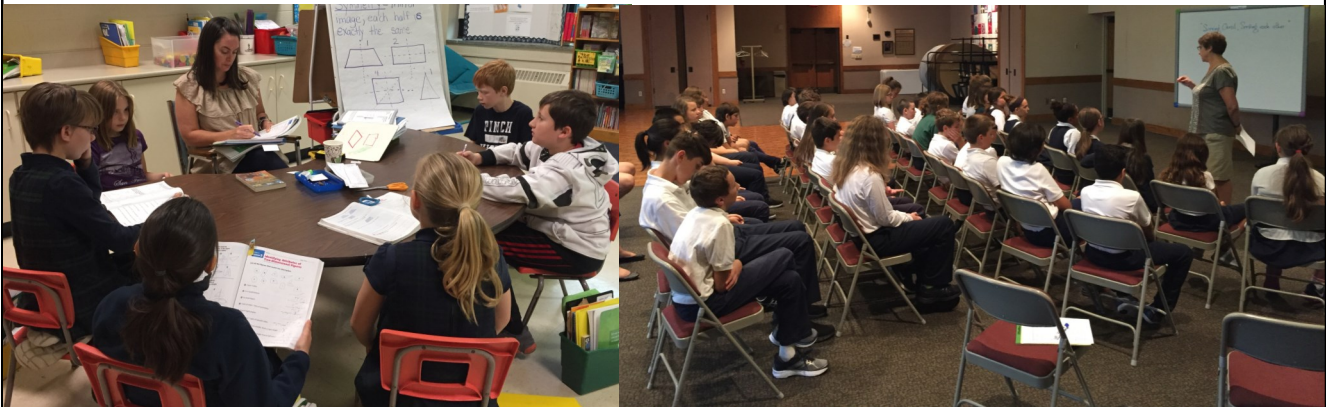




# ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**LEARN ▪ LEAD ▪ LOVE**

## Parent-Student Handbook 2017-2018

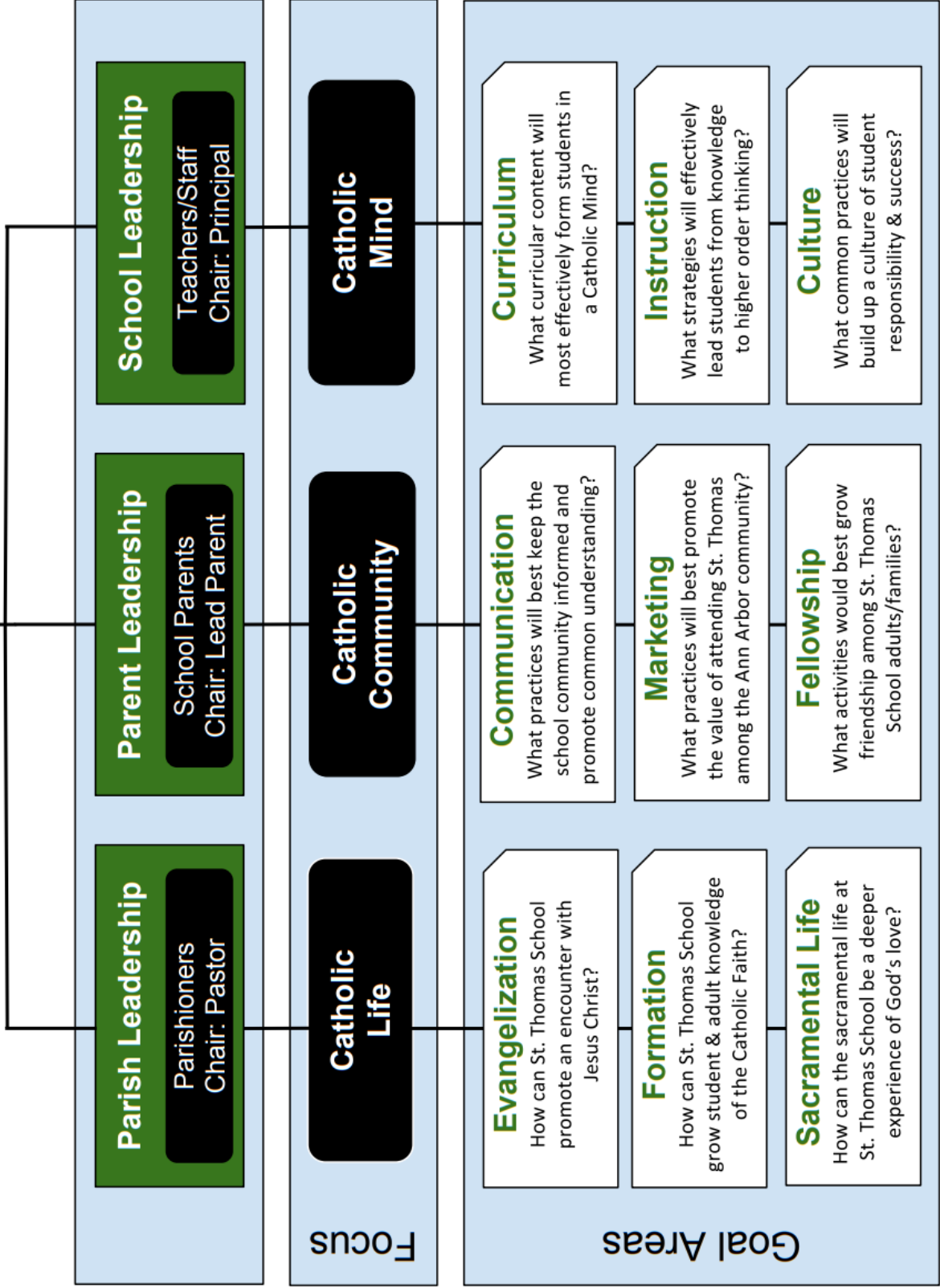


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# St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School Advisory Council

Leadership Team



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## Faculty and Staff

Rev. William Ashbaugh	Pastor
Rev. Anthony Smela	Parochial Vicar
Mr. Timothy DiLaura	Principal
Mrs. Catherine Donahue	Business Manager
Mrs. Laura Steffy	Secretary
Mrs. Theresa Henderson	Nurse/Liturgist
Mrs. Denise Gruetzmacher	Preschool Director
Mrs. Laure Dallas	Preschool
Mrs. Mary Sue Ortiz	Preschool
Mrs. Kathryn Simpson	Preschool Aide
Mrs. Beth McGirt	Kindergarten
Mrs. Sue Heemstra	Kindergarten Aide
Ms. Christa Light	First Grade
Mrs. Anne Kennedy	Second Grade
Mrs. Elizabeth Recla	Third Grade
Mrs. Patricia Witt	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Alyssa Nett	Fifth Grade
Ms. Patti Marks	Sixth Grade
Ms. Jennifer Croze	Seventh Grade
Mr. Thomas Donahue	Eighth Grade
Mrs. Sherry Bercu	Learning Center
Mrs. Veva Lashaway	Spanish
Mr. Conrad Miller	Athletic Director
Mr. Jeff Moyer	P. E.
Mr. Robert Peters	Latin
Ms. Sharon Tewes	Art/Technology
Mr. Alan Warmanen	Music/Band
Mrs. Vickie Brideau	Library
Mrs. Pat Fulton	Library
Mrs. Christie McGuire	Library

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## INTRODUCTION

### PARISH PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:

The education of a Christian is an on-going process, which begins at birth and is not completed until one goes to the Creator at death. It is the goal of St. Thomas Parish to encourage the Christian growth of each parishioner by fostering, nurturing, developing and intensifying faith in and love of God the Father, Jesus the Word, and the Holy Spirit. To this end, our aim is to provide programs that encompass the four aspects of Christian education: the beliefs of the Church, development of Community, Christian service, and worship of God. We recognize that parish educational programs can only supplement the teaching and formation that goes on in the home. It is important that all parishioners be convinced of their personal and constant need for participation in programs of Christian education.

Approved and Accepted by Education Commission 6-14-79

### SCHOOL SLOGAN:

Learn ▪ Lead ▪ Love

### SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT:

In partnership with families, St. Thomas seeks to forge a diverse community of scholars, leaders and saints. Assisted by the Holy Spirit, we challenge students to grow intellectually through a rigorous curriculum, forming confident youth leaders grounded in virtue.

We guide children to become friends of Jesus—to love as He loves, and join our community's rich tradition of proclaiming the Kingdom and bettering our world.

### SCHOOL VALUES:

Prayer ~ Integrity ~ Humility ~ Courage

### STUDENT PLEDGE:

Today, I will remember the example of St. Thomas, an Apostle of Jesus.  
Guided by the Holy Spirit, I will strive to do my best  
And to glorify God the Father in all I do—  
In my school work, in the choices I make,  
and how I treat others.

### SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that: God is the Creator and Father of all.  
Each of us is called to fulfill the potential of being made in the image of God.  
Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Light.  
Guided by the Holy Spirit we can build God's kingdom on earth.  
Every child has a right to know God the Father, Jesus the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit.  
We have a mission to make a difference for the present and for eternity.

**DISCRIMINATION POLICY OF THE DIOCESE OF LANSING**

The ministry of the Catholic Church, in keeping with the revealed word of God, can never be restricted to people of one race or color, nor to the people of any one nation or ethnic origin. In this tradition the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Lansing believe that all people are fashioned in the image and likeness of God and have been redeemed by Jesus Christ. As an integral part of this belief, Catholic schools cannot and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in any area of administration.

We affirm, then, that all educational policies, scholarships and loan programs, all athletic and school-administered programs and activities, all employment policies and contractual agreements conform to this belief. Consequently, we willingly comply with the limitations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

**ENROLLMENT**

Consideration for entrance into St. Thomas School is prioritized according to the following formula:

- A. Students already enrolled.
- B. Students from families already enrolled.
- C. Students from families registered in St. Thomas Parish as of the Parent Information Night (according to the date of earliest registration into the Parish).
- D. Other Catholic students as indicated on the registration form.
- E. Non-Catholic students from Catholic Schools.
- F. Non-Catholic students.

New registrations will be processed after a reasonable amount of time has been given to present enrollees to re-enroll. The policy determining priority will be in effect until March 15. After that date, students will be received on a first come first served basis.

Acceptance is not automatic. It is based on priority listing, the report card of the previous year, shadow observations, standardized test results, completion by the former school of the Pre-Admission Form, and successful completion of a screening or placement test for which a non-refundable fee is charged. All new students are accepted by the principal on a probationary basis for the two quarters of the school year following acceptance into the school.

Kindergartners must attain 5 years of age by September first of the year in which they enroll and successfully complete the kindergarten readiness evaluation.

New students coming from outside the Ann Arbor Public School district and all kindergartners must have a current physical dated after May 1 of the year in which the child enrolls.

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## PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents who enroll their children at St. Thomas Catholic School are partners with the school in the children's education. We invite you, as the primary teachers of your children, to work with us in providing professional expertise, pertinent information and constructive communication regarding your child's needs and progress. We ask for this support and partnership so your child/ren will develop Christian values and be highly educated.

At the start of this process, we offer these Parent Responsibilities:

- A. Accept the Mission Statement of our school and its implementation in our school.
- B. Attend parent meetings and conferences throughout the year.
- C. Provide financial support necessary to operate our Catholic school through timely tuition payments. Support our school by actively participating through the volunteering of services, including fundraising needed for the support of our school.
- D. Take advantage, when recommended, of the school's ancillary services such as speech, remedial reading, and psychological testing.
- E. Know that the student is given an adjustment period during which time it will be determined whether or not the student is capable of complying with our school's educational programs, rules, and regulations.
- F. Work with and support the teaching staff and administration in a positive manner.
- G. Respect and follow school and classroom rules so that your child may imitate your actions and positive attitude.
- H. Make sure your child's school attire is clean, appropriate, and conforms to dress code.
- I. Follow up on any concerns you have regarding your child's education. Go through proper channels. Talk first with the teacher, then with the principal. Make sure you know all the facts before you react. Deal only with the current issue and be ready to offer suggestions during conferences. All meetings will be held in a professional and respectful manner by all involved.
- J. Understand that discipline begins in the home and is continued at school. Parents who set limits, responsibilities and duties, demand respect and discipline appropriately will help their child/ren follow the rules and expectations of St. Thomas School.
- K. Drop off and pick-up children on time.
- L. Volunteer 20 hours per year in the school or pay \$250 in lieu of volunteer hours. Parents, in collaboration with teachers, are responsible for keeping track of their hours. A log sheet is attached to this handbook for your use. Please turn in this sheet by May 31.
- M. If a staff member or parent indicates significant violation of School Code of Conduct, all electronic communications will be suspended immediately. A meeting with principal, pastor, and additional administrative representative will be held. Legal action will be taken if procedure is not followed

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- A. Work toward being model Christians in all their school activity.
- B. Respect each person, follow all teacher & administrator directions, respect the dignity of all students..
- C. Abide by all classroom and school rules and procedures.
- D. Be on time and ready to learn with sufficient sleep and nourishment.
- E. Appear neat, clean and in dress code.
- F. Achieve the best academic standards of which they are capable.
- G. Study hard, complete homework and make-up work according to the classroom policy.
- H. Be respectful of school facilities and all material items.
- I. Give best effort every day and conduct themselves in a responsible and polite manner at all times.

**TEACHER EXPECTATIONS**

Teachers are expected to:

- A. Teach as Jesus taught. Be a witness to the Catholic faith.
- B. Develop a constructive and organized learning environment which provides motivation and a sense of security for all students.
- C. Provide a positive, caring atmosphere with clear rules and procedures, and fair and consistent enforcement.
- D. Develop clear and timely lesson plans based on diocesan standards of student learning.
- E. Provide engaging & challenge learning activities that are responsive to all students learning needs.
- F. Monitor student behavior at all times and resolve problems primarily through discussion, and, if necessary, through parent contact.
- G. Refer persistent or serious problems to the principal.
- H. Provide regular contact with parents which ensures parents' understanding of current student progress socially, academically and behaviorally in the classroom.



## DRESS CODE

### Elementary School (Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades):

**Pants (for boys or girls):** Khaki polyester, twill or dress corduroy; plain or pleated front. All pants must fit waist and inseam. Designer, elastic ankle, oversized, cargo, or carpenter pants are not dress code compliant.

**Jumpers/Skirts:** Standard plain Khaki jumper or skirt, or plaid jumper or skirt purchased from Flynn O'Hara. Jumpers or skirts may be worn with a white PeterPan collar blouse. Jumper or skirt length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

**Shirts:** Hunter green polo, oxford or turtleneck; long or short sleeves (no cap sleeves).

### Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades):

**Pants (for boys or girls):** Navy polyester, twill or dress corduroy; plain or pleated front. All pants must fit waist and inseam. Designer, elastic ankle, oversized, cargo, or carpenter pants are not dress code compliant.

**Skirts/Jumpers:** Standard plain Navy skirt or jumper, or plaid skirt or jumper purchased from Flynn O'Hara. Skirt and jumper length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

**Shirts:** White oxford, polo or turtleneck; long or short sleeves (no cap sleeves).

### All Grades:

**Sweaters:** White, navy or hunter green; crew, cardigan, pullover or vest; no designs, monograms or decorative buttons. A dress code compliant shirt must be worn with all sweaters.

**Socks:** Solid white or dark color crew socks. Solid color knee socks, leggings or tights in white, black, hunter green (elementary girls only) or navy (middle school girls only).

**Spirit Wear:** Hunter green school spirit wear pull-overs purchased from Under-Armor may be worn. A dress code compliant shirt must be worn beneath spirit wear. St. Thomas School Athletics pull-overs purchased from Under-Armor may be worn during the particular sports season on game days (only). Sweatshirts, hoodies, non-St. Thomas pull-overs are not dress code compliant.

**Shoes:** K – 8 Boys/Girls: Dark toned shoes or sneakers (with minor colored flaring only.) K – 8 Girls may also wear all white sneakers. Flats for girls with foot covering. Bright colored sneakers or significant bright colored flaring may be used in PE class. Sandals, clogs, roller shoes, high heels, or platform shoes are not dress code compliant. All shoes must have backs and toes. Shoes must be tied at all times.

**Shorts:** (September, May and June only)

Walking Shorts (boys and girls) -- Khaki for elementary, Navy for middle school; knee length. No cargo, carpenter, oversized or designer shorts regardless of color. Shorts may not be worn on Wednesday Mass days.

**Monthly All-School Jean Day:** Last Thursday of the Month—participation optional, no donation. Appropriate wear only: Jeans without holes, non-dress code shirts or t-shirts with appropriate printing permitted. No sportswear—i.e. caps, jerseys, sweatpants, sport shorts—pajamas, yoga pants, spandex, etc. Dress code sock and shoe policies apply. St. Thomas Auction Jean Day passes are redeemable on Thursdays only.

**Monthly All-School Leadership Day:** First Wednesday of the Month—participation required. Boys/Men in oxford white shirt with tie and dress code or better pants, Girls/Women in dresses, skirt and blouse or dress slacks.

### General:

Belt looped pants must be worn with a brown or black metal buckle only belt. All shirts and blouses must be tucked into pants or skirts. One pair post earrings, girls only. Polish/Make-up: None for Grades Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup>, minimal for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. No distracting haircuts, unnatural colors or styles. Jewelry: Minimal. No hats. No tattoos. Principal reserves the right to make final decisions in regard to interpreting & applying the dress code.

### Non-Compliance Procedure:

AM Homeroom Dress Code Check—A student not dress code compliant will call home from the office to have dress code wear brought to school. Students are re-admitted to the classroom only after being dress code compliant.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

### GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Newsletter: Once a month, a school newsletter is sent via the oldest child and posted online. It contains a calendar of upcoming school events, summaries of past events, and other pertinent information. Please post this calendar in a visible place. Other classroom information is sent home at the discretion of the teacher.

### AUTOMATED TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Automated telephone messages will be sent to each family for extraordinary occurrences such as snow days or other school-wide concerns. Please listen carefully to the entire message as there is a delay in automated messages. You may replay the message.

### PRIVATE PARTIES

Invitations to parties and social activities are NOT to be passed out at school.

### TEACHER CONTACT

Phone calls, emails, and notes are used frequently to keep the lines of communication open. Please do not call teachers at their homes unless invited to do so.

### PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

No consideration will be given to anonymous letters. If there is a problem; parents should follow these steps:

- Step 1. Set-up a phone or face to face appointment with the teacher to discuss your concerns.
- Step 2. If your concerns have not been resolved by step 1, put your concerns in writing and contact the principal.
- Step 3. If there has been no resolution within three school days, contact the principal or pastor.

In the event that the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the decision rendered at the local level, an appeal may be made to the Chairperson, Department of Education and Formation, Diocese of Lansing.

A copy of the full text of the Diocesan grievance procedure may be obtained from the school office.

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## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### CURRICULUM

A summary of the educational philosophy and Diocesan curriculum guidelines for each subject is available in the school office for your perusal.

### DIOCESAN POLICY ON RELIGION

All students of the Diocese (Catholic and non-Catholic) are required to attend classes in Religion throughout their period of enrollment in a Catholic School. Attendance at school liturgical services, which are held during the school day, is also required. Non-Catholic students and parents should be aware of these requirements.

### HOMEWORK AND ASSIGNMENTS

Homework is an assignment completed outside the classroom to enable both the student and teacher to know if the student has mastered the material taught in class. Teachers assign homework that is reasonable in amount and appropriate to the class work and grade level. When daily assignments are not being completed during class time, and consequently must be finished at home, it may appear that there is excessive homework. Please contact the teacher if you have any questions.

Homework will be corrected and returned to the student in a timely fashion and before the assessment for that material.

A time-line for long range assignments will be provided and progress checked consistently.

Parents will be informed when a student repeatedly fails to complete homework assignments, or is not doing satisfactory work. This can be done via phone, progress reports, e-mail, or other written communication.

Student work should be neat, accurate, and completed on time according to directions.

### REPORT CARD/PROGRESS REPORTS

It is the goal of the school to be in frequent contact with parents. Students in grades Kinder - 8 are evaluated four times during the school year. Midway through each quarter, parents of any student who is doing unsatisfactory work will be notified. Following is a brief explanation of the grading systems used at the various levels.

#### Kindergarten -- 3rd

1 - Beginning  
 2 - Developing  
 3 - Mastering  
 4 - Applying  
 NY—Not Yet Taught

#### Grades 4th - 8th

A - 92 to 100%  
 B - 82 to 91%  
 C - 72 to 81%  
 D - 62 to 71%  
 E - Unsatisfactory

\* Incompletes must be made up by a specified date or the grade will be deemed to be failing.

### STUDENT PROGRESS NOTIFICATION

Mid-Quarter Progress Reports are sent home on approximately the 5th Friday of the quarter.

Report cards are sent home approximately a week after a quarter ends.

Parent Teacher Conferences are held following the first quarter.

### HONOR ROLL

First honors are given to those students who have attained an overall average of 95% or above in the six core subjects: Religion, Math, Literature, English, Science, and Social Studies AND no grade lower than a 92%, including elective classes. Effort, conduct, and skill rating marks must be 3 or 4.

Second honors are given to those students who have attained an overall average of 89% or above in the six core subjects: Religion, Math, Literature, English, Science, and Social Studies AND no grade lower than a 82%, including elective classes. Effort, conduct, and skill rating marks must be 3 or 4.

First honor awards will be given to those students who have maintained the standards of first honors all four quarters.

Second honor awards will be given to those students who have attained first or second honors all four quarters.

## **SCHOOL AWARDS**

At the end of the year, students are given recognition for their achievements.

## **TESTING**

The NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP Growth) assessment will be administered to grades First through Eighth in the fall from September 5th to October 15th, in the winter from January 15th to February 15th and in the spring from April 5th to May 15th. Attendance is very importance during testing time include proper rest and nourishment before testing days. These assessment are a powerful tool in understanding student learning progress and is used to determine how best to tailor instruction to best promote student learning. Parents are sent the results.

The Diocese of Lansing Religion Tests are given in grades 5 and 8.

When there is concern regarding a particular student's ability, achievement, or emotional state, or if the possibility of a learning disability exists, individual testing can be requested through the Ann Arbor Public School Pupil Personnel Office or another agency.

## **RETENTION**

While it is never easy to retain a child at his/her current grade level, it may be necessary to do so if the child is unable to complete the required curriculum in a satisfactory manner. Many factors may contribute to retention: a lack of developmental readiness, a year of frequent illness, family difficulties, or a slowed pace of intellectual development. Students will have failed the grade if they have failed three or more academic subjects with a cumulative average of 61.4 or below, i.e. 1st quarter = 85, 2nd quarter = 75, 3rd quarter = 40, 4th quarter = 40, average = 60%.

Any 8th grader who has earned a failing grade in an academic subject will receive a certificate of attendance rather than a diploma.

Parents are kept aware of inadequate progress. When cooperative efforts to improve the child's performance have failed, careful evaluation of the best opportunity for the child's success may indicate the need for evaluative testing through the public schools or a private firm or, as a last resort, non-promotion. The judgment to promote or retain is made by the school.

## **FAMILY EDUCATION AND PRIVACY RIGHTS**

In accordance with Public Law 93-380 regarding Protection of Rights and Privacy of Parents and Students, the parents of any student shall be entitled to receive, or be informed of, that part of such record or data as pertains to their child. If a parent wishes to examine his/her child's record, he/she should make this request through the school office. In turn, the principal will make an appointment with the parent. The records will then be examined in the office with the principal and the parent. Written consent from the student's parent will be required when specific records are to be released to judicial or counseling agencies with any subpoenas or orders from any educational institution or agency.

## **STUDENT SUPPLIES/TEXTBOOKS**

All students are expected to be prepared for all classes by having the necessary supplies every day. A list of needed supplies is in the June newsletter and posted online. Textbooks are to be used properly-not written in or intentionally destroyed. Parents are responsible for replacing damaged text books.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Parents are obligated to have their children at school on time daily. The school calendar lists the days that school is in session. On a day a student is absent, parents should call the school (769-0911) before 8:15 A.M. to report the absence.

A child who misses half the morning or afternoon classes shall be considered absent for a half day. The mid-point of the day is 11:30 A.M. while 9:30 A.M. is the midpoint of the morning and 1:00 P.M. is the midpoint of the afternoon.

In case of absence, the parent should inform the school so that arrangements may be made for make-up work. Requested homework may be picked up at the office after 3:15 P.M. Older students (grades 5-8) who have been absent, have the responsibility to arrange making up assignments and tests.

Normally, any missing assignments and/or tests are to be completed within 2-3 days after returning from an absence.

Any student who visits another school on a regular St. Thomas school day will be considered absent. That student will then be expected to make up all missed class work, tests, and assignments upon his/her return. The same will apply for those children participating in Take Your Child To Work Day.

Any student who has been taken from school for an appointment of any kind and then returns is responsible the next day for any tests or assignments missed due to the appointment.

### **TARDINESS**

Students will be marked tardy at 8:00 AM. Those who come to school after 8:00 AM must report to the office and obtain a tardy slip before going to class. Frequent tardiness not only impacts the child involved but also is disruptive to the other students in the class resulting in loss of valuable class time. After being tardy 5 times per quarter, the parents will be notified and, if necessary, a conference with the principal will be arranged.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Appointments should be made outside of school hours. If it is necessary to schedule an appointment with medical doctors, dentists, etc., during school hours, then a note from home requesting the student be excused should be presented in the office before 8:00 AM. The time of the appointment and the doctor's name should be included. The student shall be picked up from the school office by the parent and upon returning to school report his/her presence to the office. Wednesday morning Mass should be especially avoided as a time for scheduling appointments. Leaving during the school day for an appointment means that it is the student's responsibility to complete and return the next day any missed assignments or make-up any missed tests.

When a student becomes ill or is injured during the school day, the school will contact the parents (or an adult designated by the parents) to come to the office to pick up the student.

Students who leave the school grounds without permission or proper authorization will be subject to suspension.

### **FAMILY TRIPS AND VACATIONS**

The normal school schedule provides time for vacations at Christmas, Easter, and summer. Parents are requested to plan vacations during these periods of time. The interruption of academic studies for lengthy vacations during the school year can be detrimental to the child. Teachers are not required to prepare work ahead of time for the student. Because of the importance of the material missed, parents become responsible for preparing the child for any missed tests. Any missing assignments and/or tests are to be completed within 2 - 3 days after returning from vacation.

### **FUNERALS**

Please notify the school if your child will be absent due to a funeral. Due dates for missed work may be determined on a case by case basis.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

St. Thomas aims to develop self-discipline in students marked by respect for others and themselves. When a student fails to exercise proper behavior, the following steps will be taken, depending on the seriousness of the act:

1. Warning.
2. Loss of recess privileges, after school detention, or phone call to a parent.
3. Administrator/teacher/parent/student conference.
4. In school or out of school suspension or expulsion. All work missed (tests, quizzes, etc.) due to a suspension from class or school may not be made up by the student resulting in a "0" for those assignments.

The following offenses are considered serious in nature. The principal reserves the right to act on disciplinary matters not specifically addressed in this handbook.

1. Disrespect to any adult present in the school.
2. Threatening, bullying or name calling.
3. Fighting or other physical violence on or near the school premises.
4. Leaving school grounds without permission, truancy or cutting class.
5. Repeatedly out of dress code.
6. Defacing or destroying property. In the case of destruction of school property, monetary retribution will be made back to the school by the offending student's family.
7. Repeated disturbances in class.
8. Failure to report to an assigned detention.
9. Misconduct at school sponsored events.
10. Failure to follow classroom or school rules as given by teachers and/or posted in the school.
11. Presenting any work(s), material(s), or idea(s) as coming from a false source, either deliberately or inadvertently - including, but not limited to, homework, projects, quizzes, tests, parent or guardian signatures.
12. Use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages or drugs on school property or at school events.

### **PHYSICAL VIOLENCE**

St. Thomas aims to provide a safe, orderly learning environment and will not tolerate intentional physical violence against students, teachers, or staff. Students are expected to be mindful at all times of the physical safety of other students and to treat all persons with respect and dignity.

Major offenses include :

1. Intentionally striking, or causing to be struck with an object, another person on the face or head;
2. Any intentional act resulting in an injury to another person that, in the reasonable judgment of the school, requires the attention of a medical professional; and
3. A pattern of minor offenses.

Each offense is handled on an individual basis and will generally result in the following consequences after a conference with parents and principal; first offense will result in a suspension second major offense will result in a suspension or be grounds for expulsion. Other offenses may be dealt with by conference with parents and principal, and/or suspension.

**BULLYING**

*This school seeks to be a place where students, parents, teachers, non-instructional staff, administrators, and others live ever more fully in the presence of Jesus, whom they encounter in the Sacraments, in the Word, and in each other. Bullying is thus fundamentally and wholly incompatible with the Gospel values that are the foundation of this school. We therefore will not tolerate bullying in our school, on our property, or in our programs and activities.*

*It is not possible to comprehensively define the concept of “bullying.” Normally, bullying involves one or more students intentionally subjecting another student to repeated degrading actions, words, or social interactions. Individual incidents of unkindness, such as a fight or an insult, are improper, but might not constitute bullying. Bullying goes further, with actions or speech that are deliberate and sustained, and are intended to isolate, hurt, or humiliate. Ordinarily, bullying would not involve silence or inaction, or mere physical presence, but it is possible that those non-actions could intentionally exacerbate a bullying situation. Bullying speech could occur in the victim’s hearing or elsewhere, and could be oral, written, or electronic. This includes all forms of social media.*

*Any student, parent, teacher, or other person who is aware of a bullying situation should immediately notify the principal. Upon such a report, the principal will determine the facts and take appropriate action.*

*Just as bullying cannot be comprehensively defined, it is not possible to catalogue in advance all the appropriate responses that the school might choose to take. However, by enrolling a child in the school, parents and guardians give consent to the school’s exercise of complete discretion to take any action it deems appropriate including, without limitation, oral caution, written warning, probation, conditions, suspension, expulsion, or even referral to civil authorities.*

*Every member of our community shares, in the manner appropriate to age and role, responsibility for the well-being of this Catholic Christian educational community. As appropriate to age and role, each of us should model good behavior, shelter the vulnerable, and treat with respect and kindness other members of this community. Bullying and other unhealthy and immoral behaviors are sometimes portrayed in popular media as normal. This school exists for the purpose of introducing children to a fundamentally different way of living — a life in Jesus. Each of us should be vigilant about bullying and unceasing in our prayer for all the members of this community.*

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## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual Harassment is forbidden in any school or parish in the Diocese of Lansing. Sexual harassment is at odds with the Gospel and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome advances that create discomfort for the victim. It can be verbal, including suggestive comments, lewd jokes and slurs or physical (unwanted touching or contact) or known possession of sexually explicit material. Every adult working in school and each student of the age to understand the meaning of sexual harassment has the responsibility to be aware of and understand the school's policy forbidding sexual harassment.

If a child feels he or she is the victim of sexual harassment, they should notify an adult immediately. St. Thomas School will investigate and act upon such claims and will punish the offender severely, up to and including termination or expulsion.

Each offense is handled on an individual basis and generally will follow these consequences for students: first minor offense will be dealt with by conference and/or suspension; repeat offenders of major sexual harassment may result in expulsion.

## **HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of St. Thomas Catholic School that every effort be made to provide an environment free from all forms of harassment. This policy applies to the actions of all faculty, staff and students as well as others who may be in a working relationship with the school. St. Thomas School will neither tolerate harassment nor will it tolerate reprisals against any student who makes a complaint. Students are expected to treat all persons, including each other, with respect and dignity. Accordingly, inappropriate behavior, including bullying, directed at faculty, staff or other students will not be tolerated. Such behavior will warrant disciplinary action according to the disciplinary policies of the school or the discretion of the principal.

## **SUSPENSION — IN SCHOOL AND AT HOME**

Students will not be sent off school grounds during school hours except in the company of the parent or other designated adult. A student may be given an in-school suspension during which time he/she will be required to be isolated from peers. If the student has been kept from two or more classes, a parent notification of suspension will be sent via e-mail.

The school will expend every reasonable effort to assist students to adjust to the social and academic requirements of the school environment. Decisions to suspend follow only after other means of motivation have failed, except for reasons of automatic suspension.

In reaching such decisions, consideration is always given to the welfare and Christian development of the individual student and the practical, common good and safety of the entire student body. The length of the suspension will depend on the severity of the offense. A student who is given an out of school suspension shall not be on the school grounds, either inside or outside of the building, and shall not participate in or attend any school activity, whether academic, social, or extra-curricular. A student shall not return to school until there has been a conference with the administrator, parent/guardian and student.

Automatic suspensions and possible expulsion will result for the following reasons:

1. The possession or use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or drugs on school property
2. Possession of knives or other weapons
3. Possession or use of any type of fireworks
4. Endangering the safety of others through physical violence



**EXPULSION**

The permanent dismissal of a student from the school is enacted only as a last resort, after other means of motivation and correction have failed and/or attendant circumstances of crime, scandal, morality or disruption necessitate this extreme disciplinary action.

Any expulsion will conform to the following procedures:

1. Notice to parent/guardian of the general nature of the punishable offense and of the specific violation.
2. Referral to the Diocesan Superintendent or his/her delegate.
3. Notification of an appeals process.

**GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT AND P.A. 328**

The law requires the expulsion of students who possess a dangerous weapon on school property or at school activities, or who commit arson or rape in a school building or on school grounds.

**LOCKERS/CUBBIES**

Lockers and cubbies are the property of St. Thomas School and we reserve the right to search them if necessary. No stickers are allowed on lockers unless they are magnetic. All items must be completely removed at the end of the school year.

**COMPUTER/INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY POLICIES****CODE OF ETHICS**

Access privileges will be revoked or disciplinary action may be taken for any violations that are unethical. Violations may constitute a criminal offense.

**PRIVILEGES**

The use of Internet and related technologies is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges.

**ACCEPTABLE USE**

The use of computers/Internet and related technologies must be in support of education, research, and be consistent with the educational objectives of St. Thomas School and the Diocese of Lansing. **IF IT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY FOR SCHOOL, YOU MAY NOT USE A SCHOOL COMPUTER FOR IT.**

**UNACCEPTABLE USE**

Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening, violent, or obscene material or material protected by trademark.

Game playing, "chat", or chain letter communication is prohibited. Other examples of unacceptable information could include, but are not limited to, pornography, information on bombs, weapons, inappropriate language and communications, flame letters, and transmission of any confidential personal information.

Acts of vandalism are prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or to damage hardware or software. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Prior to receiving a permission to use the Internet and related technologies, **THE STUDENT MUST HAVE A SIGNED PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK DECLARATION AGREEMENT ON FILE IN THE OFFICE.**

Students in the upper grades 4-8 will be required to purchase and be responsible for a computer "key." This is a flash drive also know as a USB memory chip or a jump drive, which will be used to store data. Grades 4-8 will need a 512MB to 1G to hold presentation format assignments (pictures, special effects, sound).

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## **SAFETY / SECURITY / EMERGENCY / MEDICAL**

### **BUILDING HOURS**

The office is open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on school days. The building is locked at all times. Anyone entering must identify themselves at one of the school buzzers located at the main entrances and then proceed to the main office to sign-in. Students may enter the building at 7:40 a.m. and must leave school grounds by 3:15 p.m. unless they are going to ESP (Extended School Program), sports or music practice.

### **VISITORS AND GUESTS**

Students should never invite a guest or visitor to come to St. Thomas during the school day without first seeking permission from the principal and teacher. If a student wishes to bring a friend to his classes for a day, the student's parents should contact the principal.

ALL VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL, INCLUDING PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS, MUST REPORT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. Your name on our sign-in sheet will help us determine the number of adults in the building during safety drills.

Upon entering the building, direct anyone who has entered with you to the office.

During the school day, parents should bring items for students to the school office. Classes should not be disturbed. Messages to students will be delivered at an appropriate time by the office staff. Parents and/or visitors should never interrupt a class that is in session. Phone calls for office staff to give messages to students should be made before 2:30 pm.

### **WEATHER RELATED**

If serious weather conditions make travel dangerous, school may be closed for the day. The School Messenger automated telephone messaging system will be used to notify parents. Notice will be also be given over radio stations WAAM/AM-1600 and WJR/AM-760, and television stations WDIV/TV Channel 4, Fox 2, and WXYZ TV-Channel 7. When the weather is threatening, parents should listen to these stations for information. School closings will be determined no later than 6:30 A.M.

If the National Weather Service posts a tornado warning, a tornado has been sighted. Under these conditions, students must remain at school in the safest place. Parents will be notified by School Messenger with updates and when it is safe to come and get your child.

During the year, the school has fire and severe weather alert drills to help students practice safe ways to evacuate the building or move to the most protected areas.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

In case of disaster, St. Thomas will remain in a "lock down" mode until an all clear is given. Doors will be locked. Parents are asked to adhere to this policy and will be notified with updates and when it is safe to come and get your child.

### **MEDICATION AND FIRST AID**

In the interest of health and safety, we ask that you comply with the following guidelines regarding students and medication.

At the beginning of the school year, please notify the school office of any medical condition which exists. This includes diabetes, asthma, allergies, etc.

If your child requires medication during the school day, you must give your authorization to the school to administer this medicine. In addition, A SIGNED AND DATED SET OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE STUDENT'S PHYSICIAN MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE OFFICE ALONG WITH ANY MEDICATION. INSTRUCTIONS ON THE LABEL OF PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ARE NOT ADEQUATE. THE MEDICATION MUST COME TO SCHOOL IN ITS ORIGINAL LABELED CONTAINER. A medication contract is attached and will also be available in the school office. All contracts are kept on file in the school office and must be renewed each year. WE MUST HAVE PARENTAL PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER ASPIRIN, TYLENOL, ETC. AND THE ASPIRIN, TYLENOL, ETC. MUST BE SUPPLIED BY THE PARENT. ALL MEDICATION, INCLUDING COUGH DROPS, MUST BE SENT TO THE OFFICE. Any medication left in the school office at the end of the school year will be destroyed.

Asthma inhalers and Epi pen may be kept on the child's person. Instructions must be given to the child's teacher.

In the event of serious injury, parents will be notified immediately and appropriate action taken.

## **ATTENTION: ALL Parents of Students with Major Medical Conditions**

Bring all forms, letters and medications to the school at least 2 weeks before school or immediately upon diagnosis, if diagnosis occurs during the school year. These items must be in the office prior to the first day of school as staff needs to be apprised of all conditions and how to handle each condition BEFORE school begins.

### **HEALTH MANAGEMENT PLAN: SEVERE ALLERGIES AND GENERAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

General medical or medication policies apply to all chronic conditions and disorders—Ex: asthmas, diabetes. Policies will reference food allergies specifically; however policies are applicable to other severe allergies such as bee stings or latex.

### **WHY HAVE A HEALTH MANAGEMENT PLAN?**

St. Thomas Catholic School recognizes the growing number of students with chronic medical conditions. In some situations these conditions are life threatening. While the medical and health-related needs are unique for each child, the intent of this plan is to provide a set of consistent practices within the school.

1. Information the family should provide to the school
2. Medications the family should provide to the school
3. Location of medications and who is trained and authorized to administer it
4. Responsibilities of all involved: parents, students, teachers, staff and principal
5. Specific policies regarding food allergies (prevention; special staff training on use of Epi-Pens, etc.)

A collaborative partnership between school, family and the medical community can provide a safe and healthy learning environment which will help parents and their children with medical conditions make a transition between the safety of their home into the expanding world of a school. Similarly, classmates without an existing medical condition will develop a greater understanding for individual differences, a capacity for flexibility, and increased compassion.

### **GENERAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

1. Establish standard practice guidelines to assist in supporting students with medical conditions within the community of St. Thomas the Apostle School.
2. Help ensure the safety of students with medical conditions.
3. Provide a sense of security and understanding to students, families, faculty and staff within the community through standard documentation and communication.
4. Ensure ALL students receive equal treatment regardless of medical status.
5. Ensure both students and staff have a full understanding of the medical needs of students.
6. Ensure parents/guardians understand the responsibilities of the school and what is expected from the parents/guardians to ensure that student health care needs are met.

### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES**

1. Include everything listed in the General Medical Conditions Section and below:
2. Snacks will be limited to fruit and vegetables for the first two weeks of school in PK, kindergarten, and ESP. The purpose is to safely allow time to determine which student areas need to be designated “No Peanuts Allowed” and/or “No Tree Nuts Allowed.”
3. The above mentioned areas will be labeled as “No Nuts Allowed.”
4. Other groups who use the classrooms, (such as religious education, parish meetings, etc.) will be educated that peanuts and tree nuts may not be brought into certain classrooms and will be expected to follow this policy when in the classrooms.

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## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **GENERAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

1. Immediately inform school after you discover that your child has a medical concern that may affect the education of your child. These conditions may include, but are not limited to: ADHD, anxiety, asthma, CHF, depression, diabetes, hemophilia, food or latex allergies, migraines or reflux.
  - a) Fill out the Medical Action Plan package detailing your child's condition. This may include consultation with your medical professionals.
  - b) Provide a letter from your medical professional explaining your child's condition and outlining the medical professionals' guidelines for appropriate precautions and treatments required for your child.
  - c) Provide the school with a way to reach you (cell phone, beeper, etc.) and maintain updated emergency contact numbers and medical information.
  - d) Inform teachers, principal and staff of known symptoms your child has exhibited on past reactions to aid them in recognition of a reaction.
  - e) Consider signing a release of information so the school may educate staff and volunteers that will interact with your child regarding his/her condition.
2. If school medicine administration or student self-medication administration is to be performed, the parent/guardian shall provide the school with the medications.
  - a) These medications shall be maintained in their original dispensing containers and will be accompanied by a letter from the physician detailing the students' name, dosing instructions, medication name, possible adverse reactions, and any other information that may be deemed important by the parents/guardians, physician, or school staff.
  - b) Keep track of the expiration dates of medications maintained at the school. When these medications pass expiration, remove them from the school and replace them if necessary.
  - c) Provide medication to be kept in the office and in the classroom.
  - d) Be aware that it is against the law for your child to receive another student's medication. You must provide your own child's medication and fill out the appropriate Medication Administration Permission Form.
3. Be willing to go on your student's field trip if possible and if requested. (Please note, the child's safety or attendance will not be conditioned on the parent/guardian's presence.)

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES**

1. Include everything listed in the General Medical Conditions Section and the below:
2. Provide a completed food allergy action plan to the office and to all teachers who will be in contact with your student: Your student's picture should be attached to this form.
3. Provide medication to be kept in the office and in the classroom.
  - 1 dose of epinephrine (Epi-Pen or TwinJect) and Benadryl with dosing device (measuring spoon or cup) in the office.
  - 1 dose of epinephrine (Epi-Pen or TwinJect) and Benadryl with dosing device (measuring spoon or cup) in the classroom.
4. Periodically teach your student to:
  - a) Never share food.
  - b) Report teasing, bullying or threats to an adult authority.
  - c) Recognize the foods or potential foods to which he/she may be allergic.
  - d) Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction.
  - e) Report immediately to an adult if he/she feels a reaction is occurring.
  - f) Identify where the Epi-Pen/TwinJet auto injector is kept while at school and who has access to the epinephrine.
5. Be willing to provide "safe snacks" for your student to keep in the classroom so there is always something your student can choose from during an unplanned special event.

## **PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **GENERAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

1. Provide an open and welcoming environment for children and families regardless of medical condition.
2. Know and recognize students who have medical conditions and/or food allergies.
3. Develop and implement a school wide plan for promoting an inclusive, sensitive, and responsive school climate when responding to students with medical conditions.
4. Do not allow bullying of students with medical conditions and or food allergies
5. Systematically educate the school community on issues having to do with medical conditions (e.g.: PAL program materials, parent/guardian information letters, school newsletters, school website, etc.)
6. Include the PTG in the educational process and when scheduling all-school events and fundraisers.
7. Provide any and all necessary training necessary for school staff dealing with children with medical conditions. This training may include, but is not limited to the following:
  - a) Food allergy training
  - b) Epi-Pen training
  - c) General First Aid (CPR)
  - d) Blood borne pathogen response
8. Provide accessible emergency communication between classrooms, offices, playground, gym, lunchroom, and any other areas where students gather.
9. Contingency plan in place in case of a substitute teacher, teachers aid, office help, food service staff, etc. when a substitute reports to the office to check in:
  - a) He/she should be given a copy of the student's medical action plan for.
  - b) Provide education to substitute teachers that includes the identification of students that have medical conditions that will be under their care during the school day.
  - d) Verify and document any medical training substitute teachers have received (Epi-Pen, First Aid, CPR, etc.)
10. Training on recognition of allergic/anaphylactic reactions and treatment of these reactions.
11. Implement policy and practices that promote good health and hygiene.

## **PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES**

1. Include everything listed in the General Medical Conditions Section and the below:
2. Provide training to faculty and staff on recognition of all allergic and anaphylactic reactions and treatment of allergic and anaphylactic reactions.
3. Enforce school policies related to "No peanut/tree nuts allowed" tables, rooms or designated areas in the school.
4. Communicate with other groups who use the building about the room policies and the need to enforce these policies even after school hours.
5. Participate in Epi-Pen/TwinJect training.
6. Recognize the symptoms of an allergic and an anaphylactic reaction.
7. Be prepared to administer medication and call 911 if epinephrine is administered.

### **OFFICE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Know students who have medical conditions and food allergies.
2. Store medications in an organized and easily accessible manner in office.
3. Store medications in a safe and secure facility.
4. Implement policy and practices that promote good health and hygiene.
5. Follow up with families to ensure that files are complete regarding Medical Action Plans.
6. Participate in Epi-Pen/TwinJect training.
7. Recognize the symptoms of an allergic and an anaphylactic reaction.
8. Administer OTC and prescription medications as indicated by the Medical Action Plan when needed.
9. Be prepared to administer emergency medications, ensure 911 and parents are contacted and remain with the student until emergency responders arrive.

## **CLASSROOM TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

(Homeroom, Specials, Substitutes and ESP)

### **GENERAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

1. Know the students you teach who have a medical condition and/or food allergies and be aware of symptoms that may indicate medical intervention is necessary.
2. Review any Medical Action Plans for students and, if necessary, review said plans with parents/guardians to ensure accuracy and understanding.
3. If medication is to be stored in the classroom:
  - a) Make sure the medication is stored in a safe, easily accessible and transportable manner. In some cases, medications may need to be carried outside of the classroom (e.g. playground, gym, art, computer class, etc.)
  - b) Be prepared to administer emergency medication and call 911, if required.
4. Do not allow bullying of students with medical conditions and/or food allergies.
  - a) Educate classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing or harassing students with food allergies or other medical conditions.
  - b) Be aware of how the student(s) with medical conditions are being treated.
  - c) Enforce school rules about bullying and threats.
5. Collaborate with the parent/guardian of the student(s) to provide a lesson plan about the special needs of classmates (e.g. discussion about food allergies and anaphylaxis in age appropriate terms and with the student's permission.)
6. Maintain the student's Medical Action Plan with photo accessible at all times.
7. Be sure all volunteers, student teachers, TAs and substitute teachers are informed of the student's food allergies/medical conditions and preventative safeguards.
8. Welcome parental/guardian involvement in organizing class parties and special events.
9. Consider ways to wash hands before and after eating (e.g. hand wipes, liquid hand sanitizer.) Important for food allergies, people with weakened immune systems, flu season, etc.
10. Regarding field trips:
  - a) Ensure a trained staff person is assigned to chaperone or the parent/guardian of child with condition is present.
  - b) Emergency medications and action plans are to be taken on field trips and should be easily accessible.
  - c) Proactive planning should be done as to avoid high risk situations.
  - d) If leaving Ann Arbor identify closest medical facility.

## **CLASSROOM/TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

(Homeroom, Specials, Substitutes and ESP)

### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES**

If there is a child with a severe and potentially life threatening allergy in your classroom -

1. Include everything listed in the General Medical Conditions Section and the below:
2. Do not allow students to share food.
3. Keep students with life-threatening allergies under direct supervision on field trips unless the student's own parent/guardian is present to supervise them.
4. If medically necessary provide a separate space for child with allergies when eating.
5. Inform all classroom parents/guardians if conditions exist that may endanger a student (food allergies.) If community food is to be distributed, make sure that food will not cause an accidental contact to an allergen.
  - a) Compose letters to all parents/guardians in your class informing them of allergen(s) in their child's classroom.
  - b) Check labels on food brought into the classroom for class parties to prevent accidental exposure of a student to a food allergen.
  - c) Work with parents/guardians to determine what foods are "safe" and distribute list to class for classroom snacks if appropriate.
  - d) Encourage parent/guardians of child with allergy to supply safe alternative foods for unplanned special events.
  - e) Encourage non-food treats when appropriate.

6. Check all ingredients of soap and lotion products used in the classroom.
7. Participate in Epi-Pen/TwinJect training.
8. Recognize the symptoms of an allergic and an anaphylactic reaction.
9. Be prepared to administer medication and call 911 if epinephrine is administered.

## **FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITY**

### **DIRECTOR**

1. Be prepared to discuss menus, a la carte items, food products and ingredients; food handling and preparation procedures; cleaning and sanitation practices; distribution, and serving process.
2. Participate in emergency response training (First Aid, CPR, Epi-Pen.)
3. Maintain a record of ingredients of food prepared or served.
4. Provide allergen information upon request.
5. Participate in Epi-Pen/TwinJect training.
6. Recognize the symptoms of an allergic and an anaphylactic reaction.
7. Be prepared to administer medication and call 911 if epinephrine is administered.

### **LUNCH VOLUNTEERS**

1. An Allergy-friendly table will be designated in the cafeteria.
2. One indoor volunteer should be assigned to monitor the food allergy table.
3. Monitor for reactions, food sharing, students permitted to sit at the table (Note, not all students with food allergies will be required by parents/guardians to eat at reserved table. Additionally, friends may sit at the table if they are eating the school's hot lunch.)
4. Cleaning the table and bench prior to and after each lunch session.
5. Strictly follow the cleaning and sanitation protocol to avoid cross-contamination. Instructions are posted in the cleaning supply area in the lunchroom.
6. At least one volunteer should have previous experience/knowledge of Epi-Pen administration.
7. Lunch time volunteers with recess supervision duty must carry a cell phone in case of an emergency. A phone will be provided to volunteer by the office if needed.
8. Participate in Epi-Pen/TwinJect training.
9. Recognize the symptoms of an allergic and an anaphylactic reaction.
10. If a student with a food allergy is not feeling well, they must be escorted to the office rather than sent with a buddy or alone. A reaction may occur while unsupervised by an adult.

### **INSURANCE**

Occasionally, students are accidentally injured while taking part in school activities. To help manage any medical bills incurred as a result of such injury, the Bishops of Michigan have approved the placement of a statewide student accident insurance policy effective July 1, 1993. This policy will be provided at no cost to the students' families and will extend to all students enrolled in a diocesan school and will cover school related activities including interscholastic sports. Claim payments for student accident medical expenses will be made after the primary carrier has paid. Contact the office for more information.

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## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

### **DROPPING STUDENTS OFF IN THE MORNING**

Due to crowded conditions on Elizabeth Street, students can be dropped off on State Street, in front of the church on Kingsley Street, or in the parking lot. Please note that there is not a crossing guard on Elizabeth Street in the morning.

In the morning, all students will report to the assigned area indoors. ADULT SUPERVISION WILL BE AVAILABLE AT 7:45 AM AND CHILDREN SHOULD NOT ARRIVE BEFORE THIS TIME UNLESS THEY ARE ENROLLED IN THE EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM. STUDENTS ARRIVING BEFORE 7:45 AM. WILL BE SENT TO ESP AND A FEE WILL BE ASSESSED. Students must be in class and ready to start the day by 8:00 AM. Students arriving after 8:00 AM are tardy and must come to the office for a tardy slip.

### **PICKING STUDENTS UP AFTER SCHOOL**

PARENTS SHOULD BE WAITING IN THE PARKING LOT TO PICK UP CHILDREN AT DISMISSAL TIME. Parents should meet their children at the playground. Children will be led to a designated box painted on the playground. Children will be released to parents once the teacher has been notified that the parents are taking their children and assuming responsibility for them. Students should not go into the parking lot without a parent accompanying them. For safety reasons, children may not be picked up on Elizabeth Street.

Our insurance carrier has warned that, unless participating in school-sponsored and/or supervised activity, students must vacate the building at dismissal time; students shall not wait in or at the school building after 3:15 P.M. Parents must make other arrangements for the safety of their children. For your convenience, we have the Extended School Program (E.S.P.) which provides childcare on both a regular and emergency basis.

Any children remaining in the building at 3:15 P.M. will be taken to ESP and families will be billed accordingly.

Once a student has been dismissed, the student is either in the company of a responsible adult or remains at school in ESP. Students may not leave the premises unescorted and then return for ESP or athletic practices.



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## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

### EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM (ESP)

This program is offered to parents who need to have care for their children before and after school. ESP is open from 7:00– 7:45 a.m. and from 3:15– 5:30 p.m. daily. Once school is dismissed should a parent or designated adult not be available for pick up the student will be sent to ESP. More information is available in the school office.

### TELEPHONE

Students may use the telephone in the school office during the school day in cases of extreme necessity. Arranging to have friends accompany each other home is not an emergency. Students will not be called to the phone on school time except in cases of emergency. Classroom telephones are not to be used by students except with the permission of the teacher.

### CELL PHONES

Cell phones are not to be used during school hours. Cell phones will be confiscated and parents may pick them up from the principal's office if they are visible or ring during the school day. This includes all wrist phones or wrist electronics. Call the office to give messages to children. Children may call parents from the office.

### ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT/GAMES

Personal electronic devices for games, music, reading, computing, etc., are not allowed on school grounds including when in ESP. They will be confiscated and taken to the office where parents may pick them up.

### LOST AND FOUND

All books and other articles which are found are brought to the lost & found. Parents are encouraged to label their children's belongings for easier identification.

### PARKING LOT

Parents are only allowed to park in non-numbered spots in the parking lot while assisting in the school.

### VOLUNTEERS

As required by the Bishop of the Diocese of Lansing, all volunteers and paid workers who deal directly with children must attend the program Virtus, Protecting God's Children, before they can hold the position. The three hour class is held throughout the Diocese during the school year. Check listing in the office. Any person volunteering or working with children must have this training or they will not be allowed to help in our school. This applies to lunch supervisors as well as others who get paid for their time.

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are considered an extension of classroom activities. They are undertaken with the approval of the school administrator for the purpose of cultural, religious and/or educational enrichment.

No student may participate in a field trip unless a signed parent permission slip for the specific event is on file with the school. The permission slip designated by the Diocese of Lansing shall be used.

Whenever it is necessary to use private passenger vehicles, a Volunteer Driver Information sheet must be completed and placed on file with the administrator. This must be renewed and/or up-dated every six months.

Parent chaperones are expected to secure each child with a seat belt. Parents are asked to closely follow the directions of the teacher by staying with the group and supervising the children assigned to them at all times. Parents may not leave the group and take students to other places without teacher approval. This includes going to another restaurant or attraction.

It is important that chaperones **not bring other children** on the field trip since the chaperone's attention is often diverted to the other child. Therefore, siblings may NOT go on field trips when their parents are chaperoning.

Sometimes students participate in trips that may incur a substantial expense. There may be fundraising opportunities for those unable to pay the entire cost.

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## **LIBRARY**

The Grade School Library is located on the third floor of the south building and is available to all grades. The computer lab is located in the library/media center.

Circulation of books consists of a two-week checkout time with two one-week renewals (four weeks total) unless a book is on the current reserve list, which limits checkout time to one week. Kindergartners and first graders may borrow only one book at a time while grades 2 - 8 may borrow two books. If a student desires more books and has proved reliable in returning books, the librarian may allow additional books to be checked out. Non-returned or lost books must be paid for at the rate of new book replacement.

The Library also contains an audio-visual center, a computer center, and a magazine section. Magazines can be checked out, but the references and audio-visual materials are limited to library use only.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students in grades K - 8 are required to wear gym shoes. These shoes are to remain at school for the express purpose of physical education. It is suggested that girls have a pair of shorts or slacks to slip on for class activities.

All students in grades 6 - 8 are required to wear a St. Thomas gym suit purchased through the Physical Education Office. In addition, students are expected to provide a towel, deodorant, and soap for their showers and to wear white socks with their gym shoes.

For safety reasons, students must remove all jewelry during physical education classes.

All locks used in the Physical Education locker rooms are to be purchased from the Physical Education Department. They remain the property of the student.

Glass containers are forbidden in the locker rooms, the shower rooms, the drying rooms and the restrooms.

Food, beverages, and gum are not permitted in the gym or locker room area at any time.

All injuries are to be reported to the teacher in charge immediately.

A note from the parent should be on file in the Physical Education Office describing why a student should not fully participate in all gym activities. A note from the family doctor is required for an extended excuse from gym or showers.

## **ATHLETICS**

The Athletic Department provides Fifth through Eighth Grade programs in co-ed Soccer, co-ed Cross Country, girls' Cheer, girls' Basketball, boys' Basketball, girls' Volleyball and co-ed Track. The philosophy and goals of the Athletic Department are:

- ◆ To provide a well-planned and well-balanced program for all who desire to participate
- ◆ To operate athletic activities in harmony with the policies of the Michigan High School Athletic Association
- ◆ To develop and maintain high ideals, sportsmanship and team play
- ◆ To encourage competition, not only for the tangible reward, but also for the intrinsic values that make athletic competition valuable
- ◆ To be concerned with the total development of the student and to promote athletics as an integral part of the educational program

A current MHSAA athletic physical form must be on file with the athletic director before an individual is allowed to participate in any form of athletic activity -- practice or games. A current physical is one that has been completed on or after April 15 of the previous school year. The form can be obtained from the athletic director or from the school office. It must be filled out and signed by the examining physician, a parent/guardian and the student. It will be kept on file in the athletic office. After any injury requiring medical care by a doctor or hospital, a doctor's release to active participation must be given to the coach or athletic director before that student may again participate.

Academic eligibility will be checked every Friday. If students are determined to be ineligible, they may not play the following week (Monday through Sunday). If students are ineligible two consecutive weeks, they are no longer on that team.

Students are ineligible if they have:

- Grade averages in two classes less than 72%.
- Grade average in one class less than 62%.
- Demonstrated consistent or gross misbehavior determined by the principal or athletic director.

Athletic Eligibility Exception Policy

- Sometimes a student may not be able to keep up with the work of a class. The student may not be classified as a special education student, but may still struggle academically. A faculty member may request an exception to the eligibility policy. The principal and the athletic director will review each case and decide on eligibility.
- Guidelines for exceptions:
  - There can be no late or missing assignments.
  - Assignments must demonstrate genuine effort.
  - The student must consistently demonstrate good behavior and adherence to St. Thomas rules and policies.

Each athlete must be in attendance at school all day on a game day and the morning following a game. An excused absence from school may be allowed if arrangements are made with the Athletic Director prior to the absence. Failure to meet this requirement will be dealt with on an individual basis by the Athletic Department.

## **CAFETERIA**

A fully equipped cafeteria is provided where a hot lunch is served to those who wish to purchase it. For those who prefer to bring their lunches from home, milk and water are also sold. It is the wish of all involved with the lunch program that the lunch period provides a safe and healthy atmosphere in which each child can enjoy his/her meal and free time. The use of the cafeteria is considered a privilege enjoyed by students who obey the rules and who show respect toward other students and staff.

Hot lunch is available Monday through Thursday with pizza by the slice offered on Fridays.

## **LUNCH RULES**

An adult will walk the students into the cafeteria. Students should use indoor voices.

When students enter the cafeteria, they will have only one trip to purchase their lunch and snacks, then they are to remain seated. No seat switching/visiting at other locations is permitted. Students are to remain seated while eating.

No open food or drink is permitted out of the cafeteria. Uneaten lunch portions should be placed in lunch boxes and taken home, not discarded or taken to the playground.

Students are responsible for clearing tables and floor of all trash and paper.

## **PLAYGROUND RECESS**

Students are to be at the playground only during those times specified. There is to be no loitering on the way to or from the playground. Students must walk at all times and stop at indicated markings.

Recess will be conducted indoors when the wind chill temperature is below zero degrees Fahrenheit. Students must use appropriate Christian language and must show respect to students, staff, and lunch supervisors at all times. Students should speak in a moderate tone at all times.

No food is allowed on the playground or in the gym.

Students should play in a manner that maintains the safety of others and themselves. Throwing snow, rocks, or rubber chips, playing on the wall, pushing and shoving, are ways in which we endanger others and ourselves, and are not permitted. Students should stay within the designated area.

In moving to and from the playground, maintain two lines and speak in a moderate tone. Because people going to Mass must use the same sidewalk, please stay on the right hand side of walkways, be attentive and share the space. No adult should have to move to allow a child to pass.

Respond respectfully and immediately to directions from the adults who are supervising.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF RULES INFRACTIONS**

1. Warning
2. Name and behavior written down and a meeting with the principal.
3. If behavior persists, the parents will be called and child may be required to eat in the office and serve a recess detention.

Continued misbehavior may result in:

1. A meeting with parents.
2. Suspension from the cafeteria or playground for a length of time.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

### FUND RAISERS

**All fund raisers must be approved by the principal before they are implemented.** Parents are advised to pick and choose which fund raisers they want to support during the school year. The PTG (Parent Teacher Guild) offers fund raisers during the school year. The PTG is a generous supporter of fulfilling the needs of the school, teachers, and students.

### GRADE SCHOOL TUITION

Tuition payment can be divided into 10 monthly installments or into larger payments of either once per year, twice per year, or quarterly. Tuition payments are due beginning in August and end in May. Tuition and fees for K-8 are collected and managed by FACTS Tuition Management Services. Installment and late fees are charged.

The tuition amount is determined by the number of children attending St. Thomas School and whether the family is an active parish member that contributes to the support of the parish. Tithing to the parish at a minimum level of \$25 per week or \$1,200 per calendar year is required for tuition at the In-Parish level. Catholic families who are members of other parishes must also register with St. Thomas Parish and contribute to St. Thomas Parish at the same level in order to receive the In-Parish rate. Dual registration is permitted. Families that are not members of St. Thomas Parish are considered Out-of-Parish.

Parish support levels will be checked quarterly and tuition will be changed to Out-of-Parish if the requisite is not maintained. Parish families that experience difficulty in maintaining the requisite must contact the Parish Business Manager or Pastor.

### PRESCHOOL TUITION

Preschool tuition is separate from K-8 tuition. Preschool tuition should be given to the School Business Manager by the first of each month. No bill will be sent to preschool families. Only extra charges such as ESP or additional hours will result in a bill at the end of the month.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

St. Thomas School has scholarship money through the PTG, Fr. Carey Fund, St. Thomas Grade School Endowment Trust Fund, and the annual school auction. At the time of registration, a family that requests financial assistance must complete a PSAS form that is available from the school office. The amount of financial assistance that can be awarded is determined by the Pastor, the Parish Business Manager, and Principal based on the results provided from the PSAS information and the number of families requesting assistance.

Those families that need additional assistance over and above what can be provided from the sources listed above must contact the Parish Business Manager or the Pastor.