts (P3 Printing & Graphics). Shoe, sock, and belt requirements remain the same.

### GIRLS

Shirt/Blouse (K – 8th)	Short or long sleeve: WHITE button-down with collar or WHITE polo shirt.
Jumper (K – 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	Maroon and gray plaid uniform jumper (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Pleated Skirt (4th – 8th)	Maroon and gray plaid uniform skirt. Length must be below the knee (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Sweater (K - 6th)	Maroon cardigan or vest required to be worn over white shirt (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Blazer & Tie (7th & 8th)	Maroon Blazer & Tie with white button-down shirt.
Socks	WHITE or MAROON knee-hi socks or WHITE or MAROON tights. "No-show" socks are prohibited.
Shoes	All BLACK; no colored markings, soles, or laces; buckle or tie shoes with closed toe/closed back. Low or no heel. No sneakers, tennis shoes, or boots.
<b>Summer Option Shirt</b>	<b>Allowed only in Aug., Sept., &amp; May:</b> Maroon polo (P3 Printing & Graphics).
<b>Summer Option Bottoms</b>	<b>Allowed only in Aug., Sept., &amp; May:</b> Jumper (K – 3rd) or Skirt (4th – 8th), no vest or cardigan required. No shorts allowed.
<b>Summer Option Socks</b>	<b>Allowed only in Aug., Sept., &amp; May:</b> WHITE ankle socks.

## GYM UNIFORMS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

### GYM UNIFORMS ARE WORN ALL DAY – STUDENTS DO NOT CHANGE AT SCHOOL.

August, September & May	October – April
Maroon uniform gym shorts with logo. Must be knee length (P3 Printing & Graphics).	Gray uniform sweatpants with logo (P3 Printing & Graphics).
Gray uniform T-shirt with logo or STAS spirit shirt.	Gray uniform sweatshirt with logo or STAS spirit shirt.
White or black socks. No-show socks prohibited.	White or black socks. No-show socks prohibited.
Any color of sneakers (no light-up).	Any color of sneakers (no lights)

## UNIFORMS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Pre-K students will wear gym uniform every day. See above gym uniform requirements.

## Attendance Policies and Procedures

### Archdiocesan Academic Calendar

*The Catholic Schools Office shall publish a general Archdiocesan academic calendar. Principals shall submit to the Catholic Schools Office a copy of the proposed local calendar for their school, signed by the Pastor/Rector and Principal, by the date requested. All local school calendars must be based on the Archdiocesan academic calendar and include at least the number of student contact days required by the State of New Mexico. (ASF/CSPM#1400)*

### New Mexico State Board Requirements

New Mexico State BOARD OF EDUCATION sets the requirements for school attendance (PSC – 22). The school year is required to be 180 days. St. Thomas Aquinas School calendar is approved by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

### Length of School Day

*Instructional time on all regular school days in all Parish/Regional elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school will be at least that required by the State of New Mexico.*

*Minimal school days may be taken a maximum of ten times per year for the purpose of professional development or for extended faculty meetings. On minimal school days, schools must be in session a minimum of either one-half period more than half the total number of periods or 3.5 hours. Parental notice of minimal school days should be given well enough in advance for parents to make arrangements for after school care. Whenever possible, minimal school days will be noted on the annual school calendar. The Superintendent must approve requests for exceptions to the minimal school day requirements. (ASF/CSPM#1420)*



## **Daily Schedule**

7:00 – 7:30	Breakfast in the Cafeteria
7:30	Students go to classes at this time
8:00	Bell rings/Prayers and announcements
8:10	Classes begin
2:50	Closing Prayers/Announcements
3:00	Dismissal

## **Attendance**

### **Absences**

Students are expected to be in attendance for the full day for all scheduled class days. Parents/guardians who allow their children to miss school for less than serious reasons hamper their children’s education and frustrate the school’s efforts to educate the students. An essential component of learning involves student interaction and experience in the classroom. The Assistant Principal shall determine the appropriate disciplinary and academic actions to be taken if there are excessive absences or tardies.

There are two types of absences and tardies, “excused” and “unexcused.” An “excused” absence or late means that the student is allowed to make-up all the work that is assigned during the absence whereas an “unexcused” absence or late means that it will be up to the teacher’s discretion whether the student will be allowed to make-up or receive credit for the work missed during the absence.

Absences that will be “excused” are:

- Arriving late due to medical appointment (requires a doctor’s note upon arrival);
- Doctor appointments during school day, (with a note from the doctor’s office);
- Illness - Students absent for 3 or more days, due to illness or medical reasons, must provide the school office with a written doctor’s excuse for the absences.
- Funeral attendance;
- Ceremonial religious events/traditions;
- Court or legal appointments (note required from legal authority upon arrival); and
- Other absences that are excused at the Assistant Principal’s discretion.

### **Medical Absences**

St. Thomas Aquinas School makes special efforts to help students establish and maintain good health habits and stay healthy. The success of our effort depends on parental follow-through at home. Students should stay home from

school when they are ill or when they have an elevated temperature or a suspected contagious condition. This is for their protection as well as for others in the classroom.

Students will be sent home if they:

- have elevated temperatures
- are vomiting
- have diarrhea
- have an undiagnosed or contagious skin rash
- have red or inflamed eyes

**Student Activities/Sports: Students who are absent from school (all or part of the day) will NOT be eligible to participate in any after school activities or sports programs.**

**\*\* Make-up work: See Make-Up Work page 12.**

If excessive absences – five (5) – per quarter are noted, students are placed on a probationary status and a conference will be scheduled with the parents/guardians, the Principal and the Assistant Principal to identify and resolve the problem.

Note: There is no guarantee that credit for the class can be earned.

## **Tardies**

Training in punctuality is important. Students are required to be in their classroom by 8:00 am. Otherwise, they will be required to report to the office for an admissions slip to be able to enter their class. Classes must begin on time without interruptions. A student who is late to class disrupts the learning of all students and deprives them of valuable instruction time.

All tardies will be recorded on the student's permanent attendance record. Tardies will be excused if they are called in with a legitimate reason at the discretion of the school administration. Parents/guardians must satisfy the administration that unexcused tardiness will cease.

Any student who is late for ten or more days, excused and/or unexcused, will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal and/or Principal.

## **Notification Procedure**

When a student is unable to attend school or will be tardy, a parent/guardian must call the school attendance line before 8:00 am at 892-3221 ext. 55. Please leave the following information:

- the name of the person calling and a phone number
- student's name and grade
- teacher's name
- reason for absence/tardiness
- expected duration of absence/tardiness
- request for missed assignments (and if the assignments are to be sent home with another student – specify name and grade of that student)

Work will be available for pick up at 3:00pm in the nurse's office.

## **Appointments during School**

Students' appointments should be made after school. Students who must leave early are to bring a note from a parent/guardian to the office – with the reason for the early dismissal clearly stated, or the parent/guardian must call on the day before the early dismissal (except in the case of an emergency). Students will remain in their classroom until after the parent/guardian arrives and completes the Student Release Form. If the student returns to school before the end of the day, s/he must check in at the office and bring a timed and dated slip from the appointment. If the student returns the next day, s/he must bring the appointment slip to the office on the morning of the following school day.

**NOTE:** Early dismissal is always discouraged.

## **Extended Absences**

Absences for family vacations or other such extracurricular activities are not viewed as being in your child's best academic interest. Such absences must have the approval of the administration before their occurrence. Two or more days are considered an extended absence.

The procedure to follow when asking permission for extended absences includes the following:

- At least one week before the student is to be excused, a parent/guardian must submit in writing, to the office, the dates and reason for the absence.
- Parents take full responsibility for securing make-up work.
- See page 12 for information concerning make up work and absences due to vacations.

## **Truancy**

Truancy is an absence from school without a valid/verifiable excuse more than five (5) days in one school year. Truancy is a violation of the New Mexico Education Code. Truancy is not tolerated. A truant student will be re-admitted after a conference with parent(s)/guardian(s), the Assistant Principal and the Principal has taken place.

## **Cancellation/Early Dismissal of School**

*Ordinarily, a school will close for snow if the local public school district is closed or if local conditions or faculty absences warrant closure. The Principal should consult with the Pastor/Rector regarding closure due to weather or facility conditions.*

*When closures exceed a reasonable number of days, the Catholic Schools Office may require that days be added to the calendar in order to maintain the level of instruction.*

*Each school shall develop and disseminate local policies that address closure and special schedules for weather or facility conditions. These policies should include procedures for faculty and media notification.*

*Ordinarily, students should not be released early. Emergency conditions that may warrant early release require the permission of the Pastor/Rector in Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and consultation with the Superintendent prior to the dismissal of the students. The Archdiocesan high school requires the permission of the*

Cancellation or early dismissal of school may take place due to extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. The school administration is aware of the hardship that can be caused by an abrupt cancellation. Therefore, school will remain open unless a significant risk has been created by unusual circumstances. The school will broadcast cancellations, emergency closings, and other pertinent information via **FACTS SIS, Parent Alert** and the media (television and radio).

In the unusual circumstance where school must be canceled during the day, the administration will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at their home before releasing them from school. Parents must provide additional phone numbers of responsible adults on the emergency form in the event that parents cannot be reached.

## **Student Activities/Services/Policies**

### **School Mass**

Students are privileged to be able to attend daily Mass – Mondays through Fridays at 8:15 am.

As always, we are to be mindful of expected reverence in Chapel and adherence to the following guidelines:

- Enter chapel in a quiet and prayerful manner
- Genuflect upon entering and leaving chapel
- Talking/whispering is not allowed
- Participation is always encouraged

### **Sacraments**

Based on a curriculum developed by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the students of St. Thomas Aquinas School receive daily instruction in the Catholic Religion. Additionally, in the appropriate grade levels, the students receive remote preparation and instruction for the sacraments of Penance and First Communion. Traditionally, the preparation and reception of Penance takes place in second grade and the preparation and reception of First Communion takes place in the third grade.

Parents are required to attend sacramental preparation classes at the parish prior to student reception of sacraments. Students are also required to demonstrate mastery of a Catechism prepared by Msgr. Raun prior to reception of sacraments.

Students who have not been baptized or older students in need of First Penance or First Communion should contact the office for specific directives and preparation guidelines.

### **Religious Activities**

All students are to participate respectfully in all religious activities and devotions provided by the school. These include, but are not limited to, daily prayers and observances, instruction, religious feast day activities, and holiday practices.

## **Counseling**

A family in need of support for counseling should see school administration for assistance. St. Thomas Aquinas School does not have a school counselor. We can connect you with private counselors and therapists to help support you. But, it is the parents' responsibility to seek this support. We will partner with parents and help provide any needed support. For further questions and assistance, please see administration.

Should the school undergo a trauma, spiritual comfort and counseling services will be made available to the students through our pastor and clergy through the parish. Should a family find itself in crisis, every effort will be made to provide appropriate services. St. Thomas Aquinas School seeks to provide support for the socio-emotional health of all students and families.

## **Library Policies**

The library strives to create an environment where students gain a love of reading and an awareness of books as a means of research and education. The primary purpose of the library is to implement, enrich, and support the educational program of the school. The library is open on school days and is supervised by the librarian or classroom teacher. Library classes are held weekly for grades Pre-Kindergarten - 6 and accessible to mid-school students as needed.

The following are rules and regulations for the library at St. Thomas Aquinas School:

- Only persons within the parish or school community, namely students enrolled in the regular school day, teaching staff, or other school personnel may check out books or materials from the library.
- Students in grades K-3 may check out one (1) book or periodical per week. The school librarian may grant exceptions to this.
- Students in grades 4-8 may check out two (2) books or periodicals per week. Exceptions are approved by the librarian only.
- Books are checked out for one (1) week and may be renewed for an additional week with the librarian's approval.
- Reference materials are used in the library only. Exceptions being made for teachers and staff members who may check them out for the day but must return them by the end of the same day.
- Additional book checkout will be suspended until previous books are returned.
- The current price to replace a given book, plus processing fees, will be charged for lost books or other materials on loan.
- A fine will be charged for damaged books in accordance with the amount of damage. This will be assessed by and left to the discretion of the librarian.
- Habitual failure to return books may result in loss of library privileges.
- Outstanding library charges and fines will be added to tuition costs.

## **Performances**

Some student performances are held in the evening for the convenience of working families. All performances are mandatory. The attendance and quality of performances will be reflected in the student's music grade.

## **Child Care Program/Policies**

**Hours of operation and fees for normal school days:**

Dismissal to 3:30 pm..... \$5.00

After 3:30 pm..... \$10.00

Families will be charged Child Care fees after 3:10 pm on a full day.

**Hours of operation and fees for half days of school:**

Dismissal to 12:30 pm.....\$5.00

12:30 pm to 3:00 pm.....\$10.00

After 3:00 pm.....\$15.00

Families will be charged Child Care fees after 12:10 pm on a half day.

For any child left after 6:00 pm, a call to a parent or guardian is placed and a fee of \$25.00 will be charged.

**Billing Information:** Billing is done on or near the 2nd of each month and payment is due 15 days from the date of billing. Invoices are sent via email from FACTS Tuition Management. Please review invoices carefully, as payment amount(s) and automatic debit dates are listed. Charges will be automatically debited from your account on file. Please be prompt in paying your invoice. Returned payment fees may apply from FACTS as well as your bank. Service can be denied if accounts are past due more than 30 days.

**Dress Code:** All students are required to wear the regulation school uniform. No street clothes are permitted.

**Student Expectations:** Students will follow classroom behavior guidelines and school handbook expectations.

**COVID Guidelines:** Child Care will follow all school COVID guidelines.

Child Care reserves the right to alter and adapt the program and policies presented in this notice with the permission of Sr. Anne Louise Abascal. Anyone who does not agree to adhere by the policies set forth will be denied service. Policies are subject to COVID regulations.

**Cafeteria Program and Policies**

Due to Covid-19 health measures, the lunch program may be altered during the 2023-2024 school year. Lunch will be held following health and safety measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

For those bringing lunches from home, milk is available at this time. NO GLASS CONTAINERS, soda, candy or gum may be brought to school. Other sweets should be kept to a minimum. (Violations will result in disciplinary action.)

In anticipation of our food service lunch program, free and reduced cost lunch applications are available. Qualifying students will be able to participate in the free and reduced lunch program once the lunch provider begins food service. Forms may be obtained in the office or on FACTS Family Portal.

## **ENTERING THE CAFETERIA**

- Students should stand quietly in line inside the cafeteria.
- Students should stand clear of the tables while in line as it disturbs other students who are already seated.
- Students who bring a sack lunch but are buying milk, should line up in the front of their class's line.
- Students should sit at the first empty place at their assigned table.
- Students may not prevent anyone from being seated.

## **AT THE TABLE**

- Students should eat quietly, in a polite and respectful manner.
- Students will be encouraged to eat the main course first and then the extras and dessert.
- Students may only eat the food on their own tray or sack lunch.
- Students are to show the same courtesy to cafeteria personnel and supervisors as they do their classroom teachers.
- Meal time is to be a pleasant, relaxed time that is conducive to digestion and overall well-being.

## **LEAVING THE CAFETERIA**

- When it is time to leave the cafeteria, students are expected to be quiet and listen for instructions.
- Students will wait until their table is excused.
- Students will check that their table area is free of trash on top of and underneath the table.
- Students will throw away trash and take trays to the window.
- Students will follow the directions of the person on duty.
- Students will exit the cafeteria in a quiet, orderly manner and WALK to the playground area.

Further directions regarding lunch and lunch room behavior will be given directly to the students as needed.

\*Remember, lunch recess is the time to use the restrooms. Students need to take time to use the restrooms during lunch recess or wait until the end of the day.

Parental help with supervision at lunch and recess is always welcome. However, parents must sign in at the office and follow school rules and directives. Parents are not allowed to eat with the children as there is limited space in the cafeteria reserved exclusively for the students.

Parents volunteering for various activities at the school may eat in the cafeteria at other than lunch times or in another room designated by the administration.

## **Civil Rights Assurance**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

## **Field Trip Policies**

Under Covid-19 regulations, all field trips will be considered on a case by case basis as regulations permit.

Field trips are privileges afforded to students. NO student has the absolute right to go on a field trip. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic standards or behavioral requirements. All school rules and regulations apply on field trips and will be enforced as such.

Field trips:

- Are scheduled by the classroom teachers throughout the year
- Are scheduled well in advance so as to give parents/guardians ample notice of the trip date and time to sign and return the permission slip
- Are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum
- Are the financial responsibility of the parents)/guardian(s) and are non-refundable

St. Thomas Aquinas School will only accept the official permission forms provided by the school. Handwritten notes or telephone calls are unacceptable. Students who fail to provide a proper permission form, signed by the parent/guardian, will NOT be allowed to participate in the field trip.

Should a student not be permitted to attend a trip for any reason, s/he may be asked to stay home and complete an assignment complimentary to the trip and will be marked absent from the day's event. S/he may be assigned to another classroom and be required to complete assignments pertaining to the learning purpose of the trip.

Parents may be asked to chaperone the trip. All chaperones must have the Volunteer Requirements completed prior to the trip. (See Volunteer Requirements) It is undesirable for too many parents to escort children on school-sponsored field trips. Research indicates that beyond one parent per 4 or 5 students; adult supervision actually decreases, putting students at risk in unfamiliar territory. Older children require no more than 2 adults per 8-10 students. All volunteer drivers must be 21 years of age or older and be in compliance with the state insurance laws carrying 'full coverage' on the vehicle to be used to transport students.



**Field trips are NOT open to other family members or children being cared for; therefore, brothers and sisters and other children may NOT attend.**

## **School Parties/Birthday Celebrations**

### **Homeroom Celebrations**

Homeroom parties are permitted for Christmas and at the end of the school year. Such parties are only allowed at the end of the day. Parties will be coordinated by the class parent and the teacher. Most parties will be 'pot luck' in nature, with food assignments going home within a few days of the celebration.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

It is important to recognize birthdays and to celebrate the life of children and adults alike. To celebrate birthdays in school, plain cupcakes, cookies, cookie bars, assorted finger snacks, etc. – foods that are easily distributed by the teacher/students (nothing that needs to be cut or scooped may be brought to class). Plans for birthday celebrations are to be discussed with the classroom teacher prior to the day.

### **Invitations**

Invitations may be given out in the classroom **only if the entire class is invited to the event, otherwise, the invitations must be mailed.** Class lists are available in the office. Exceptions may be made to invite only girls or only boys. Class lists may not be used for private business gains or to message families inappropriately. This will be seen as harassment and may result in a family's removal from the school.

## **Student Council**

The Student Council is a student organization with an executive board and one representative from each homeroom. Elections of officers and representatives are held early in fall. To participate, a student must meet all eligibility requirements. The primary objective of the council is to represent the student body in improving the school, the student body and the community. Members of the faculty sponsor the student council.

### **Eligibility Requirements and Campaign Regulations**

- Maintain at least a 'B' average
- Positive leadership qualities
- No discipline referrals or behavioral detentions
- More than 1 homework detention will disqualify the candidate
- Exemplifies Christian values
- Ability to speak effectively in public
- Student body president and secretary must be in 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Vice-President, commissioner of religion and publicity chair may be in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade

- Each candidate will write a brief essay as to how s/he will contribute to the student body of St. Thomas Aquinas School making STA a better place because of their efforts
- Each candidate must have his/her teachers sign a candidacy form – indicating qualification endorsement
- The candidacy forms must then be submitted to the Principal for final approval
- If approved, candidates will need to make up to 4 candidacy posters, submit them to the Principal to be initialed, then hang the posters in the hallways of the school
- Candidates will campaign throughout the week
- At the close of the week, candidates will make their speeches over the school’s intercom system
- Grades 4-8 will have an active voice and will cast their votes on election day

Students in grades 1-8 will choose a class representative and an alternate.

- Representatives must be capable leaders and able to speak clearly in public
- They will present class information to the student body during our general meetings – class activities, projects, fun, religious activities/accomplishments/goals, educational achievements/advancements, etc.
- Representatives are voted for by the class with final decision to be made by the teachers
- An alternate is also chosen – in the event the representative is unable to fulfill his/her duties
- The first task of the class representative is to make a list of school activities, ideas, projects and programs their class would like to participate in as a student body
- The second task of the class representative is to prepare a short speech (about a minute in duration) about the activities in their classroom – “What has your class been doing?”

## **Student Programs**

*Parents who wish to enroll their children in special programs outside the school, academic or otherwise, during the school day, may do so only with the written consent of the Principal and Pastor/Rector; and the approval of the Superintendent. Such requests shall be judged on a case-by-case basis and if granted, shall be for a period of no more than one academic year.*

*Granting this type of enrollment is solely at the discretion of the Principal and Pastor/Rector and is subject to the approval of the Superintendent. (ASF/CSPM#2200)*

## **St. Thomas Aquinas Athletic Department**

### **Athletic Goals**

Athletics takes its place among many important aspects of Christian education. Academic education in the Catholic tradition is our primary objective. As part of a total educational experience, St. Thomas Aquinas hopes that all dimensions of this kind of education will be beneficial and provide a productive learning experience for students.

## **Athletic Goals:**

- To encourage participation in the various athletic programs
- To learn to win with pride and lose with dignity
- To learn and experience the reality that different people have different talents and abilities and to respect personal differences
- To learn that in athletics, as in life, there is often a need for an individual to make sacrifices for the common good
- To invoke the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship among teammates and opponents
- To understand that desire, attitude, cooperation and ability are necessary to compete at the appropriate levels

## **Eligibility Requirements**

- It is the responsibility of the students, with the help of the parent(s)/guardian(s), to maintain eligibility standards.
- Health insurance is required
- Student athletes must maintain a 'C' average or above to be eligible.
- If student athletes are unable to maintain a 'C' average, they are ineligible and will not be able to finish out the season. A grade check will be done for all student athletes during the 4<sup>th</sup> week of participation in each sport.
- Any student with 2 'D's' or 1 'F' at the end of the grading period or grade check will be ineligible for a two-week period. At the end of the third week, a final check will be done to see if the student athlete has improved to a satisfactory level.
- Inappropriate conduct or poor academic/classroom effort are grounds for ineligibility. Any student receiving a mark of 0 or 1 from any teacher in any class for effort or conduct will be required to attend, but sit out of practice or game/meet for a period of 1 week. Student must bring a reading book or homework with them during this time.
- Should an athlete have to serve a detention, the athlete will not be permitted to participate in practice or game/meet for that day.
- If an athlete is absent, s/he will not be eligible to participate in that day's practice or game/meet.
- Parents and athletes are required to attend the meeting in August before your student may participate in our Athletic program.
- Siblings of athletes and non-team members found unattended in the gym or outside during practice hours will be taken to the Child Care Program and parents will be billed for this service.
- Should an athlete decide to quit a team, for whatever reason, s/he is still financially obligated and must pay this obligation.
- All uniforms are the property of St. Thomas Aquinas School. Failure to return a uniform results in a \$50.00 fine.

## **General Behavior**

**The St. Thomas Aquinas Athletic Department enforces a general set of rules and standards for behavior for all athletes, parents, fans, and staff. Please read the following carefully.**

1. Parents and athletes are expected to abide by all policies, rules and regulations as set forth in the St. Thomas Aquinas student and parent handbook.
2. Playing sports at St. Thomas is a privilege. An athlete will, at all times, behave in a manner that will properly represent the school, staff, parents, teammates and themselves. Violation of this rule will subject the athlete to possible suspension or expulsion from the team. The decision will be made between the Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director and the coaching staff.
3. Athletes and parents will exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.

Poor sportsmanship would include, but is not limited to:

- Fighting
- Taunting
- Trash talking
- Harassing the officials
- Foul language

4. **Parents will not approach a team bench or talk to a coach before, during, or after a game.** If a parent needs to communicate a concern to a coach, s/he shall call or email the coach to discuss the matter or to set up an appointment. If the parent is unsatisfied after making contact with the coach, an appointment will be made with the athletic director. If the parent is still unsatisfied, an appointment shall be made with the school Principal. Failure to follow this procedure may result in the student's suspension from team activities.
5. Misconduct and/or abusive language before, during, or after games will not be tolerated from anyone including staff, participants, or observers. Individual(s) responsible for such misconduct must leave the building, and possibly the premises, with potential revocation of the privilege of watching future St. Thomas Aquinas events.
6. Parents/Guardians or students who engage in abusive behavior towards students, staff, or coaches during athletic activities will not be tolerated. Their family will not be allowed to participate in the sports' programs. The student/family is subject to removal from St. Thomas Aquinas School. This behavior includes harassing of officials, coaches, or athletes, use of profanity, fighting, or any behavior/language against good sportsmanship.

## **Playing Time and Positions**

Playing time and team rules will be determined by the coaches. The school and coaches advocate that every player be given the opportunities for development in the sport regardless of skill. Because parents may only see a portion of what occurs, allow the coaches to coach and the athletes to play to the best of their abilities. Playing sports competitively offers many opportunities for personal growth. Playing sports also triggers emotions. We need your support in helping your child deal constructively with these emotions. Assure him/her by remaining positive and motivated, and accepting accountability for his/her actions and behavior.

Playing time in games is determined by the following:

- Remaining academically eligible
- Listening to and following the coaches directions
- Hustle and desire during practices and games

- Behavior in practices and games
- Behavior before and after practices and games
- Positive attitude toward coaches, teammates, other players, and game officials
- Attendance at school the day of a game

The coach will determine the position(s) your child will play. The coach will place your child in position that will best suit his/her strengths, avoid injuries or embarrassment, and where s/he will best help the team.

## Concussion in Sports

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles such as a goalpost.

### What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

#### Observed by the Athlete

Headache or “pressure” in the head  
 Nausea or vomiting  
 Balance problems or dizziness  
 Double or blurry vision  
 Bothered by light or noise  
 Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy  
 Difficulty paying attention  
 Memory problems  
 Confusion

#### Observed by the Parent/Guardian

Is confused about assignment or position  
 Forgets an instruction  
 Is unsure of game, score or opponent  
 Moves clumsily  
 Answers questions slowly  
 Loses consciousness (even briefly)  
 Shows behavior or personality changes  
 Can’t recall events after hit or fall  
 Appears dazed or stunned

### What to do if signs/symptoms of a concussion are present

#### Athlete

**Tell Your Coach Immediately!**  
 Inform parents  
 Seek medical attention  
 Give yourself time to recover

#### Parent/Guardian

Seek medical attention  
 Keep your child out of play  
 Discuss plan to return with the coach

### **Return to play guidelines under Senate Bill 1:**

1. Remove immediately from activity when signs/symptoms are present.
2. Must not return to full activity prior to a minimum of one week.
3. Release from medical professional required for return.
4. Follow school district's return to play guidelines.
5. Coaches continue to monitor for signs/symptoms once athletes return to activity.

### **References on Senate Bill 1 and Brain Injuries**

#### **Senate Bill 1:**

[www.nmact.org](http://www.nmact.org)

or

<http://legis.state.nm.us/Sessions/10%20Regular/final/SB0001.pdf>

#### **For more information on brain injuries check the following websites:**

<http://www.nfhs.org/sportsmed.aspx>

[www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports](http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports)

<http://www.westwcea.org>

## **Extracurricular Activities**

All activities that take place beyond the scope of the school day are considered extracurricular activities. They include, but are not limited to, chorus, clubs, sporting teams/events, and various other activities. Only students currently enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas School may participate in the extracurricular activities sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas School. Parental permission is required for participation in such activities. The school reserves the right to refuse any student from participating in an extracurricular activity. This means that students serving detention, those who have been warned several times and continue to persist in undesirable behavior, or those failing to maintain a 'C' or above in all subjects – as per extracurricular contractual agreement, etc. will be disqualified from participating in after school events.

Students are expected to conduct themselves with the same code of ethics and behavior that govern regular school hours. Students must report directly to the designated area. Failure to comply will result in permanent privilege revocation.

A \$75.00 participation fee is assessed for most extracurricular activities.

If you have children who are not on teams or in any other extracurricular activity, they must go to child care if you are not here to pick up and/or supervise them. They cannot be released to the care of their siblings.

## **St. Thomas Aquinas School**

### **Athletic Participation Agreement**

St. Thomas Aquinas School is a member of the Albuquerque Parochial & Independent Athletic League (APIAL). APIAL wishes to provide the best possible athletic programs for its member schools. It wants athletic participation to be a valuable educational experience. You are requested to read the following carefully and thoroughly. We expect that students will represent St. Thomas Aquinas School in such a way that parents, the school, and the community can be proud.

### **Conditions for Placement**

**Insurance:** We require proof of health and hospitalization insurance to be on file in the school office.

**Family Health Care Provider:** We must know the name of your family health care provider. If your child is injured in athletics, an attempt will be made to have treatment administered by the provider you have named. If s/he is not immediately available, authorized procedures for obtaining emergency medical treatment will be followed. You may ask the assistance of the Bernalillo County Medical Association in helping to select a health care provider.

**Eligibility:** Rules governing eligibility are determined by the APIAL. In addition, St. Thomas Aquinas School policy states that failure to maintain grades will result in dismissal from athletics until the student's grades are acceptable. A student receiving a D or below on progress reports or report cards becomes immediately ineligible for athletics.

**Athletic Fees:** The non-refundable athletic fee must be paid prior to the first scheduled practice. These fees help to cover league costs, uniforms, trophies/awards and athletic banquet expenses.

### **Parents' Code of Conduct**

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
2. I will remember that children participate to have fun, and that the game is for youth, not adults.
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
4. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
5. I (and my guests) will be positive role models for my child, and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy.
6. I (and my guests) will not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct toward any official, coach, player or parent, such as booing and taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language or gestures.
7. I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility.
9. I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
10. I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.
12. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing.
13. I will emphasize skill development and practices, and how they benefit my child, over winning. I will also de-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
14. I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question or confront coaches at a game, scrimmage or practice. If I have a concern, I will discuss it with the coach privately at an agreed-upon time and place. If I have a concern with an assistant coach, I will direct it to the head coach.
16. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sporting events.
17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am an official coach.

Failure to comply in any of these areas may result in any one or all of the following:

- A. Parent will be asked to leave the premises for the duration of the practice/game.
- B. Parent will be suspended from attending future games.
- C. Child may be suspended from team.
- D. Removal of the student/family from St. Thomas Aquinas School

#### **Parents' Responsibilities & Commitments**

- Parents are responsible for the student's transportation to games, practices, and scrimmages. It is expected that students arrive in a timely fashion.
- Parents making arrangements for their child's transportation from school to a sporting event must notify the school office in writing that the child may be released to the care of an adult other than the parent.
- Coaches and assistant coaches supervise student athletes after school from 3:00 pm until practices are over and students have been released to the care of their parents. Students who remain after the scheduled time will be sent to child care at the expense of their parents.
- All parents are expected to help with the concession stand. Schedules will be issued for volleyball and basketball home games.

#### **Rules of Conduct for Student Athletes**

1. I will maintain a Christian approach and attitude towards learning and playing the sport.
2. I will use appropriate language and/or gestures at all times.
3. I will refrain from horseplay or unsportsmanlike behavior at all times.
4. I will not fight no matter who started it or what the reason.
5. I will speak in an appropriate charitable manner at all times.
6. I will be respectful to the referees.
7. I will chew gum and eat food outside of the practice area only.
8. I will remain at the assigned area unless I otherwise have permission from my coach.
9. I will adhere to the rules set by my coach
10. I am a team player playing a team sport.

#### **Student's Statement of Consent**

This application, to compete in athletics for St. Thomas Aquinas School, is entirely voluntary on my part and is made with the understanding that I have not or will not violate any eligibility rules and regulations of the APIAL or St. Thomas Aquinas School. I will conduct myself in a sportsmanly manner at all times. I understand that playing sports is an honor and a privilege. I will at all times behave in a manner that will bring honor to my school or to me.

#### **Parent's Statement of Consent**

I have read the above and agree to adhere to all areas written here or verbally implied by the St. Thomas Aquinas School and Parish. If and when my child participates in athletics offered at St. Thomas Aquinas School, my signature on the Family Acknowledgement Form denotes my consent for my child to engage in interscholastic athletics at St. Thomas Aquinas School.

Parent signature on this document:

- Gives my child permission to practice, play, and participate as per the schedule of the Albuquerque Parochial & Independent Athletic League (APIAL).
- Serves that I understand that games may be played away from St. Thomas Aquinas School grounds.
- Serves as a legal hold harmless of any member of St. Thomas Aquinas School and Parish staff, volunteers, coaches, and assistant coaches should any incident occur on or off property.



- Serves that I further understand that the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the APIAL, St. Thomas Aquinas School and Parish will not be held responsible for any accidents that may occur.

## Health Policies

### Immunizations and Health Records

**New Mexico State Law mandates that every student has a completed and signed current immunization record on file in the school.** A doctor, nurse, or health personnel at a health clinic must sign it. If reactions occur which prevent a child from having the required immunizations, or if you have opted out of required immunizations, a state approved Certificate of Exemption must be provided. Evidence of proper immunizations for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, Vericella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, measles mumps and rubella, haemophilus Influenza Type B, and polio are required. **All 7<sup>th</sup> grade students** must have proof of receiving one dose of the Tdap vaccine and the meningococcal vaccine. Students will remain at home until the immunizations are up to date. Any additional vaccinations should be noted on the child's health record.

### Medications Given at School

#### *A. Medications*

*School personnel may not administer medications of any kind to any student without appropriate consent forms. The following requirements must be met for a student to receive medication at school:*

- 1. The medicine must be in a prescription bottle or original container.*
- 2. There must be a written request, signed by the student's parent or legal guardian, and by the student's doctor, specifically authorizing school personnel to administer any medication sent to school. That request must contain the following information:*
  - a. The dates and times when the medication is to be administered;*
  - b. Instructions as to proper dosage; and*
  - c. The original signature of the student's parent or legal guardian and the original signature of the prescribing doctor.*
- 3. Principal/Preschool Directors may not accept general, on-demand or standing orders for students to take over the counter (OTC) medications for non-specific conditions.*
- 4. All medications must be kept in a secure place to which students do not have access. (Exception: School personnel may keep back-ups of inhalers or Epi-pens in the classroom, as well as in the school office, if such inhalers or Epi-pens are properly secured.) Because of the risk of students sharing medication, no student may carry his or her own medications on school campus or at any school-related event. If a student would be seriously at risk if they were not able to personally carry an Epi-pen or inhaler, and the student's parent or legal guardian requests that the student be permitted to do so, the school may grant an exception to this policy if the student's parent or legal guardian, and the student's doctor document the following:*
  - a. That there would be a risk to the student if the student were not able to personally carry the medication; and*
  - b. That the student has been instructed on the indications for use of the medication, on the administration of the medication, on the possible side effects, on the student's responsibility not to share the medication with anyone, and the student's responsibility to notify the teacher of the use*

*immediately after such use.*

- 5. The person designated by the Principal/Preschool Director to administer medication to students shall keep a log of all medicine administered. Where reasonable and feasible, a student's medication is to be self-administered in the presence of the Principal/Preschool Director (or designee).*
- 6. Glucose testing and insulin administration is to be coordinated by the student's parent or legal guardian, in collaboration with the school's Principal/Preschool Director (or designee).*
- 7. At the end of each school year, all medications shall be returned to the students' parents or legal guardians, or disposed of in an appropriate manner.*
- 8. These requirements apply to over-the counter drugs as well as to prescription drugs. Other than as specifically permitted above, school personnel shall not furnish any medication, including acetaminophen, cough drops, medicated lip balm, etc. to any student, at any time, for any reason.*

## **B. Students with Food Allergies**

*Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school do not have a legal obligation to accept a student with a food allergy. It is acceptable for a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school to deny enrollment to a student if the school cannot reasonably accommodate the student's food allergy. If a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school knowingly accepts a student with a food allergy, the school should follow the following guidelines provided by the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network ("FAAN"):*

- 1. Family's Responsibility*
  - a. Notify the school of the child's allergies.*
  - b. Work with the school to develop a plan to accommodate the child's needs.*
  - c. Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by the child's physician.*
  - d. Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or when expired.*
  - e. Provide the school, at the minimum, with at least two (2) Epi-pens for school or student use.*
  - f. Educate the child in the self-management of the food allergy. This would include strategies for avoiding exposure; safe and unsafe foods; symptoms of allergic reactions; how to tell an adult when having allergy symptoms; and how to read food labels (age appropriate).*
  - g. Review procedures with the school, the child's physician, and the child after a reaction has occurred.*
  - h. Provide up-to-date emergency contact information.*
- 2. School's Responsibility*
  - a. Notify parents and the student that the school cannot guarantee an allergy-free environment.*
  - b. Ensure that all staff understand food allergies; can recognize symptoms; know what to do in case of an emergency; and work with other school staff to eliminate the use of allergens in the student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, etc.*
  - c. Create and review the Food Allergy Action Plan before an allergic reaction occurs to ensure the plan is efficient.*
  - d. Ensure that medications are appropriately stored, and be sure that an emergency kit is*

- available containing the physician's standing order for epinephrine. If student is seven (7) years old, or older, the student may carry an Epi-pen on his/her person if properly trained.*
- e. Designate and properly train school personnel to administer medications.*
  - f. If a student needs or has self-injected with an Epi-pen, call 911, the parents and the student's doctor in that order.*
  - g. Ensure that a trained staff member is available during school operations.*
  - h. Discuss field trips and other special activities with the family of the child to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.*
  - i. Discourage children from "trading" food.*
  - j. Ensure all surfaces such as tables and toys are washed clean of contaminating foods.*
  - k. If needed, designate a specific table in the cafeteria for children with food allergies.*
  - l. Encourage all students to wash hands after handling food.*

### **3. Student's Responsibility**

- a. Do not trade food with other students*
- b. Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain the food allergen.*
- c. Be proactive in the care and management of food allergies and reactions (age appropriate).*
- d. Notify an adult immediately if they believe they have eaten or been exposed to the food allergen.*

### **C. First Aid Kit**

*All Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall keep essential first aid supplies available at all times. First Aid kits must be the standard Red Cross First Aid kit (WITHOUT the OTC medications) and must be taken on all field trips. First Aid kits may be purchased or developed using typical first aid supplies. First Aid kits must be regularly checked and refilled as necessary. Gloves must be included and worn when there is a possibility of exposure to blood or body fluids in administering first aid. (ASF/CSPM#2320)*

The nurse or Principal will administer medication. Refrigeration is available.

## **Emergency Information**

**EACH STUDENT MUST HAVE CURRENT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION ON FILE IN THE OFFICE AT ALL TIMES. This information shall be kept confidential.**

In case of an emergency, each student is required to have, on file, the following information at the school office:

- Parent or guardian's name
- Up-to-date address
- Home phone number/s
- Cell phone number/s
- Work phone number/s
- Physician's name and phone number

- Medical alert information
- Information for other emergency contacts

In case of illness or injury, students will be cared for by the school nurse and/or health assistant. If the nurse is unavailable, another staff member will provide care. However, members of the staff will only render first aid. If emergency medical treatment is required, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If parents/guardians are unavailable, the student will be transported to the nearest available hospital emergency room.

When parents are out of town, notice of emergency numbers is required to be sent to the office. In addition, your child's teacher should be informed if parents are scheduled to be away from home for any length of time or if there are any changes at home that may affect your child's school performance.

A student may only be transported from the school by persons who are listed on the student's emergency contact list. Parents may add contacts to their student's list via email, written note or phone call to the school office. Students will not be released to any person's custody without proper identification, i.e. picture ID and verification that said person is on the student's emergency contact list. This includes, but is not limited to, early dismissals from school, child care program and regular after school pick up.

## **Injuries or Illness during School Day**

**In the event a student develops a serious illness or injury where further medical care is determined necessary, a reasonable effort will be made to contact parents/guardians. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, appropriate transport and care of the student will be arranged. Information about the student will be shared with appropriate personnel on an as-needed basis only. The school is not financially responsible for transport or medical care.**

### *Accidents and Illness at School (Emergency Information Form)*

- 1. Each school, preschool, and child care program must have readily available, updated and completed emergency forms for each student.*
- 2. When a student becomes ill or is involved in an accident, the Principal/Preschool Director (or designee) shall immediately contact the student's parent or legal guardian.*
- 3. In case of serious injury, the Principal/Preschool Director (or designee) should call the paramedics. If the Principal/Preschool Director (or designee) cannot reach the student's parent or legal guardian, an attempt shall be made to contact any other person listed on the student's emergency card.*
- 4. All Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school must require that the parents or legal guardians of all students sign a statement authorizing the school to seek medical attention for the student if they or other persons cannot be contacted. (ASF/CSPM#2340)*

We would like to remind parents that the School Nurse treats injuries and ailments that occur **at school**, and is not responsible for caring for injuries which originate at home. Any student who becomes ill during the day should report to the nurse's office after advising a teacher or playground duty personnel. If the student needs to go home, the parents will be notified to pick up the student.

All school injuries are to be reported to the appropriate teacher/staff member as soon as they occur – whether the student considers the injury to be serious or not. Every injury should be reported to the nurse.

Students should remain at home when they are ill, as they might be endangering others, and they will more than likely be unable to do their school work. **The student must not return to school until he/she has been more than 24 hours without a fever (100.4 or higher) without fever reducing medications, vomiting, or diarrhea. Please also keep your child home if he/she has been ill during the night.** These requests are made for your child’s protection and for the welfare of the other children and staff who may be unnecessarily exposed to contagious diseases. Students absent 3 or more days must bring a doctor’s note in order to return to school.

## **Food Allergies**

St. Thomas Aquinas School follows the guidelines provided by the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). Please refer to [www.foodallergy.org/managing-food-allergies/at-school](http://www.foodallergy.org/managing-food-allergies/at-school).

## **Communicable Diseases**

*Any student, teacher or other staff member having a communicable disease will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The Superintendent must be consulted prior to any action on the part of the Pastor/Rector or Principal/Preschool Director.*

*In all cases, due consideration will be given to the needs and well-being of the individual(s) involved, those with whom they have contact and the broader school/parish community being served. Information will be conveyed on a need to know basis only.*

*Where required by law, the school will report a communicable disease to the New Mexico Department of Health and Human Services (505) 827-0006 and proceed according to their directives. The Superintendent must be notified immediately of any action directed by the Department of Health and Human Services. (ASF/CSPM#1510)*

## **Infectious Diseases**

### **New Mexico Department of Health**

Exclusion from school until the following stipulations are met

- Pink Eye.....Until seen by physician and approved for return
- Impetigo.....24 hours after antibiotics are started
- Ringworm.....Until lesions are healed and must be kept covered

### **New Mexico Department of Health**

Control of communicable diseases: Exclusion from school for the following amount of time

- Whooping Cough .....until cleared by physician
- Chicken Pox .....after lesions are dried and crusted.

- Scarlet Fever and Strep Throat.....twenty-four (24) hours of antibiotics
- Hepatitis A .....until cleared by physician
- TB .....until treatment instituted and infectious stage no longer in effect

### **Covid-19**

If a student tests positive for Covid-19 they may return to school according to the current health recommendations from the NM Department of Health. Please contact the school nurse for current policies.

**When required by law, the school will report a communicable disease to the Dept. of Health and Human Services. The Catholic Schools Office/Superintendent will be notified of any action directed by the Dept. of Health and Human Services.**

**Infectious diseases will be handled according to the State of New Mexico School Health Manual.**

## **Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs**

*All Archdiocesan and Parish/Regional schools shall promote and maintain a smoke-free, alcohol-free and drug-free environment. All students are prohibited from possessing, using, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs while on the school premises and at all school-sponsored activities. If a student possesses, uses, or is under the influence of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs while on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity, the school shall immediately contact the student’s parents or legal guardians, and the school may, at its discretion, contact local law enforcement. The possession, use, sale or attempted sale of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs by a student may result in the required withdrawal or expulsion of the student from the school.*

*School personnel shall immediately report any incident involving the presence of any person on school campus or at any school-sponsored activity for purposes of possessing, using, manufacturing, selling or transferring marijuana, prescription, dangerous or narcotic drugs, to the Principal/Preschool Director. The Principal/Preschool Director shall in turn report the incident to local law enforcement. (ASF/CSPM#2330)*

## **Court Orders**

If there is a court order specifying the rights and responsibilities of individual parents, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the School with an official copy of the court order. The custodial parent may wish to supply the Principal with the “custody section” of the divorce decree if it contains information which may be useful to the School in fulfilling its obligation. St. Thomas Aquinas School abides by the provisions of applicable law with respect

to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary and upon request, the School will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student's essential academic records. Upon request, the parent/guardian has the right to view his/her child's academic record, standardized test results, health records, and emergency information.

## **Custodial / Non-Custodial Parents**

The Federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows the non-custodial parent the right to free access to school records of his/her children. Teachers, counselors, and administrators do not need the permission of the custodial parent to discuss a child with the non-custodial parent. Non-custodial parents may be given access to unofficial copies of student records, and the staff may be made available to discuss the student's records unless a court order providing otherwise is filed with the school as per Archdiocesan Policy. Information will be sent to the non-custodial parent upon request to the school office. This information includes report cards and progress reports. The Principal and teacher should be made aware of any special custody considerations. A copy of the custody agreement should be placed in child's file.

## **Child Abuse / Neglect**

New Mexico statutes require the reporting by school personnel of suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate county department or law enforcement agency. The school is not required to contact parents/guardians of these students. In the event of abuse, the school staff member will contact the local police and/or CYFD.

**NO retaliation is to be taken against "whistle-blowers" reporting suspected abuse in good faith; on the contrary, all staff and volunteers are encouraged to report ANY suspected abuse.**

Link to report abuse: <https://www.archdiosf.org/report-abuse>

Link to INDEPENDENT COMPLIANCE AUDIT ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE REPORTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:  
<https://www.archdiosf.org/documents/2023/5/INDEPENDENT%20COMPLIANCE%20AUDIT%20OF%20ASF%20REPORTING%20POLICIES%20AND%20PROCEDURES.pdf>

## **General Policies and Procedures**

### **Arrival**

The school building will be accessible to students at 7:00 am. There is no before school care prior to 7:00 am, and the school cannot be responsible for unsupervised students prior to the opening of the school building. As such, students are not to be dropped off at school prior to 7:00 am. Students arriving **prior** to 7:30 am are to report to the

cafeteria for breakfast. The student/s should be dropped off according to drop-off procedures to alleviate congestion in the parking lots.

In order to ensure school security and have knowledge of all adults on campus, at NO time are parents to enter the school building without authorization. All adults must have clearance to enter the building as either a staff member, authorized vendor, or volunteer. Parents wishing to enter the building must be cleared through the front office as a guest or volunteer. Parents should, therefore, not enter the building through student entrances upon arrival or dismissal. Appointments must be set to meet with teachers. Parents/adults will be directed to the front office for clearance to enter.

Prior to 7:30 am, students may NOT:

- Walk through hallways unsupervised
- Go to classrooms – unless they have written permission on file for tutoring
- Spend the time before school in the restrooms
- Spend the time before school in a teacher’s classroom
- Wait outside of any classrooms
- Wait outside of the buildings
- Go to lockers

Students arriving **after** 7:30 am are to report **directly** to their classrooms.

Mid-school students are to:

- Follow all of the above regulations before 7:30 am
- Go directly to their homeroom after 7:30 am
- Quietly get necessary books and supplies from locker
- Remain in homeroom

Note: Students must come to school in complete uniform (e.g., ties on correctly, shirts/blouses tucked in properly, sweaters or blazers on before arriving at school).

## **Dismissal**

All students being dismissed will remain in line under the care of their teacher until a parent arrives. No child may go home with another child without prior written consent **TO THE OFFICE** from both sets of parents. Students who remain at 3:10 pm will be escorted to Child Care at the expense of the parent.

Students must abide by the same rules after school that apply before school with regard to loitering in and around the building.

Parents: Please use the drive-up method to pick up your child/children. Older students will be lined up with the youngest child in the family. If needed, park and talk with teachers after dismissal. They must direct their attention to their students. Accidents can happen when they are distracted.



## **Student Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

Our parents and staff have developed drop-off and pick-up procedures for the safety of our students. Please read the following procedures and study the map on the following page.

### **Student Curbside Drop Off**

We have divided the students into three (3) groups.

- Families with children in grades 1 through 4 should enter the playground entrance off Hood Road (Entrance A on the map) and drop off on the north side of the school.
- Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten families should use Entrance B off Hood Road.
- Families with 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students should enter from Ivory Road at Entrance C.

**Tip: Families using the Ivory Road Entrance may avoid bottlenecks if you approach the school from Lisbon to Ivory rather than from Hood Road. If you are dropping off children in different grades, use the entrance designated for the youngest child.**

Drive slowly through the parking lots. Pull forward to the drop-off point (see map) and only drop off near the curb so your children can step directly onto the sidewalk. For safety reasons, **DO NOT DROP OFF IN THE DRIVEWAY.** Remain in your car. Patrols are available to help younger students.

**Important Note: If your child cannot exit your vehicle on the curbside (for example, a van using Entrance A, without a passenger door on the left side of the vehicle), please use an entrance where your child is able to exit safely onto the curb.**

### **Student Curbside Pick Up**

Use the same entrances designated for drop-off procedures. Children will be waiting on the sidewalk with their teachers in the areas identified by grade. Merge slowly and carefully to curbside. Do not park in the center of the traffic pattern and expect your child to be brought to your vehicle. Children may not walk between cars or into traffic. Older siblings and car pool students will wait with the youngest child at dismissal. All families are expected to follow the traffic plan for pick up. Parking in the neighborhood streets and picking up your child by walking on campus or having your child cross streets to access your car in the neighborhood violates or school policy.

**DO NOT BACK UP TO LEAVE THE LINE.**

**It is dangerous to do so, since children may be behind your vehicle. Putting your vehicle in reverse in the pick up line risks injury or death to staff and/or students.**

**Important points to remember:**

- Drive slowly, merge carefully, and watch for children.
- In most cases you should remain in your car at drop-off or pick-up sites.
- **Families with two door vehicles will find it necessary to exit the vehicle to access the backseat. Either vehicle door can be used for loading or unloading. Use the side closest to the curb when possible to prevent students from walking near traffic.**

- Stay in a single line. We form 2 lines on the Kindergarten side and the north side pick-up zones only. Follow the directions of the traffic volunteer.
- Keep backpacks, etc. next to your child in the car rather than in the trunk. Patrols will assist younger children.
- Remember to have lunches, lunch money, papers, etc. ready before you enter the line.
- Cell phones while dropping off or picking up your children is prohibited.
- Leave your dog at home when dropping off or picking up your children.
- The teachers are required to watch and help load the children. Therefore, all conferences must take place in the school.
- Avoid blocking our neighbors' driveways. Please respect their property. Parking in the neighborhood violates our school policy.
- At dismissal, stay in your car and in line. Your child will wait for you with his/her teacher at the curb.
- Please be calm and patient and above all, be kind to, and cooperate with our traffic patrol volunteers.

If interested in helping, please call the school. The shared responsibility of the safety of our children is well worth our efforts.

## **Transportation of Students by Teen Drivers**

Student safety is of paramount importance not only during the school day, but also before and after school and at school sanctioned activities. In addition, the School realizes how helpful teenaged siblings who are licensed drivers are in transporting their younger family members. The School requires that a driver under the age of 18, holding a valid New Mexico provisional license may only transport his or her family members **if the family has provided written authorization on his/her student's emergency contact list**. Secondly, per State law, said driver may only transport one non-family member. The School must have written authorization from the non-family member's parent or guardian listing that particular driver on the child's emergency contact list.

## **Property**

All school property (buildings, rooms, lockers, desks, chairs, books, etc.) is valuable and must be respected. All student property is valuable and must be respected. If property is destroyed in any manner, payment for damage to school or personal property must be made. Bills for damage done, either deliberately or through carelessness, will be sent to the parents of the students responsible for the damage. This pertains to textbooks and library books as well.

DELIBERATE DAMAGE TO ANOTHER'S PROPERTY WILL ALSO RESULT IN SUSPENSION OR DISMISSAL, DEPENDING ON THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE.

## **Emergency Plan and Procedures**

### ***Crisis Plans***

- A. *All Principals/preschool directors in cooperation with the faculty shall develop written general and specific crisis procedure plans, which shall be reviewed annually. These plans should provide specific procedures for emergency situations including, but not limited to intruders from within,*

*intruders from outside, fire, tornado, and earthquake.*

- B. They should also include, at a minimum, information regarding evacuation, notification of police and other appropriate authorities, signals/codes for personnel, a system to contact parents or responsible parties, a system for release of students, provisions for site isolation, methods of communication, both internal and external, first aid, faculty and staff assignments, closing of school and early dismissal of students.*
- C. In the event of a natural disaster, the school shall respond to directions given by the Catholic Schools Office or local governing authority.*
- D. The responsibility for determining whether the building should be evacuated rests with the Principal. In the absence of the Principal, the assistant Principal, or the Principal's designee, who shall be a certified teacher, shall be responsible for carrying out the emergency procedures.*
- E. Copies of the procedures are to be distributed to all school personnel and families. All school personnel, including those involved in coaching and before and after school programs, shall be instructed in these procedures. Any emergency, disaster, or dangerous situation shall be reported to the pastor and to the Superintendent as soon as possible.*
- F. In the event of a lockdown the Pastor/Rector of parish preschools and elementary schools and the Superintendent must be notified. In the case of a lockdown at the Archdiocesan high school the Superintendent must be notified. S/he will provide for notification of Catholic Center personnel.*

### **Emergency Drills**

- A. Written standards of procedures for emergency drills (fire, tornado, etc.) shall be posted in each classroom, gymnasium, cafeteria, and all other occupied areas of the building. All occupants of the building shall be made aware of the emergency procedures as posted.*
- B. According to New Mexico law, private schools must conduct an emergency drill at least once a week during the first four weeks of the school year and at least once a month thereafter. Two drills during the year must be shelter-in-place (as opposed to evacuation) drills and one must be an evacuation drill, as directed by the State Department of Education. The remainder of the drills must be fire drills.*
- C. Fire extinguishers shall be placed in appropriate locations, clearly identified, and checked annually or more frequently, if required by local fire regulations.*
- D. The fire marshal must prescribe reasonable rules, regulations and programs for teaching proper methods of fire prevention and control to all children in the state, whether in public or private schools.*

### **Non-Authorized Persons**

- A. All Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall establish procedures to register visitors on campus and monitor non-authorized persons. Persons with no legitimate reason or written authorization to be on the school grounds should be asked to leave by any school personnel. If the person does not leave, the police should be called. (ASF/CSPM#1520)*

### **Fire/Safety Drills**

Safety drills, such as fire and school lock-down drills, are conducted in compliance with the laws of the State of New Mexico. Exit procedures are posted inside each classroom. Silence is to be maintained at all times during the drill. Everyone in the building at the time of a safety drill is expected to participate in the drill and follow the prescribed guidelines:

- Walk quickly – DON'T RUN.
- Line up in a straight line in silence on the basketball courts, facing away from the school.
- Wait for instructions.
- Return to class in silence and in a straight line.

## Security

School doors are always locked during regular school hours. In order to ensure school security and have knowledge of all adults and students on campus, at NO time are non-staff member adults or non-enrolled students to enter or exit the school building without authorization. All adults and minors must have clearance to enter the building as either a staff member, authorized vendor, or volunteer/visitor.

Visitors must exit and enter the school building through the front entrance **only**. All visitors coming into the school during school hours must utilize the front door. All visitors must check in at the office and follow safety protocols for access to campus. Visitors will be cleared by the front office and identified with a school badge.

## Office Telephone

The office telephone is a business phone that may only to be used by parents or students in an emergency. Permission is required from administration for any student to use the phone. Students are not allowed to use the phone to make personal arrangements (such as requesting permission to go to another student's home after school or to ask parents to bring forgotten homework).

## Cell Phone Policy

**To bring a cell phone to school, parents and/or students must:**

1. Complete a Student Cell Phone Permission Form signed by parent.
2. Cell phones may remain with students during the school day, but they must be stored in a backpack or school locker. Teachers may collect phones at their discretion at the beginning of class periods.
3. Cell phones should not be on the person of the student or brought out to specials or recesses.
4. Phones must remain turned off until students are picked up by parents/guardians, etc.
5. The school, staff and/or its designees will not be held legally or financially responsible for loss or damage to cell phones brought to school. Parents must bear the cost of any loss, damage or any fees or penalties incurred from cell phone carriers, due to phone replacement or service contract issues.
6. Students' cell phones may not be used for personal calls or text messages during the day. **Students are to use school phones with the nurse or office if needed with adult supervision.** Parents and guardians are to be contacted through school phone lines or via school email by staff.
7. Cell phone cameras and video capabilities may not be used to photograph or video students or staff members without consent. Any sharing of these images through social media or messaging violates reasonable expectations of privacy. These acts may result in disciplinary action including expulsion.
8. Apple watches or text capable watches are considered cellular devices. Watches must not have call, text or internet capabilities as this is considered cell phone access. Smart Watches may be worn if they are not call/text/internet capable during the school day. These devices must be cleared by the teacher and administration.

Cell phones may not be used while on school property except under coach's or staff supervision and permission.

## **Cell Phone Misuse Consequences**

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Phone will be confiscated. Parent must go to the office after school to claim student's phone. The parent and child will meet with administration to review cell phone policies.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Phone will be confiscated and returned to a parent. The student will receive one day of in-school suspension.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Phone will be confiscated and returned to a parent. If a student's phone is confiscated for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, disciplinary action will be taken including disciplinary probation and/or dismissal from school.

Reasons for, but not limited to, confiscation of phone:

- Cell phone brought to school without authorization
- Cell phone usage on school property without explicit permission from those in authority
- Cyber bullying or harassment of any type during the school day with the cell phone.

## **Prohibited Materials**

The following materials are prohibited at St. Thomas Aquinas School and will be confiscated from the student:

- Toys
- Electronic devices
- Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco\*
- Weapons/weapon-like objects\*

\*If a student possesses, uses, or is under the influence of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs or is in possession of a weapon, while on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity, the school shall immediately contact the student's parents or legal guardians, and the school may, at its discretion, contact local law enforcement.

## **Lost and Found**

Jewelry, electronic devices and other costly items will be taken to the office. All other items found at school will be taken to the Lost and Found located in the cafeteria.

**Writing your child's name on the inside of his/her clothing and personal items**

**will avoid having to search for them in the Lost and Found.**

Items unclaimed at the end of the quarter will be donated to St. Vincent de Paul.

## **Donation Guidelines**

St. Thomas Aquinas School is a registered not-for-profit organization with the Internal Revenue Service. Therefore, donations made to the school are tax deductible. All donations are considered the property of the school and are non-returnable. Tax-deductible donations made to a particular teacher or classrooms are the property of the school.

## **Behavior Policies**

### **Courtesy Policy**

#### **Respect - Responsibility – Reverence**

**Definition:** Politeness and respect given to adults, students and oneself.

**In Action:**

- Greet persons with respect, including visitors to our school
- Speak to one another with dignity
- Respect all property – yours and other students, school, and teachers
- Step back and offer adults or students the opportunity to pass through the doorway first
- Offer to carry things for teachers and for one another
- Stand and greet adults when they enter the room
- Play at all times must include everyone – be fair – use intelligent language
- Keep campus clean by throwing trash away
- Name calling, bullying, gossiping, physical or emotional injury to others is prohibited.

All students – parents – teachers – staff – administration ... should review the rules of courtesy. These rules are in effect at all times when we are present at St. Thomas Aquinas School, both on and off campus. We are to support and practice these rules at school and at home alike, with our peers and with our families.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- To create and promote a Christian understanding of the responsibilities we have toward each other.
- To be self-disciplined and to take personal responsibility for one's actions.

- To develop the ability to think constructively, to solve problems, and to reason independently.
- To become aware of the mission and policies of St. Thomas Aquinas School.
- To cooperate fully with the teachers and staff at all times.
- To respect school property and the property of others at all times.
- To wear the school uniform correctly and with pride.
- To attend school regularly and punctually.
- To strive for excellence by working to one's ability, completing assignments, studying for tests, participating in school projects, and utilizing time well.
- To share time and talents with the school community.
- To respect God, our country, self, and one another at all times.

## **General Behavior Expectations**

Each teacher will develop rules according to the age, grade and specific developmental needs of the children. All members of the faculty and administration share in the disciplinary function of St. Thomas Aquinas School. The first line of discipline is the teacher. Each teacher is deemed competent by the administration to deal with disciplinary infractions within his/her classrooms/areas.

Note – to challenge the authority of individual teachers is to challenge the authority of the school. Refusal to obey any level of authority automatically refers the problem to a higher level of administrative discipline. In addition to student responsibilities in the classroom, ALL students are expected to abide by the following general code of behavioral conduct:

- Reverence and respect in the presence of our Lord are integral to the spiritual growth of the student.
- Students are expected to be respectful and obedient and to exhibit a positive attitude towards themselves, others, and their environment.
- Respect and obey all faculty, staff, and support personnel.
- Follow directions promptly the first time they are given.
- Students may never leave the classroom or go to another destination without the expressed permission of the teacher they are supposed to be with or, after passing period, will be with the next period.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to oneself.
- Use appropriate Christian language at all times.
- Respect one another – physically or verbally.
- Wear proper uniform correctly at all times.
- Keep school property, inside and out, free of litter.
- Know that defacing school property is prohibited.
- Gum on campus is prohibited.
- Keeping food in desks or eating during class time is not permitted.
- Students may enter the teachers' lounge when accompanied by a teacher or for mail pickup (except between the hours of 11:00am and 1:00pm).
- Prohibited items such as alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, jules, weapons, and pornography are NOT allowed at school.

## **Recess/Playground Behavior Expectations**

- ALL students MUST go outside during each recess – unless they are injured, ill or serving a detention.
- Students are to RESPECT recess supervisors in word and action.

- Students are to RESPECT one another. Fighting and name-calling, throwing rocks, snowballs, or other objects are absolutely unacceptable.
- Students are to keep the playground neat.
- Students may not leave the school grounds for any reason.
- Students are to play on the designated playground areas only.
- Students are to use the playground equipment in the manner in which it was intended.
- Students are to take turns on the swings and when playing tetherball.
- When the bell rings at the end of recess, the students are to immediately stop playing and walk toward their designated lines.

## **Hallway Behavior Expectations**

Students are expected to:

- Walk in a single file line
- Walk silently and directly to destination
- Keep to the right of hallway at all times
- Give the right of way to younger students, teachers and staff

## **Cafeteria Behavior Expectations**

Students are expected to:

- Follow directions of the cafeteria staff
- Speak in soft inside voices
- Throwing food is unacceptable
- Walk at all times
- Clean up the table and the floor space after eating
- Raise hand for assistance
- All food is to be eaten while sitting at the table
- Remain seated until dismissed
- When dismissed, take tray and/or trash to designated areas

**\*\* For complete cafeteria policies, see page 39.**

## **Restroom Behavior Expectations**

- Defacing the restroom walls, doors, floors, etc. is strictly prohibited.
- Respect the privacy of all students
- Maintain quiet in the restrooms – inside voices
- Remember rules of hygiene
- Put paper where it belongs
- Leave the restroom promptly after use



- Pre-kindergarten students must only use their assigned PreK restrooms. No other grade levels may access the PreK restrooms.

## **Student/Parent Access to Classrooms**

- Students/Parents will have access to their classroom only when their teacher is present.
- No student or parent will be given permission to enter a classroom, before school hours, during school hours, and after school hours unless the classroom teacher is present.
- Students are responsible for packing their books, notebooks, and other homework supplies into their backpacks at the end of the day.
- Parents may check with the classroom teacher before 3:30 pm to make sure their children have the necessary homework materials.
- Custodians will not open classroom doors for students or parents before teachers arrive each day. After school, students and parents can access classrooms until 3:30 pm when teachers are present. Should a teacher be out prior to 3:30 pm, school staff will help with access to the classroom. Students must be supervised. Classrooms are not accessible after 3:30 pm.

## **Specials**

ALL SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM RULES AND CONSEQUENCES APPLY  
WHILE STUDENTS ARE IN THE FOLLOWING CLASSES:

- ART
- GYM
- LIBRARY
- MUSIC
- SPANISH

Students are to be respectful towards the teachers of these subjects in the same way they show respect and courtesy to their homeroom teachers. Remember, these classes are considered when calculating honor roll placement.

The student's job, as always, is to do his/her best at ALL times. Consequences for poor choices and lapses in self-discipline are uniform across the curriculum. Students are expected to maintain the same level of excellence and productive choices as they do in their homerooms.

## **Discipline Policies**

### **Purpose of Discipline**

There is a reason for being proud of our school. We strive to present ourselves and live the true Christian principles of formation which are found in the Gospel, as well as fostering commendable academic goals. Our purpose is primarily to form, by both word and deed, an atmosphere where the ideals of Christian living, along with intellectual growth, can be realized. In short, to do what we can to form, with the grace of God, ideal fulfillment in all areas of human growth and development.

The true goal of any disciplinary measure is to assist the student in achieving self-discipline that will manifest itself in clear and logical reasoning and in action, which is consistent with good moral principles. As citizens in a democratic society, students must be given the opportunity to participate actively and responsibly in school life. When a student's behavior infringes upon the rights of others or works against the education process, the student will be

corrected and given the reason(s) for any corrective measure administered. Corrective measures, though punitive by nature, are always intended to help the student look for positive productive behavior choices.

## **Code of Conduct**

A student shall not by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct intentionally cause the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school. A student who fails to comply with directions from teachers, student teachers, educational assistants, Principal or other authorized school personnel during any time when s/he is under the authority of school personnel shall be in violation of school rules and regulations and subject to disciplinary measures.

## **Students in Good Standing**

Every student at St. Thomas Aquinas School is assumed to be “**in good standing**” until they choose to prove otherwise. All students start the year “in good standing” and remain so by avoiding detentions and suspensions. All special activities and events – parties, assemblies, sports competitions, etc. – are for St. Thomas Aquinas School students “in good standing. Yes, it pays to cooperate.

## **Overall Discipline Approach**

Discipline is considered an educative process. Each student is given opportunities to correct his/her behavior and guided towards appropriate behavior. Warnings can be directed towards **an individual or a group of students who are being disruptive**. If the student chooses to ignore an opportunity for redemption, or exhibits defiance, a discipline notice will be issued to the student and he/she is directed to school administration.

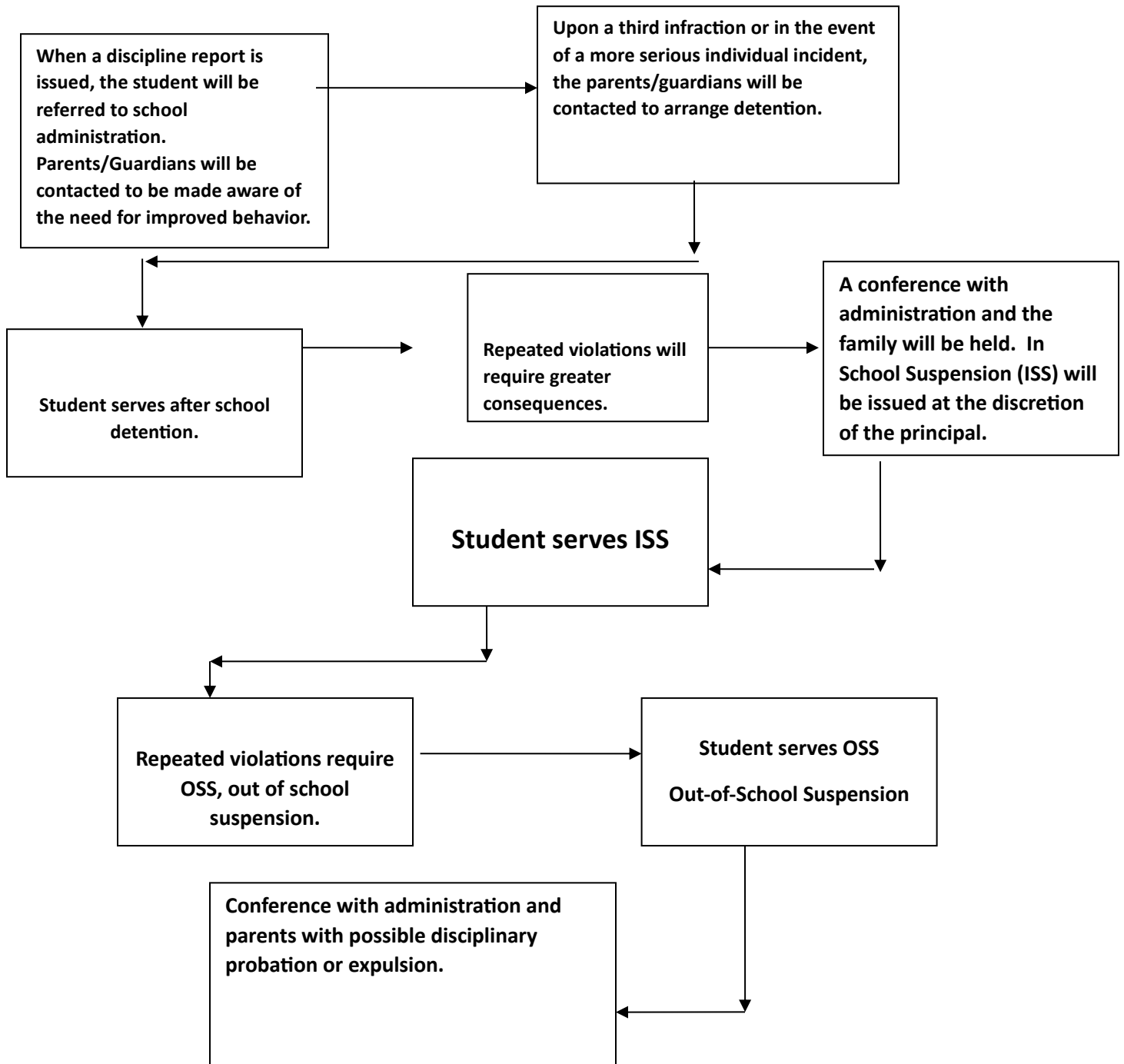
**(Note: If the student is openly defiant/destructive etc., the teacher reserves the right to assign an immediate detention. If the student is unresponsive to this measure, s/he will be removed from the environment and parents will be called.**

## **Pre-kindergarten - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Disciplinary actions for behavior (PreK through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and homework infractions (Grades K through 2) will be appropriate to the age groups of these students. Each teacher will list and discuss his/her classroom management policies on discipline with students and parents. Students in this age group must abide by the school’s Code of Conduct. School administration reserves the right to apply the Flow Chart for Behavior Discipline Policy to students in Pre-K through 2nd grade when deemed appropriate by the Principal.

## Flow Chart for Behavior Discipline Policy

The classroom, like a home, is a sacred learning center. Any behavior interfering with this process will not be tolerated.



\* Note - disciplinary probation timeline will remain in place until student makes the choice to adhere to the school's rules.

## **Discipline Reports**

Discipline reports are formal written documentation of behavior infractions. These reports will be issued by the teacher or administration. The teacher will inform school administration of the infraction and process the report. Discipline reports must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school administration. Discipline reports are a record of the behavior infractions that are applicable to the Flow Chart for Behavior Discipline Policy.

## **Detention Policy**

Detention for grades 3 – 8 will be held after school with the Teacher-in-Charge. Parents are notified of detention through a phone call from the teacher or school administration. Students serve their detentions from 3:00 – 3:45 pm on the same day as the issuance of the detention. An extracurricular activity is not a consideration for rescheduling of the detention. Failure to serve an assigned detention will result in detention the following two (2) consecutive school days. Continued failure to serve the detention will result in: In-school Suspension (ISS), Out-of-school Suspension (OSS), and/or disciplinary probation or expulsion. Under extenuating circumstances (e.g., previously scheduled doctor appointments, court dates, etc.) and with the prior approval from the administration, parents may make arrangements to reschedule the detention.

The following are examples of, but not limited to, choices that will result in an **immediate detention**.

- Cheating in any form (no credit earned for assignment/test)
- Use of profanity/obscenity, whether verbal, written or gestured
- Possession of pornography
- Disrespect to teachers/staff/ administration/peers
- Damage or destruction of school property
- Possession of a weapon/weapon-like object
- Bullying/harassment
- Cyber bullying while on school property
- Forgery
- Physical fighting
- Three behavior infractions
- Theft

**Serious misconduct or illegal activity will result in immediate student suspension,**

**disciplinary probation, or expulsion. The Principal reserves the right to issue immediate disciplinary action for behavior that causes physical, mental, or emotional trauma.**

## **Suspension**

*Suspension refers to the isolation of a student from some or all classes and/or school activities. Suspension is defined as a temporary dismissal of a student from the school. Suspension is a serious consequence that should be used rarely and only in response to an action of a very serious nature or after other remedial measures have been employed without success.*

*A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct occurring on campus, during school related activities off campus, or for continued misconduct after having been placed on probation.*

- A. Suspension may be imposed in accordance with rules established by the school. The student may be required to attend school, but be separated from classes (in-school suspension) or remain at home (out-of-school suspension). The suspended student will be expected to continue schoolwork on an independent basis either at school or at home. Whether a student is in or out of school, suspension may not exceed three days, except in extraordinary circumstances or to allow time to complete and investigation or inquiry pending expulsion.*
- B. Suspension may encompass extracurricular activities subject to the school’s handbook. School officials shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student’s parents or legal guardians prior to imposing any suspension upon a student. In situations where immediate suspension is warranted, school officials shall notify a student’s parents or legal guardians about the suspension as soon as is practicable under the circumstances.*
- C. The school shall keep a written record including date of the suspension, reasons, notes relating to the conference with the parents and terms and conditions of the suspension that shall be signed by the parent and Principal/Preschool Director. A copy of the record must be kept in a file separate and apart from the student’s Permanent Record.*

*The Principal/Preschool Director must approve any suspension of a student. (ASF/CSPM#2450)*

## **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

In-school Suspension: The student will spend his/her entire school day completing individual assignments given by his/her regular teacher/s while being removed from the regular classroom setting.

### **Typical reasons for, but not limited to, in-school suspension would be repeated:**

- Homework violations
- Dress code violations
- Disrespectful behavior towards teachers/staff/administration/peers
- Bullying/harassment
- Profanity/obscenities (verbal, written or gestured)
- Theft
- Forgery
- Possession of a weapon/weapon-like object
- Cheating
- Possession of pornography
- Damage or destruction of school property
- Or any other infractions listed under “Detention Policy”

## **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

Out-of-school Suspension: The student is completely excluded from the school environment. This step is a precursor to disciplinary probation and possible dismissal. At this point, the student's choices have not only been self-destructive, but invasive to the general population in the school environment. It is the hope that with this extreme disciplinary step, the student will realize the need for precise change on his/her part in order to remain a member of the student body at St. Thomas Aquinas School, that it is only by his/her actions and choices that change can be possible. Students will do all daily assignments at home. Work must be submitted by the final day of OSS to be eligible for credit. Make-up tests will need to be coordinated with the teacher/s upon the student's return to school. Parents are fully responsible for the student.

### **Reasons for, but not limited to, out-of-school suspension (OSS) would include chronic:**

- Possession of pornography
- Damage or destruction of property
- Bullying/harassment/cyber bullying
- Throwing of objects
- Non-compliance with homework or school policies
- Dress code violations
- Disrespectful behavior towards teachers/staff /administration/peers
- Theft
- Possession of a weapon/weapon-like object
- Cheating/plagiarism from any source
- Forgery

**Note: the following offenses will result in an immediate 3 day OSS and conferences regarding disciplinary probation or expulsion.**

- Possession/distribution/under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs
- Fighting/battery
- Setting off a false fire alarm – student must pay DPS fine
- Possession of a weapon/weapon-like

### **Process leading to out-of-school suspension:**

- Previous ISS (except in the cases of offenses carrying immediate OSS consequence)
- Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s) and administration
- Out-of-school suspension (OSS)

## **Disciplinary Probation**

*Probation refers to the careful supervision and evaluation of the student's conduct or academic progress for a specified period, at the end of which a determination is made concerning whether the student has corrected the misconduct or made appropriate academic progress.*

*A student may be placed on probation by the Principal/Preschool Director.*

*Probation may be imposed in accordance with rules established by the school. Probation shall include an agreement in writing between or among the student, parents or legal guardians and the school administrator addressing the student's misconduct or academic deficiencies, duration of probation, corrective measures to ensure compliance with applicable rules or requirements and the consequences of any violation of the terms of the probation. Parents must be notified in writing when the probation is terminated or if it is to be extended.*

*Subject to compliance with the terms of the probation agreement, a probationary period shall not exceed two semesters. (ASF/CSPM#2440)*

A student may be placed on **disciplinary probation** at the discretion of the administration when other opportunities for redemption, by the student, have been unsuccessful. A parent/guardian conference will take place with the administration and conditions of the probation put in writing.

A student will be placed on disciplinary probation for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Two or more suspensions per year
- Frequent detentions
- Serious abuse of school policies
- Serious behavior problems – either in or out of the classroom

**If the student's choices and behavior/s remain unchanged during the probationary period, s/he will be dismissed.**

## **Expulsion Policy**

*The permanent dismissal of a student from school is an extreme measure to be taken only as a last resort: a) after all other efforts of motivation and counseling have failed or b) where attendant circumstances of crime, scandal, immorality or disruption constitute a threat to the physical or moral welfare of other persons or c) as set forth in Policy 2470 regarding student withdrawal on grounds of parental behavior. Local schools should publish in the parent/student handbook a non-exclusive list of those actions that may constitute expulsion.*

## PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION

A. *A record shall be kept of previous measures of remediation, counseling, probation, conferences and/or suspensions. This documentation should include written communication between the school and the family.*

***In the case of serious circumstances as described in "b" above, the student shall be immediately suspended until the process described in numbers B-G can be completed.***

B. *Parents MUST be informed by WRITTEN notice that expulsion is contemplated.*

C. *A conference shall be held with parents, student, Principal/Preschool Director, Pastor/Rector, and, if appropriate, teachers at which time the grounds for dismissal will be presented and discussed.*

D. *Expulsion should be determined only after consultation with the Superintendent (and the Pastor/Rector in Parish/Regional schools and preschools). The final decision to expel a student rests with the Principal/Preschool Director and Pastor/Rector with the knowledge and consent of the Superintendent.*

E. *Once the decision has been made to expel a student, WRITTEN notification of the decision must be sent to the parents and a copy forwarded to the Superintendent.*

F. *The Principal/Preschool Director shall notify the parents in writing of the appeal process. (See Policy 1310)*

G. *The Principal/Preschool Director shall properly document all expulsion cases including grounds, evidence, record of conferences and final notice. Such documentation shall be maintained in a file separate and apart from the Student Permanent Record. (ASF/CSPM#2460)*

The following are examples of, but not limited to, offences that are considered grave and serious breaches of discipline and may result in expulsion from school:

- Possession/use of/or intent to sell or distribute drugs, alcohol or tobacco products or related paraphernalia on school premises or at any school sanctioned activity
- Possession of weapons of any kind
- Assault/battery/threats/chronic fighting involving actual or potential bodily harm/bullying
- Continued threat of violence/force against another person or persons
- Deliberate and open verbal and/or physical defiance, disrespect (verbal, written, gestured) of authority figures (including clergy, Principal, teachers, staff, aides, volunteers and other adults)
- Open disruptive behavior with willful disregard for school policies
- The chronic use of profanity and obscenities – verbal, written and/or gestured
- Vandalism – destruction of school property, real or personal property, graffiti, arson, etc.
- Harmful behavior during recess – throwing rocks/projectiles which may cause potential and real bodily harm
- Repeated theft
- Continued cheating/plagiarism from any source
- Continued forgery of parent's signature
- Leaving school grounds/events/child care program without permission



- Persistent possession of pornography
- Harassment, threats of any kind (words or actions), or hazing of fellow students, teachers, staff, and other adults
- Repeated false fire alarms
- Bomb threat
- Habitual inappropriate use of the internet
- Continued cell phone/electronic device/homework/dress code violations
- Excessive absenteeism/tardiness
- Excessive and repeated study habit infractions.
- Moral turpitude/grossly scandalous or infamous behavior/recurring inappropriate display of affection
- Moral turpitude
- **Parental harassment of clergy/administration/faculty/staff/volunteers or continued non-cooperation with stated rules**

St. Thomas Aquinas School reserves the right to dismiss students whose needs we are unable to meet.

## **Appeal Process**

*Any appeal concerning any matter relating to Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall be processed in accordance with the following regulations:*

### **A. Resolution of Ordinary Differences within the School Community**

*Every attempt should be made to resolve a conflict at the lowest possible level. Occasionally, matters may arise which will require an objective review by a third party in order to assure the maintenance of positive relationships within the school community. To facilitate reconciliation, communication and the strengthening of the community of faith, the following general guidelines shall be followed:*

- 1) In any conflict, an effort shall first be made to resolve the issue in a spirit of fairness and justice by following the ordinary and regular communication channels between the people involved.*
- 2) If the conflict cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved, recourse may be made to the person with the next higher level of accountability up to and including the school Principal/director. The specific provisions for a fair process are to be contained in the local school handbooks.*
- 3) If the Principal/Preschool Director is believed to be acting contrary to Archdiocesan or local school policy, or if there is a disagreement regarding the Principal's or preschool director's decision affecting a student, then the student (18 years or older), the student's parent or legal guardian may request that the Pastor/Rector in the case of a Parish/Regional school or the Superintendent in the case of the Archdiocesan high school review the matter or the decision.*
- 4) If the conflict cannot be resolved in an elementary school or preschool following steps one through three above, then a parent, student (18 years or older) or employee may have recourse to the Superintendent.*
- 5) If an aggrieved party requests that the Superintendent review a matter or a decision arising out of a local school, the Superintendent may (at his or her sole option) assign a hearing officer to review*

*the matter and take testimony if necessary. The Superintendent may consider evidence obtained by the hearing officer in reviewing the matter and in making his/her final decision.*

**B. Recognition of Local Authority**

*In cases involving Principal and Pastor discretion, the Catholic Schools Office recognizes the local administrations' authority to exercise discretionary rights within the parameters of local and Archdiocesan policy.*

**C. Appeal of Required Withdrawal of a Student**

*If a Principal/Preschool Director requires, for whatever reason, that a student withdraw from school, the student (if 18 years or older), or the parent or legal guardian may appeal the Principal's/director's decision following the steps in A. 3 and 4 above.*

**D. Appeal of Other Serious Decisions**

*There shall be no right of appeal for a student, parent or legal guardian if a Principal/Preschool Director takes some disciplinary action toward a student other than required withdrawal from the school. There shall be no right of appeal, for example, for the suspension of a student, or for detention. There may be occasions; however, where a Principal/Director's decision has serious consequences and the student (if 18 years or older) or the student's parent or legal guardian requests a review by the Pastor/Rector or Superintendent. It shall be within the sole discretion of the Pastor/Rector or Superintendent to determine whether to review the decision.*

**E. Process of Appeal**

- 1. When a parent, an employee or a student (18 years or older) believes his/her rights have been violated and/or the Principal/Director and/or Pastor/Rector is believed to be acting contrary to Archdiocesan or local policy, the person may submit an appeal in writing to the Superintendent with the following information, provided steps one through three above have been followed:*
- 2. The subject of the appeal.*
- 3. Any factual data, other than hearsay, the person considers appropriate.*
- 4. The efforts that have been made to resolve the issue*
- 5. The decision of the Principal, Preschool Director and/or Pastor/Rector must be appealed within ten (10) working days of the communication of that decision by the aggrieved party.*
- 6. The Superintendent may, in his or her sole discretion, designate another person to hear the appeal and to render a decision on the Superintendent's behalf.*
- 7. If the Superintendent accepts the appeal, the Superintendent (or his or her designee) shall have the discretion to review documents and take testimony (if necessary) from any witness who may have knowledge or information regarding the subject of the appeal. Should a hearing be necessary, the Superintendent may hear the appeal alone or form a hearing committee, if s/he deems appropriate.*
- 8. The decision of the Superintendent is final and binding and concludes the appeal process. There shall be no further right of appeal.*
- 9. The appeal process is designed to support the Catholic Church's belief in subsidiarity and, therefore, at no time during the appeal process may the parent, employee or student (18 years of age) be represented by an attorney. (ASF/CSPM#1310)*

## **Harassment and Cyber Bullying Policy**

*The Archdiocese strongly opposes and prohibits all forms of harassment (e.g. harassment based on an individual's race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, and disability), whether verbal, physical, visual or environmental. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including required withdrawal.*

*Each Parish/Regional school and the Archdiocesan high school shall develop and disseminate a policy, in the context of the school mission and Catholic identity, which addresses student-to-student bullying and harassment. This policy shall state that it prohibits any verbal, physical, or visual conduct on the part of students that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive, education environment.*

*In addition to this statement, the policy shall contain the following: descriptive behaviors; procedures for reporting; investigative procedures; consequences and penalties; discretion statement that allows the Principal/Preschool Director and Pastor/Rector (Superintendent for the high school) to review individual situations and waive any or all penalties. The policy should also state if the school provides a bullying/harassment prevention program for staff, students, and parents and how individuals may access that program. (ASF/CSPM#2410)*

**Harassment: No parent/guardian or other person may upbraid, insult or abuse any teacher, administrator, staff member, or coach of the school in or out of the presence or hearing of a student, other school personnel or other person/s. Such actions can result in the dismissal of family of said parent / guardian or other person from St. Thomas Aquinas School.**

Cyber bullying can be defined as willful and repeated written abuse and/or photos or graphics inflicted through, but not limited to, social media. Cyberbullying must be further classified into instances that happen at school during school hours or those that happen outside of school hours. St. Thomas Aquinas School does not have responsibility over cyberbullying that happens outside of school hours as it is the parents' primary responsibility to monitor and address their child's online activity before and after school hours including vacations and weekends. It is not possible for the faculty and school administration of St. Thomas Aquinas School to monitor and address online abuse that happens off school campus on social media, gaming platforms, cellular devices, computers, or any other cyber-related devices.

St. Thomas Aquinas School makes every effort to educate students and staff about cyberbullying, methods of cyberbullying, its effects on victims and abusers, and the means to prevent this type of abuse. Local police agencies participate in educational programs with the school to educate students on cyberbullying, its impact, and the potential criminal consequences.

STAS strives to maintain a safe and nurturing environment for all students at St. Thomas Aquinas School. St. Thomas Aquinas School's faculty, staff, and school administration strives to prevent instances of cyber bullying from occurring using personal digital devices, such as cell phones, digital cameras and personal computers. The following consequences will be enforced should cyberbullying happen between students on campus while under the supervision of school staff:

1. The student will be provided with educational lessons on cyberbullying and its effects and potential consequences during a parent conference with staff and school administration.
2. Cyberbullying incidences may be reported to the local police department for resource offices from RRPD to address at the discretion of the school's administration.
3. A student's infraction of cyber bullying may result in detention or suspension, the length of which will be determined by the nature of the infraction.
4. Repeated cyberbullying that happens on campus under the supervision of school staff may result in the removal of the student and family from the school.

Cyberbullying that happens while a student is off campus and not under the supervision of school staff is unacceptable. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to monitor and maintain a safe cyber home environment for his or her child outside of the school. This situation may involve students enrolled in STA or people outside the school community. Should a parent need help in this matter and approach school administration for assistance, he or she will be directed to RRPD to address the family matter. All instances of abuse are reported according to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe's abuse policy.

### **Bullying Investigative Procedure**

1. The Principal and Assistant Principal will be notified of the incident immediately.
2. Each person will be interviewed by school administration individually.
3. If the claim can be substantiated, a meeting with school administration and the parents will be set up.
4. Consequences will comply with the school policy.

## **Mid-School Specifics**

### **Tardiness to Each Class**

In order to develop a value of punctuality in the students, St. Thomas Aquinas School has adopted a strict policy for tardiness for all students. In addition, mid-school students are required to report to each class on time.

- It is expected that all mid-school students arrive at each class on time.
- Except in extreme emergencies, students will report to the class they are supposed to be in at that time and obtained permission to leave the classroom from that teacher.
- Students may not have another student report to a teacher as to the whereabouts of that student.

## **Uniform Violations**

Uniforms are required. Students must be in complete uniform from the time of arrival until they are picked up after school.

- Students must be in complete uniform at all times, in compliance with school uniform code.
- Behavior Infractions will be issued for uniform violations and follow the same consequences. Three behavior infractions will result in a detention.

## **Supplies/Books/Materials**

If a student does not have his/her books, writing utensils, notebooks, etc. when he or she arrives in a class, he or she will need to make up class assignments for homework. Coming to class prepared helps develop study habits and supports learning. When students repeatedly come to class unprepared, this habit needs correction. For this reason, when a student repeatedly comes to class unprepared, he or she will have a consequence similar to homework infractions.

Three incidents of coming to class without appropriate materials, such as books, notebooks, and writing utensils, will result in a study hall assignment to be served after school from 3:00 pm to 3:45 pm. Study Hall will serve as a lesson in organization and to clarify expectations. The study hall teacher will notify the family and partner with them to help.

**Three incidents = after school study hall assignment.**

**Study Hall is held once weekly at the discretion of administration.**

## **Study Habit Policies**

Homework and preparedness for class are key areas of focus for building study habits. The teachers and administration will support students in learning valuable skills through teaching study habits and assigning homework. Students are expected to complete homework and come to class prepared.

### **Homework Infractions**

Failure to complete homework assignments will result in a homework infraction. Three homework infractions will result in an assigned study hall after school with the Assistant Principal.

- In grades K-2, homework infraction policies will be age appropriate. Each K-2 teacher will list and discuss his/her classroom management policies during Back to School Night. School

administration reserves the right to apply the Flow Chart for Study Habit Support Policy to students in Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade when deemed appropriate by the Principal.

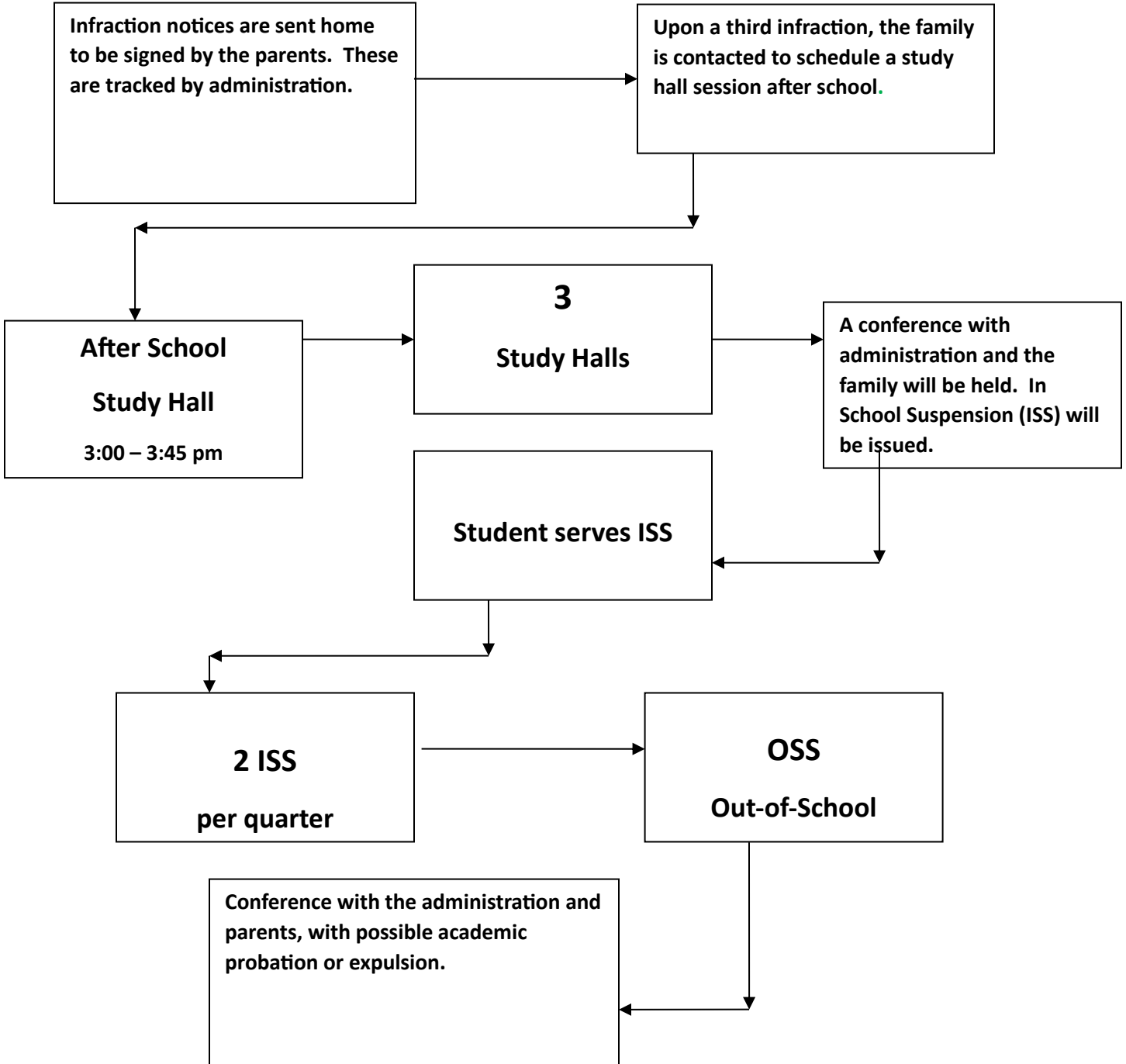
- In grades 3-5, if a student is assigned three different subjects and does not complete the work, this does not count as three separate homework infractions. Infractions will be assigned once daily.
- In Mid-school (grades 6, 7, and 8): Mid-school students are taught by both the homeroom teacher and department teachers such as math, science, religion, literature, language arts, and social studies. Mid-school homework infractions will be assigned per missed subject. For example, if a student is assigned two different homework assignments in math and literature, and does not complete the work, this counts as two separate homework infractions. At the start of the year, Mid-school teachers will explain classroom policies to parents/guardians regarding assignment credit. Students must follow teacher policy on assignment credit.

Three homework infractions will result in a study hall assignment to be served after school from 3:00 pm to 3:45 pm. Study Hall is a service provided by administration; it is a lesson in study habits and homework strategies. This service is offered once a week. Students must attend the weekly session as assigned by administration. The family will be notified and a study hall teacher will partner with them on the study hall assignment. See below the Study Habit Support Flowchart for details.

- Remember: Complete homework means that work is turned in on time and fully completed.
- In the event that a student does not understand a question or type of question, the student must make an attempt to answer it. Parents are welcome to notate a problem in homework as needing attention in class. This question can be left incomplete, and it will not count against the student as incomplete work.
- See page 20 for homework guidelines.

## Flow Chart for Study Habit Support Policy

Keep in mind that **completed homework** = 100% of the assignment has been completed and has been turned in on time. The goal is to focus on fostering self-discipline and defining an educational environment that is conducive to learning. Students will begin each quarter with a fresh start.\*



\* Note - academic probation timeline will remain in place until student makes the choice to adhere to the school's rules.

## **Searches of Students and Schools**

*A student assigned a locker or desk has use of, but not proprietary right to the locker or desk. Lockers and desks are the property of the school. Authorized school personnel may make periodic checks of lockers and desks, and their contents, at any time for any reason.*

*The Principal, Pastor/Rector, Assistant Principal and high school Assistant Principal, Superintendent or professional staff of the Catholic Schools Office may conduct a search of the school plant and every aperture thereof, including lockers and desks. School searches must be reasonable and related to the school official's responsibilities.*

*Normally, inspection of personal property, e.g. pockets, handbags, book bags, cars, etc. should not be conducted without the student's permission. If permission is given, the search must be made in the presence of at least two school officials. If permission is not given, the Principal should contact the Catholic Schools Office for further instructions.*

*After consultation with the Catholic Schools Office, inspection of personal property, e.g. pockets, handbags, book bags, cars, etc. may be made if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that such an inspection will reveal possession of objects or any substance which is prohibited on school property.*

*To facilitate compliance with this policy, schools shall publish in the school handbook a policy stating inspection rights when there is a suspicion of a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of students. (ASF/CSPM#2420)*

### **Lockers**

A student assigned locker or desk has use of, but not proprietary right to the locker or desk. Lockers and desks are the property of St. Thomas Aquinas School. Authorized school personnel may make periodic checks of lockers and desks, and their contents, at any time for any reason.

- Locks may only be placed on a locker when the homeroom teacher has the combination.
- Any student who places a lock on another student's locker will face immediate disciplinary action.
- A student is to use the locker issued to him/her throughout the entire year.
- Changing lockers with someone else or going into another student's locker will result in the loss of locker privileges for the remainder of that quarter.
- Changing lockers or going into another student's locker a second time during the year will result in permanent loss of locker privileges and an after school detention.
- Students are to maintain order in their lockers – avoid loose papers, etc. that may hinder the expeditious retrieval of books and supplies between classes.
- Students are to provide at least one metal locker shelf to help organize their lockers
- A student, who defaces or destroys his /her locker or someone else's locker, will be subject to the disciplinary policies of St. Thomas Aquinas School (pgs. 57-65).
- Students may hang family pictures or other pictures in their lockers using magnets only.
- Remember, all pictures are subject to scrutiny by teachers and/or administration for appropriateness.



# **Silent Reading Book**

All Mid-School students must carry a silent reading book with them to every core class.

## **Parent/Teacher Communication**

### **Chain of Command**

All concerns are to be addressed with the teacher FIRST. If this proves unsatisfactory after several attempts, the matter may then be brought to the attention of the administration. Concerns are not to be discussed with anyone other than the parties involved. Failure in this area has serious consequences.

### **Written Communication**

Sometimes, a good old-fashioned written note is the most effective way to contact a teacher. Put the note into an envelope with the teacher's name written on the envelope. Tuck the note in to your child's folder.

Using the homework or take-home folder, as a method of communication has proven to be an excellent tool. It is an optimum opportunity to jot the teacher a note of concern or compliment. This form of communication is best utilized in grades PreK-5 as these classes are self-contained and communication is checked daily by the teachers. Be aware that teachers often use this form of communication as well. So please remember to check your child's folder each day.

### **E-Mail**

Each teacher and staff member has a school e-mail address that can be accessed from FACTS SIS. For a complete list of e-mail addresses, login to FACTS SIS at [www.stasnm.org](http://www.stasnm.org).

### **FACTS SIS**

You may access your child's grades, class schedule, school calendar, newsletter current events, and contact the faculty and staff via e-mail using FACTS SIS at [www.stasnm.org](http://www.stasnm.org). Please contact the office if you do not have a log-in ID.

### **Conferences**

*The teacher is expected to meet periodically with the parents of each student for the purpose of discussing the student's development and academic progress in school. The student may be present for all or part of the conferences at the discretion of the teacher.*

*Conferences should take place at the designated school conference times and at other times deemed necessary by the teacher or parent.*

*Designated conference days may be considered contact days, provided students are required to attend all or*

*part of the conference.*

*Unless specifically prohibited by a court order, the non-custodial parent has the right to the same information and opportunities for conferences provided for the custodial parent. (ASF/CSPM#4410)*

Formal parent/teacher conferences occur at the end of the first quarter. However, the teacher or the parent/guardian may initiate a conference as needed. Appointments must be arranged directly with the teacher. Parents attending conferences with a teacher (other than formal conferences), must sign in at the office.

All conferences must be pre-arranged. Please be aware that teachers are NOT available for conferences and/or conversations when the students are present. - **Most importantly, this applies to drop off and pick up times.**

## **Newsletter**

St. Thomas Aquinas School posts a monthly newsletter on FACTS SIS. In it, you will find upcoming long range schedules, activity information, updates from various teachers and members of the school community.

## **Test Envelopes**

Teachers will periodically send graded material home for parental review. This allows parents to look over the work with their child and look at progress or areas of concern. The envelopes are to be signed and returned to school the following school day. In some cases, the contents must be signed and returned.

Teachers for grades PreK-8 send the envelopes home every two weeks on average. Mid-school teachers often include notebooks from various subjects in the test envelopes as well because most of the work the students complete is done in their notebooks. Please sign the inside of the back cover, with the date and return the notebook with the other papers in the test envelope the following school day.

If you have a concern or comment, you may write a brief note on the outside of the envelope for the teacher.

## **Progress Reports**

*Academic grades are to be based solely on scholastic achievement as defined by the individual school. Behavior should be evaluated separately.*

*Teachers have the primary responsibility to confer with parents about the progress of their children. The Principal has responsibility to oversee this process. In cases involving ongoing problems or serious concerns which may lead to action beyond the scope of the teacher's responsibilities, the Principal must be included in the conference with the parents.*

*When semester and/or quarter failure in a particular subject seems likely, parents shall be promptly notified in advance of the probable failure. (Excerpts taken from ASF/CSPM#4400)*

Progress reports will be available on FACTS SIS. Teachers will update parents regarding their students' grades at least every 3 weeks. If parents are unable to access **FACTS SIS**, please request a paper Progress Report.

## **Report Cards**

*Report cards, standardized test scores and parent-teacher conferences shall provide parents with tangible evidence of student progress.*

*Unless otherwise defined by the local school and approved by the Superintendent, the grading standard for all parish/regional preschools and elementary schools shall be as follows: (Taken from ASF/CSPM#4400)*

The report card reflects the program objectives that have been specifically designed as learning tasks for your child's level. It provides the parent and the student with information about student strengths and needs as related to the learning tasks in each subject area. The report is meant to encourage the development of student potential so that the child can become an attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and loving individual.

Report cards are issued following the completion of each quarter grading period. Please review your child's progress carefully and contact your child's teacher if you have any concerns about your child's grades. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for every child following the completion of the first quarter. The parent's attendance at conferences is very important. A parent/guardian may request a conference with the child's teacher at any time during the year by contacting the teacher. Progress Reports are sent via FACTS SIS at 3 and 6 week intervals each quarter. Progress reports and report cards are sent via email to parents/guardians. End of the year report cards will be provided through hardcopy.

## **Student Permanent Records**

*Each Parish/Regional school and the Archdiocesan high school shall maintain the required records of each student enrolled in the school.*

- A. *Permanent Records*
- B. *Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall keep the following student records (hereinafter the "official records") in a permanent fireproof file or digital format for a period of no less than 99 years:*
  - 1. *Academic transcripts (including attendance);*
  - 2. *Academic test results; and*
  - 3. *Immunization records.*
- C. *Guidance Department and disciplinary records are not part of the student's official records and shall not be kept in the permanent file. Those records shall be destroyed four years after the student graduates, transfers or withdraws from the school.*

*All health records (except for immunization records) are not part of the student's official records and shall not be kept in the permanent file. When a student graduates, transfers or withdraws from the school, the school may give the student's health records to the student (provided s/he is emancipated or above the age of majority) or the parents/legal guardians.*

### *D. Transcripts*

- 1. *When a student transfers to another school, a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school shall*

*send a copy of the student's official records (as defined above) directly to that new school if requested to do so (in writing) by the student's parents/legal guardians or by the student (if over the age of majority and not dependent on the parents/legal guardians).*

- 2. The official record, including the official transcript, shall only be sent to the transferring school; it is not to be given to the student or his/her parents/legal guardians.*
- 3. When a student transfers to another school, a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school must record the date and reason for the student's transfer on the student's permanent record card.*

#### *E. College Applications*

*When a student applies for admission to a college, university or other post-graduate program, and when a request is made to send copies of the student's official records to such college, university or other post-graduate program, the Archdiocesan high school shall send copies of the student's official transcript and all other school records that are requested, including disciplinary records, if appropriate. The Archdiocesan high school shall not release any medical records relating to any student absent express authorization by the student (if over the age of majority and not dependent on the parents/legal guardians) or the student's parent/legal guardian.*

#### *F. Report Cards*

*Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall issue report cards in accordance with the guidelines set forth in their Parent/Student handbooks. Report cards, standardized test scores and parent-teacher conferences shall provide parents/legal guardians with an opportunity to review and discuss student progress and achievement.*

#### *G. Privacy of Student Records*

*Principals and Preschool Directors shall take particular care to preserve both the integrity and privacy of official school records.*

#### *H. Access to Student Records*

- 1. Parents/legal guardians of Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school students, as the primary educators of those students, shall have the right to inspect and review the official records of their child in the presence of a school official. Parents/legal guardians of students who are enrolled in the high school and who are listed as a dependent on the parents'/legal guardians' most recent Federal Income Tax form(s), shall have the right to inspect and review the official records of their child in the presence of a school official. Once a student attains the age of majority and is no longer a legal dependent of his or her parents/legal guardians, the student shall have the sole right to inspect and review his or her official records in the presence of a school official. All requests to review a student's official records shall be made in writing, and shall be directed to the Principal or Preschool Director.*
- 2. Unless otherwise provided by a court order, both parents and legal guardians of a student are entitled to inspect and review the student's official records in the presence of a school official, regardless of who has legal custody of the student. Unless otherwise provided by court order or by law, both parents and legal guardians of a student shall have equal access to school documents and other information concerning the student's education.*
- 3. Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall not release any personal information concerning a student to any person who is not the student's parent or legal guardian, unless the school is authorized to do so by the student's parent or legal guardian, or unless the school is compelled to do so by*

*court order or by other operation of law. (Excerpts taken from ASF/CSPM#2110)*

## **Release of Student Information**

### **A. Student Directories**

*Before printing or publishing any student directories, Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall obtain verifiable permission from each student's parents or legal guardians to publish information regarding the student or the student's family (such as names, addresses, telephone numbers). Parish/Regional Schools and the Archdiocesan high school must retain these permissions in the student file for the duration of the school year.*

### **B. Other Publications and Media**

*Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall not publish or use a student's name, picture, voice or likeness in any form of publication or media unless a signed photo/publicity release is obtained from the student's parents or legal guardians or from the student (if the student is over the age of majority). Absent a signed photo/publicity release, Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall not use a student's name, picture, voice or likeness in any publications or media, including but not limited to photographs, films, motion pictures, audio, DVD, videotape, websites, class pictures, school yearbook, or the school newspaper, whether in connection with the student's education or participation in school activities or events or otherwise. The signed release must be kept on file for the entire length of time that the student is at the school. (ASF/CSPM#2370)*

## **Parental Involvement/Policies**

### **General Guide to Volunteering at St. Thomas Aquinas School**

Volunteerism is a very important and necessary aspect of our school's operation. For example, parental volunteers set up and organize events, coach sports, contact parents, help in the library and computer lab, and work to improve the school grounds. In all our efforts, the safety and security of our students is our utmost responsibility and it is taken very seriously. It is **strongly recommended** that there be a minimum of two (2) adults present at any after school activity.

St. Thomas Aquinas School is a ministry of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Parents, guardians, and friends of students who volunteer at the school are participating in that ministry for the benefit of our students. Most of our activities are organized through the Parent Ministry. For more information on how to become a member of any of the committees, please contact the school office or email [parentministry@stasnm.net](mailto:parentministry@stasnm.net).

**To help insure the safety of our students, the school has developed the following guidelines.**

- **All** persons other than students and employees are considered visitors. **All** visitors/guests are to report to the office and sign in on our *visitors' log*. The office will issue a badge at that time that must be worn (visibly) at all times during the visit. At the conclusion of the visit, the badge must be returned to the office and the visitor must sign out.
- Visitors are only permitted in the classrooms with prior authorization from the teacher and Principal.
- It is expected that proper language commensurate with a church ministry will be used and that volunteers will be respectful to the teachers and staff and school property at all times.
- Be advised that there is NO smoking/drinking/or drug use on campus by anyone.

### **Dress Code for Volunteers**

Dress while on campus is expected to be modest, generally adhering to those rules applying to the students themselves. When helping in the classrooms or on field trips, volunteers are required to dress in accordance with that of the teachers.

- Shorts must be at least knee length walking shorts
- Shirts/blouses that are of appropriate size – nothing too tight or revealing
- Spaghetti straps, off the shoulder or strapless attire are unacceptable
- Shoes must be worn at all times
- Dresses must be modest, knee length and with proper undergarments worn at all times

### **Volunteer Requirements**

Since volunteering is seen as a ministry of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, we have adopted the rules associated with working with children at the church. As such, we require:

- Attendance of an Archdiocesan Abuse Awareness Training Class offered by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe at numerous parishes and schools throughout the Archdiocese, as well as at the Archdiocesan office itself is MANDATORY. Without proof of completion of the training, participation in school functions including, but not limited to, field trips and parties will be denied. Your certificate of completion must be on file in the school office. Times and dates of this workshop are available at [www.archdiosf.org](http://www.archdiosf.org) as well as through the Archdiocesan office.
- You must also complete a basic background check available at the workshop. Online training is also available on [www.virtusonline.org](http://www.virtusonline.org). Background check is also available through this website.

## **Student Withdrawal Due to Parental Behavior**

*Normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, parents may so significantly reduce the school's ability to effectively serve its students that the parents may be requested to remove their student from the school for ANY of the following reasons:*

- a. Refusal to cooperate with school personnel; or*
- b. Refusal to adhere to Archdiocesan or local policies and regulations; or*
- c. Interference in matters of school administration or discipline.*

*In such cases, reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation shall be made and documented. The Principal/Preschool Director must verify that parents were informed to terminate the inappropriate behavior and begin cooperating with the school or Policy 2470 would be enforced. If such effort does not correct the situation, then after consultation with the Superintendent and, in the case of elementary and preschools, the Pastor/Rector, the Principal/Preschool Director may require the parents to withdraw their child. Documentation signed by the Principal/Preschool Director and parents as well as any other information or evidence of consultation with the parents on the matter must be retained on file.*

*If the parents refuse to accept the withdrawal, the procedures for expulsion shall be followed as outlined in letters B - G in Policy No. 2460.*

*Registration for the following school year may be denied on the basis of this policy but is not limited to the actions specified herein. (ASF/CSPM# 2470)*

## **Discipline**

During school days, discipline is the responsibility of the school staff, not the volunteers. Refer any problems to the teacher or staff member you are working with that day. Follow their lead. During after-school activities, the person in charge of the activity is responsible for maintaining proper discipline. School policies are to be followed at all school functions.

## **Communications**

Messages, memos and notices about activities at the school need to be distributed through the office. The Principal must approve all communications from any of our committee members, clubs, or teams prior to their distribution. **Memos and notices will be distributed via the school office. Approved text must be submitted to the office. Use of FACTS SIS and School Messenger to distribute messages or notices must be approved by the Administration.**

## **Confidentiality**

Occasionally, volunteers may have access to sensitive information regarding students' grades, discipline concerns, etc. This information is **confidential** and must be treated accordingly. Be aware that students and staff must grant permission for images or video to be used online. Volunteers must be aware that posting to his/her social media privately about their school experiences may violate the privacy of students and/or staff. Do not post or discuss individuals outside of your own family on social media without specific permission from the individual. Any volunteer sharing this confidential information will have volunteering privileges revoked and may face further serious consequences.

## **In Case of Emergency**

If working with a member of the school staff, follow their instructions. There is a nurse on campus during the school day to take care of all medical emergencies on campus. After hours, volunteers should know where the nearest phone is so that appropriate help can be summoned. Knowledge of basic first aid is desirable.

## **Parent Meetings**

Parent meetings are scheduled throughout the year including a Back-to-School Meeting and conferences. Covid guidelines will be followed for these events.

## **Intel Volunteers**

Employees of Intel are encouraged to volunteer at the school. **The school will receive \$10.00 per volunteer hour from the Intel Foundation.**

## **Mission Support**

St. Thomas Aquinas School supports Holy Child Association and Missions of the Religious Teachers Filippini and a Lenten collection. Remember all donations are tax deductible.

## **Solicitation**

Students are not to be solicited for money unless the Principal has approved a project. The sale of items may be conducted at the school by students when approved by the Principal (i.e. Girl Scout and Boy Scout sales).



## **Substitute Teachers**

The most common reason for using a substitute teacher occurs when the regular teacher is ill. Substitute teachers are also needed when regular teachers are on leave for personal reasons, professional training, or family emergencies.

Substitute teachers must be approved by the Archdiocese and be eligible for licensure through the State Department of Education. In addition, substitute teachers must complete the

Following requirements:

- A background check
- Attend the Archdiocesan Abuse Awareness Training workshop
- Have an application on file with the Archdiocese
- Attend an Archdiocesan substitute in-service

Parents desiring to substitute teach should contact the office for further details on requirements.

Students are expected to follow all school rules when a substitute is present. Any misconduct will be dealt with according to the established school policies.

## **Playground Supervision**

School staff members will supervise the playground at recess and lunch times. Parent volunteers are utilized to assist the teacher on duty. Any problem on the playground that volunteers encounter should be immediately directed to the teacher on duty. Child Care students on the playground are under the supervision of the Child Care director and assistant/s. Any other student using the playground after school hours must be supervised by their parent.

## **Teacher/Student Assignment**

Selection of teachers and assignment of students to classes for the following school year are done by the school administration. Parent requests for specific teachers are not accepted.

## **School Council**

St. Thomas Aquinas School has a Consultative Council that reports to the Principal. The Consultative Council provides support to the Principal in matters designated by the Council's Constitution and Bylaws.

## **Parent Ministry**

*Parent Organizations assist the school in achieving its mission. These groups shall be subject to the supervision and control of the Principal/Preschool Director. The primary functions of the Parent Organization shall be hospitality, classroom activities, parent education/information and small fundraising events for the purpose of funding the organization's activities or projects as directed by the Principal/Preschool Director. (ASF/CSPM#1095)*

## **Role of Local School Councils**

*Each school will have a local school Consultative Council that reports to the Principal and Pastor/Rector. The Consultative Council provides support to the Principal and Pastor/Rector in matters designated by the Council's Constitution and Bylaws or as requested by the Principal and Pastor/Rector. Areas for Council consultation and support include: planning, finances, facilities, public relations, marketing, enrollment management, and advancement/development and other areas identified in the strategic plan and approved by the Pastor/Rector and Principal. (ASF/CSPM#1090)*

## Alma Mater

'Neath the warm blue sky or New Mexico,

in the city of Rio Rancho,

stands a school, truly a sacred shrine,

it's our Alma Mater fair.

Of its glory we are justly proud,

and its honor we proclaim,

as our voices clear and loud

praise its ever valiant name.

Oh, St. Thomas Aquinas School!

always so faithful and so true;

our youthful hearts beat fast with joy today

as our allegiance we renew;

our words and deeds will please our Lord and God

thy motto will guide our way,

thy name we'll cheer and praise,

our one, our own dear S.T.A.!

# Study Habits Checklist

## 1. Understanding the assignment

- Do you make sure you understand the assignment before you leave the class?
- Do you make sure you understand the purpose of the assignment?
- Do you write the assignment correctly in an assignment notebook?

## 2. Scheduling your study time

- Do you have a definite time schedule for each subject?
- Do you distribute your time so as to give adequate attention to all courses?
- Do you avoid interruptions during your scheduled time?

## 3. Finding materials quickly

- Do you bring home the necessary manuals and books for completing assignments?
- Do you use textbook aids efficiently – table of contents, index, chapters, and section headings?
- Do you use the library card catalogue, computer search engines, and other tools for locating information quickly?
- Do you keep accurate notes of teacher suggestions and directions for doing assignments?

## 4. Applying yourself to your work

- Do you plan your work in advance?
- Do you begin your work promptly?
- Do you keep your mind on the subject and avoid distractions?
- Do you anticipate deadlines so that you will have your work done on time?
- Do you turn your assignments in on time?
- Do you check your work for neatness and accuracy?

## 5. Providing good physical conditions for study

- Do you have a straight-back chair and a clean desk for your study?
- Do you regularly sit up comfortably straight?
- Do you keep the air in your room fresh and reasonably cool?
- Do you have sufficient light directed over your shoulder to give you good illumination without fatiguing glare?
- Do you have pencils, pens, papers, and other materials on hand for use?

## 6. Analyzing study habits

- Do you make frequent checks of your study habits to make sure you are improving?
- Do you work on increasing your vocabulary?
- Do you try to improve your reading speed and comprehension?

## **The Life of St. Lucy Filippini**

Lucy Filippini was born on January 13, 1672 in Corneto-Tarquinia - a city that existed centuries before Rome was built. She had not yet reached her first birthday when her mother died and was buried in the Church of San Marco. Her father, whom she loved dearly, also died six years later and was buried in the Church of Santa Margherita in Corneto. Now orphaned, Lucy went to live with her aunt and uncle. As a child Lucy would prepare small altars and pray devoutly. It was soon clear that she possessed a precocious intelligence, an inclination toward the spiritual life, and a modesty that was truly angelic. Her vision was set on God. Notwithstanding her aristocratic upbringing, she always conducted herself with modesty and its practice.

At times Lucy would seek for a serene atmosphere in the nearby Benedictine Nuns' Monastery of Santa Lucia where the daughters of the nobility were educated. Lucy visited frequently, drawn there by her desire to be among those whose lives and goodness she admired. It was here that she received her First Communion. Here, too, Lucy received the spiritual nourishment of which she never had enough and listened attentively to the explanations of the divine mysteries. The grace she felt can be understood from the joy and enthusiasm expressed later as she led and instructed others. Desirous of penetrating the innermost meaning of the truths brought by Christ to mankind, she showed in her speech and her understanding and wisdom beyond her years. She spoke with much fervor, and her words of compassion and love brought tears to the eyes of her companions. They were a prelude to Lucy's future mission.

When Cardinal Mark Anthony Barbarigo made his first pastoral visit to Corneto, he made a lasting impression on Lucy and she followed him to Montefiascone. Entrusting herself to the Cardinal's guidance, Lucy was eager to leave behind all worldly things. Lucy had a special devotion to Our Lady, her spiritual mother, and throughout her life her deep love for Mary and her faith sustained her when Cardinal Barbarigo's plans were to be implemented in his dioceses. He had envisioned her as a key factor to bring about a rebirth of Christian living. He had already begun by establishing a seminary where young priests might study and train for the ministry of the Word.

The next step was to develop a Christian conscience and encourage the practice of virtue in the home; this he resolved to do by opening schools for young ladies, particularly the children of the poor, in whom he saw hope for the future. Lucy would head the schools they founded to promote the dignity of womanhood and help influence a healthy family life. Together they looked ahead to fulfilling their generous, ardent and profound mission of faith and charity. In 1692, teachers were trained to staff the rapidly expanding schools.

The young ladies of Montefiascone were taught domestic arts, weaving, embroidering, reading, and Christian doctrine. Twelve years later the Cardinal devised a set of rules to guide Lucy and her followers in the religious life. Fifty-two schools were established during Lucy's lifetime. As the Community grew, it attracted the attention of Pope Clement XI who, in 1707, called Lucy to Rome to start schools, which he placed under his special protection. Here she completed the work of founding the schools.

To complement the work of the schools, Lucy and her Teachers conducted classes and conferences for women, who were strengthened in their faith as they took part in prayer, meditation, and good works. Her focus for the social apostolate was to encourage her Teachers to minister to the needs of the poor and the sick. Her method of teaching attracted widespread attention.

History records that Saint Paul of the Cross was "pleased to discover, even in the most humble villages, small and fervent centers of spiritual renewal where...the Religious Teachers kept alive the flame of faith, a wholesome fear of God, and an appreciation of educated life." Lucy's spiritual and educational adventure resulted in countless conversions through the gift of grace. The social apostolate was an extension of the classroom. She testified that the

young ladies were the coordinating element that underlies family life: "Having learned in school those things that were necessary, they repeat them to parents and relatives at home and thus became so many young teachers."

Lucy died at sixty years of age, March 25, 1732, on Feast of the Annunciation. For three centuries the example of Christian womanhood that marked the lives of her Teachers and students was recognized by Holy Mother Church. In 1930, Lucy Filippini's saintly life was adequately acknowledged. Not only was she officially declared a Saint of the Church, but she was given the last available niche in the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome. The Institute, which bears the name of Lucy Filippini, owes its birth to the solicitous good shepherd who loved schools and to the holy teacher who committed her entire life to the educative-apostolic mission.

This mission initiated by the Cardinal and Lucy 300 years ago, continues today through the schools and the Religious Family to which they gave life. Its mission has spread beyond Italy into Europe, the United States of America, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, and England.

## **School's Covid Plan**

The information contained in this document is subject to change at any given time pending COVID-19 data and the information provided by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and local/state health agencies. As part of the plan for return to in-person instruction, STAS has prepared a conservative plan for return to school with modifications to the learning environment to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

### **Maintenance and Sanitation**

- **A thorough cleaning of the school facilities will be completed prior to the start of the school year.**
- **School facilities will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of each school day or before the next school day begins.**
- **STAS will utilize recommended sanitizing materials.**
- **High contact surfaces (bathroom facilities, desks, entryways, doorknobs and door handles) will be sanitized throughout the day.**
- **Visual aids for best hygiene practices will be placed in visible areas around the school.**
- **Lessons on hand washing and hygiene will be conducted in class to encourage safe practices.**
- **Hand sanitizer will be available and utilized throughout the day with proper supervision.**
- **Everyone will be required to sanitize or wash their hands upon entering and exiting a room.**
- **Equipment considered to be high contact such as water fountains and lockers will be discontinued.**
- **The use of communal areas such as the library, gym, and cafeteria will be sanitized frequently and monitored for social distancing.**
- **A daily log and record of sanitation is maintained by the school facility.**

### Prevention Guidelines

- The three most important prevention strategies include reasonable social distancing, hand washing/sanitizing.
- Students and staff who are sick must stay home.
- Students and staff will receive training regarding prevention and be kept updated regarding best practices.

### Screening

Per state and local health agencies, Covid-19 symptoms include:

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

- Families will screen their child(ren) for the symptoms of COVID-19 prior to arrival at school.
- Faculty and staff will self-screen for the symptoms of COVID-19 prior to arrival at school.
- Families, faculty, and staff will abide by health department protocol should there be a positive Covid-19 result. Please contact the school nurse for the most current instructions and guidelines.
- The school will follow the current protocol requirements.



### **These protocols could include:**

- **The potential closure of the school building for sanitation.**
- **A period of remote learning to allow for quarantine.**
- **Communication of current health department policies for prevention of the spread of Covid-19.**

### **Lunch**

- **Our lunch providers will be using disposable utensils and trays.**
- **We will no longer be using the salad bar option.**
- **If bringing lunch from home, please choose container options that a student can easily open on their own.**
- **Students will wash hands and/or sanitize hands before and after lunch.**
- **If State health orders force the school to be remote, reasonable efforts will be made for meals to be available for pick up.**

### **Classroom Environment**

- **HVAC air filters are replaced every six months with Covid safe filtration levels.**
- **Teachers will oversee daily cleaning of student desks, tables, and other hard surfaces during and at the end of the school day.**
- **As stated earlier in the document, classrooms and high-contact areas will be sanitized routinely by maintenance.**
- **Classrooms and school spaces are sanitized at the end of each day.**
- **Communal spaces such as playgrounds and restrooms will have staggered use, limited students, and will be disinfected regularly.**
- **Prekindergarten will use individual nap cots labeled for each student.**

### **Remote Learning Days**

- **School-wide Remote Learning Days may be utilized to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, as directed by state and local authorities.**

- Remote instruction is not to be used without authorization and is not a daily choice or an alternative to attending school in person.
- Faculty will provide remote instruction to all students should State guidelines force in-person restrictions.
- Faculty members are under contract to provide in-person instruction when the school is in-person. Should your child’s teacher become Covid positive or suffer a serious health crisis, your child will be provided with a substitute teacher for in-person instruction. If feasible, the classroom teacher will continue to prepare lessons, make assessments, and provide synchronous/asynchronous instruction for the day from a safe location through Google Hangouts, Zoom, or another means of communication.
- At all times, the safety of the students and faculty will be protected to the greatest extent possible.

#### **Athletics and Physical Education**

- Our Athletic Director will provide guidelines to athletic coaches, student-athletes, and families before the start of an athletic season in accordance with the current APIAL guidelines and local health authorities.

#### **Worship and Sacraments**

- Our school Mass is central to the practice of our faith. We will continue to celebrate the Mass following the guidelines for religious worship set forth by the Archbishop of Santa Fe.
- Confession and Adoration will follow the protocols of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

#### **Child Care**

- This program is subject to local health ordinances and will not be provided in remote situations.

**The welfare of students is at the foremost of our intentions as a school community. As mentioned at the beginning of the Covid-19 Plan, all of the above is subject to change based on the data in compliance with the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and state/local authorities.**

## **Family Acknowledgement**

It is both Archdiocesan and school policy that all parents/guardians and children attending St. Thomas Aquinas School will have read and discussed the St. Thomas Aquinas School Handbook. The Handbook contains pertinent information for you and your student/s concerning the mission and philosophy of the school, operational features, policies and required personal and academic behavior of students and the behavior of adults.

It is hoped that, through prompt and thorough reading of this Handbook, parents/guardians can more easily make a thoughtful decision as to whether St. Thomas Aquinas School is the best school for their children.

Acknowledgment of the handbook and agreement to policies is made through the enrollment process as part of registration.

Because success in any organization at every level can only be achieved when all involved know what exists and what is expected, the Pastor, Principal, Teachers and Staff at St. Thomas Aquinas School consider the reading and understanding the Handbook and willingness to comply with the policies to be of the greatest importance.

Family Acknowledgement of school policy is part of registration.

Students whose families do not agree with school policy forfeit their eligibility for registration and attendance.