

Dear Parent(s):

The faculty and staff of St. Thomas the Apostle School welcome the opportunity of working with you and your children during these formative years.

This handbook of information is presented for the purpose of familiarizing you and your children with our school policies and operating procedures. Please use the information contained in this handbook to plan effectively for a positive experience at St. Thomas School and to discuss pertinent information with your children.

Each family will receive one copy of this handbook. Please keep this publication nearby and refer to it when you might need clarification. Additional information is provided on a timely basis by our monthly newsletter and calendar.

We are happy that you have chosen St. Thomas School. At St. Thomas we promise to work with you, the first teachers of your children, to "...prepare children for life in a respectful and supportive environment by providing a dynamic education centered in Christ."

Peace in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Faber". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

David A. Faber
Principal

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Vision Statement

As weavers helping children enhance their tapestry of life, we create in one another threads to develop academically, emotionally and spiritually in the pattern of Christ and His message.

Beliefs

As Catholic educators...

We believe in a Christian environment that affords an opportunity to hear the Gospel message of Hope, achieve a vital personal relationship with Christ, share in the Christian community of faith and develop a sense of service based upon love.

We believe in developing self-esteem by providing a secure environment that includes the acceptance of individual and cultural differences. We will strive to enhance each child's feelings of self-worth in order to attain his/her full potential.

We believe that students, teachers, parents and others in Catholic schools should respect each other because they respect Jesus who lives in them. We will encourage children to join with others to respect and show justice to one another.

We believe in a shared responsibility between home and school. As teachers, we will report to parents their child's progress regularly and as needed, in a spirit of charity, with professional accuracy and honesty.

*St. Thomas School Community
January 1994*

Mission Statement

St. Thomas School community prepares children for life in a respectful and supportive environment by providing a dynamic education centered in Christ.

We believe in developing self-control in students through discipline that is positive, consistent, and fair according to the needs of each child. Central to this idea is the constant reminder that the students are expected to act in ways reflective of our Christian community.

We believe in providing opportunities that challenge and stimulate all young people to levels of excellence in many spheres of life.

We believe in fostering skills that will enable students to interact in a positive and peaceful manner within our school community.

We believe in encouraging the development of accountability and responsibility in each child.

We believe in providing opportunities that enhance students' success. Experiencing success will increase the likelihood of future success.

We believe each person in a unique gift of God with personality, talents, and abilities waiting to be developed. Growth paces itself with each individual. Every child is encouraged to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

Admission Policy

It is the intent of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish that enrollment is open to all members of the community. In the event that an entry level classroom (preschool and kindergarten) is approaching the maximum student capacity, the children of parishioners maintain enrollment priority at entry levels and the children of parishioners and non-parishioners who are already attending St. Thomas School in grades 1-8 retain the priority of their place.

Admissions Process

A new family seeking registration at St. Thomas School initiates the admissions process by contacting the school, and introductory information is extended. The mission, beliefs, curricular and co-curricular programs are discussed with the parent and a tour of the school and/or classroom visitation are offered. For preschool and kindergarten, registration materials are provided. For grades 1-8 an Admissions Questionnaire must be completed by the parent for use by the school in determining if an appropriate placement can be made. Placement decisions will be made in consultation with parents, the child's previous school, and St. Thomas teachers. Placement decisions will be made by the principal and communicated to the parents. When an appropriate placement is determined, registration forms are provided.

To begin school as a preschooler in either the three or four year old programs, the child must be three or four respectively by September 1. Exceptions may be made when class size allows. A physical examination, within a year prior to the first day of school is required, and all required immunizations are complete.

To begin school as a kindergartener, a child must be five (5) years old on or before the date specified by the State of Michigan Department of Education. A physical examination, within a year prior to the first day of school is required, and all required immunizations must be complete. The parents and teacher must agree that the child meets commonly held kindergarten readiness criteria.

Registration

A non-refundable fee is paid at the time of registration. Enrollment is not finalized until the fee is received and accepted by the parish office. When the number seeking enrollment is greater than the number of available openings, students will be admitted according to the following priorities:

1. Children of parishioners currently enrolled (P-8).
2. Children of parishioners seeking entry level enrollment (Preschool and Kindergarten).
3. Non-parishioner children currently enrolled (1-8).

4. Children of parishioners with siblings currently enrolled (1-8).
5. Non-parishioner children with siblings currently enrolled (1-8).
6. Children of parishioners seeking enrollment (1-8).
7. Other Catholic children from outside the parish.
8. Children from families of other religious faiths.

Please note that admission in the preschool programs does not automatically allow for admission to St. Thomas School. Upon admission to kindergarten, admission to subsequent grades is automatic.

Because of the high level of difficulty involved in setting these priorities and in decision making when any classroom has reached capacity, the Pastoral Council and the Education Commission recommend the following:

- Clear yet open communication with families involved
- Self-resolution of conflicts by the families involved when all family members may not be admitted at once.
- Knowledge of opportunities for Catholic education beyond the doors of St. Thomas School that may be considered by the applicant family.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline Policy

A positive and preventative approach to discipline shall be used to promote and encourage student responsibility, self control and self esteem at St. Thomas School.

This Code of Conduct shall emphasize a positive disciplinary philosophy and contains general school rules and procedures for rewards and consequences. The administrator and faculty will review this Code of Conduct as needed.

Discipline Philosophy

The root of the word discipline is disciple. We believe every disciplinary situation is an opportunity to teach positive, Christian behavior. We believe that students, teachers, parents and others in Catholic schools should respect each other because they respect Jesus who lives in

them. We will encourage children to join with others to respect and show justice to one another. We believe in developing self-control in students through discipline that is positive, consistent, and fair according to the needs of each child. Central to this idea is the constant reminder that the students are expected to act in ways reflective of our Christian community, and which foster a positive learning environment.

The basic rules of Christian Conduct include:

1. Respecting the rights and property of others.
2. That everyone should be accepted equally and treated with respect and friendliness regardless of their differences.
3. All students and staff members have a right to personal safety and freedom to learn.
4. Showing respect to the rightful authority and obeying the school rules.

Rewards

Rewards are a natural outgrowth of positive living. In order to express appreciation for positive behavior at school, we make many attempts to recognize and reward students in many of the following ways: positive praise and feedback, stickers, bookmarks, awards, classroom parties, classroom auction, publishing names and pictures, extra recess times, positive parent phone calls, etc.

In earlier grades it is important that children experience these rewards in very concrete (extrinsic) ways. As they grow older it is important to shift the focus from the concrete or extrinsic rewards to the internal (intrinsic) rewards -- that feeling we experience for a job well done. For this reason it is common practice in schools to see less focus on concrete rewards like stickers and parties in the upper grades. However, we realize the need for recognition is important to all of us, even as adults. As a result, rewards in the upper grades will most often be in the form of praise, kind words, positive parent phone calls, a pat on the back, publishing names and pictures, etc.

We believe the more students are recognized and praised for positive behavior, the more students will repeat this behavior.

Consequences

In most disciplinary situations, the general procedure follows:

Step 1

Warning given to student by adult supervisor (teacher, principal, playground supervisors).

Step 2

If inappropriate behavior continues a reasonable consequence will follow (determined by the adult supervisor).

Step 3

If continued misbehavior occurs, the adult supervisor will assign a consequence and contact the parents with a concise explanation of the behavior and the consequences. Parents are expected to support and cooperate with the adult supervisor in carrying out the consequences. (Parents are strongly encouraged to carry out additional consequences at home.)

Step 4

If misbehavior continues after the above steps, the matter will be brought to the attention of the principal. The principal will either communicate with the parent(s) by phone or will provide a concise description of the student's behavior to parents to be signed and returned to school by the student. The student will be required to create a plan for improvement. The plan will be distributed to all appropriate teachers.

Students may skip Steps 1-3 in situations where a supervisor determines that misbehavior is serious and falls into one or more of the following categories: Dangerous, Disrespectful or Defiant. The student will be sent to the principal and will begin on Step 4.

Step 5

A conference will be held with parents, teachers, student, and principal present. Student will formulate a new plan for improvement. The plan will be distributed to all appropriate teachers.

Step 6

If above fails, failure to follow school rules and regulations will result in suspension or expulsion.

Detentions

Detentions are special disciplinary sessions with either the student's teacher or principal. Specific work is assigned for the detention period. Notice will be given on the day of detention. Should it be necessary for your child to serve an after school detention, your cooperation in arranging transportation will be necessary. If it is not possible for the parents to make appropriate arrangements, the detention may be served on the following day.

In-House Suspension

A teacher may remove a student from class to a place designated by the principal when grossness of the offense, the persistence of the misbehavior, or the disruptive effect of the violation make the continued presence of the student intolerable. Removal of a student from class is considered serious. The teacher will contact the parent regarding this action.

Full-Day In-House Suspension

The principal will call the student's parents to arrange the next possible day for In-House Suspension. The student will be provided space at school and the principal will require a parent or relative to accompany that student for the day or reimburse the school 50% of the substitute teacher fee.

Suspension

The school will not tolerate conduct that endangers the moral and/or physical well-being of the student body or staff, or conduct that is in open disregard for school authority. The school realizes its obligation to the students and will extend reasonable effort to assist students to adjust to the social and academic requirements of the school environment. When it becomes necessary to separate a student from the school setting for a specific period of time the following procedure will be carried out by the principal:

1. The principal will contact the parent at the time of the suspension. The parents will be required to come to school, meet with the principal and accept the responsibility of their child for the duration of the suspension.
2. The suspended student will be afforded the opportunity to state his/her account of the incident which caused the suspension.
3. Parents will receive in writing the criteria involving the out of school suspension. These criteria will include the specific reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension and/or conditions for its termination.
4. The student will be expected to complete all assignments during the suspension. Assignments will be turned in to the principal or teacher upon his/her return to school.

Expulsion

Expulsion, the permanent exclusion of a student from school occurs only when the principal judges that the pattern of misbehavior has been a consistent choice of the student involved and every reasonable opportunity has been granted for the student to change the inappropriate behavior(s).

Expulsion is rare and adequate warning will be given to the student and his/her parents.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his or her discretion.

Parent Communication/Problem Solving Process

The Education Commission of St. Thomas School envisions a form of team work to carry out the spiritual mission of all our students. Parents are encouraged to work toward resolving problems or disagreements with the appropriate staff member by ordinary methods.

Before a grievance can be initiated the parents *must* take the following steps: If the parent(s) has a school-related issue/problem, he/she will discuss it with the staff member promptly. If the meeting is not successful, the matter shall be orally discussed with the principal.

If the matter is of such a serious nature that the parent cannot address the issue with the person directly, (e.g., verbal or physical abuse, etc.) it may be brought directly to the principal. In the event the complaint is regarding the principal, the parent should discuss it with the principal and, if necessary, bring it to the attention of the President of the Education Commission.

Grievance Procedure

1. If the matter is not resolved within 10 working days after the meeting with the principal described above, a written description of the issue(s) and steps/actions taken to date should be submitted to the President of the Education Commission.
2. The President shall respond by written acknowledgment to parent(s) with suggestions for resolution or advising further action if necessary. All written correspondence will be documented and filed.
3. If parent(s) wishes to pursue the matter after receiving the response from the President, the parent should refer the matter to the Pastor either verbally or in writing.

All parties agree that these proceedings shall be kept as confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure.

St. Thomas the Apostle School
Elementary Guidance Rubric

Behavior	First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Teasing Name calling, insulting or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves	Warning Student calls parent Apology	One inside recess Student calls parent Apology Student Plan of Improvement	Three inside recesses Student calls parent Letter of Apology Student Plan of Improvement
Moderate Physical Contact Hitting, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping etc. Intimidation Threats of emotional or physical violence, planned exclusion, etc. Defiance Refusal behavior directed toward supervisory staff	Warning Student calls parent Apology	One inside recess Student calls parent Apology Student Plan of Improvement	Three inside recesses Student calls parent Letter of Apology Student Plan of Improvement
More Severe Physical Contact Punching, kicking, and similar behavior that might injure others Harassment Racial, ethnic, religious or other forms of severe harassment NOTE: Consequences may be more severe in the categories of harassment or more severe physical contact than those listed here based on either the seriousness of the action or on relevant policy	Three inside recesses Student calls parent Apology	Three inside recesses Student calls parent Apology Student Plan of Improvement	Five inside recesses Student calls parent "Classes only" for three days Letter of Apology Student Plan of Improvement Meeting: Parent/Student With Teacher/Administrator

Rubric for guidance purpose: Teachers, Assistant Principal, or Principal will use discretion as necessary to meet the needs of each child

Terms Defined:

The 3D's: Behaviors that are disrespectful, dangerous, or defiant.

Violence: Any mean look, gesture, action, or word that hurts a person's body, feelings, friendship, reputation, or property.

Bullying: A form of violence that is repeated, intentional, and involves an imbalance of power between the people involved.

Bullying can take the form of a look, gesture, word or action.

"Classes only": The student participates in no informal, unstructured or non-classroom group activities such as lunch, recess, passing time in the hall, or special school assemblies.

Notes for Teachers:

1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade teachers supervise inside recess for their own students.

4th and 5th grade teachers supervise silent lunch and silent recess for their own students if deemed appropriate.

Responsibilities of faculty, staff and all supervisors:

- Any adult observing aggressive behavior or hearing about it from students will complete the top section of the *Intervention Report* form.
- The principal, assistant principal, or designee will investigate (if the behavior was reported by students and not seen by staff) and identify the appropriate consequence on the rubric. The student and principal will call parent(s) at that time.
- The supervisor of inside recess will assist the student as needed to complete the *Student Contract* form.

St. Thomas the Apostle School
Junior High School Guidance Rubric

Behavior	First Level	Second Level	Third Level
<i>Teasing</i> Name calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves	Warning Student calls parent Apology	1 silent supervised lunch Student calls parent Student Improvement Plan Apology	3 silent supervised lunches Student calls parent Communication with Parents Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology
<i>Moderate Physical Contact</i> Hitting, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, etc.	1 silent supervised lunch Student calls parent Apology	Classes only* for 3 days Student calls parent Communication with parents Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology	1 day suspension Student calls parent Student/Parent/Admin. Meeting Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology
<i>Intimidation</i> Threats of emotional or physical violence, exclusion, etc. <i>Defiance</i> Refusal behavior directed toward supervisory staff	3 silent supervised lunches Student calls parent Apology	Classes only* for 3 days Student calls parent Communication with parents Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology	1 day suspension Student calls parent Student/Parent/Admin. Meeting Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology
<i>More Severe Physical Contact</i> Punching, kicking, and similar behavior that causes bodily harm	Classes only* for 3 days Student calls parent Communication with parents Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology	3 days Suspension Student calls parent School Resource Officer (If necessary) Student/Parent/Admin. Meeting Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology	3-5 day suspension with the possibility of Expulsion Student calls parent School Resource Officer (If necessary) Student/Parent/Admin. Meeting Student Improvement Plan Letter of Apology
<i>Harassment or severe physical contact</i> Racial, ethnic, sexual, religious or other forms of severe harassment	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;"> <p>Note: Consequences may be more severe in this category than those listed here based on either the seriousness of the action or on relevant policy.</p> </div>		

Rubric for guidance purpose: Teachers, Assistant Principal, or Principal will use discretion as necessary to meet the needs of each child

Terms Defined:

The 3D's: Behaviors that are disrespectful, dangerous, or defiant.

Violence: Any mean look, gesture, action, or word that hurts a person's body, feelings, friendship, reputation, or property.

Bullying: A form of violence that is repeated, intentional, and involves an imbalance of power between the people involved.

Bullying can take the form of a look, gesture, word or action.

"Classes only": The student participates in no informal, unstructured or non-classroom group activities such as lunch, recess, passing time in the hall, or special school assemblies.

Notes for Teachers:

In cases of sexual harassment, the rubric will defer to our existing policy.

Responsibilities of faculty, staff and all supervisors:

- Any adult observing aggressive behavior or hearing about it from students will complete the top section of the *Intervention Report* form.
- The principal, assistant principal, or designee will investigate (if the behavior was reported by students and not seen by staff) and identify the appropriate consequence on the rubric. The student and principal will call parent(s) at that time.
- The supervisor of inside recess will assist the student as needed to complete the *Student Contract* form.

St. Thomas the Apostle School
Intervention Report

Student Name: _____ Date: _____ Location: _____

Basic Rules of Christian Conduct:(Handbook Page 6)

- **Respect the rights and property of others.**
- **Everyone should be accepted equally and treated with respect and friendliness regardless of their differences.**
- **All students and staff members have a right to personal safety and freedom to learn.**
- **Showing respect to the rightful authority and obeying the school rules.**

Witnessed by staff Reported by student Witnessed by other supervisory staff or parent

Description of Incident: (please be specific) Recorded by _____

Investigation of facts:

Consequences:

(Administrator)

(Parent)

(Student)

Information regarding our Code of Conduct and procedures can be found on pages 5-13 in the Parent/Students Handbook.

St. Thomas the Apostle School

Student Contract

I am a child of God. I have come to St. Thomas the Apostle School to obtain an outstanding education. I will cooperate with my teacher and my classmates. I will conduct myself in such a way as to demonstrate my personal best in all that I do.

I understand that the writing of this contract is designed to help me focus and improve my behavior.

What did I do wrong?

What could I do differently next time?

Signatures:

Student: _____

Parent: _____

Supervisor: _____

Uniform Policy

In order to provide an environment that reflects our Catholic tradition, promotes respect for school and individuals, and enhances self-esteem, students at St. Thomas the Apostle School are required to wear uniforms. The school administration will provide the details of the uniform (color and style) and will contract with a school uniform company or local retailer to make the required uniform available to parents. All students will receive order forms for uniforms in the acceptance packet when registering for school. Any deviations from the uniform (dress-up days, school spirit, team recognition, etc.) are at the discretion of the administration.

Uniform Description**Girls - Grades 1-8**

Skirt or jumper -- specific,* pleated, accordion -- navy blue. Skirts must be knee length. White or navy tights or shorts and white or navy socks, must be worn with skirt or jumper.

Navy blue pants*, or navy blue shorts* (April 1st - October 15th shorts optional). Pants and shorts are to be twill, gabardine or broadcloth with traditional trouser cut. Shorts must be mid-thigh in length. White or navy socks must be worn with pants and shorts.

Boys - Grades 1-8

Navy blue pants*, or navy blue shorts* (April 1st - October 15th shorts optional). Pants and shorts are to be twill, gabardine or broadcloth with traditional trouser cut. Shorts must be mid-thigh in length. White or navy socks must be worn with pants and shorts.

Boys and Girls - Grades 1-8

Hunter Green Polo shirt with the St. Thomas logo purchased through Educational Outfitters.

All other shirts must be ***plain white*** and consist of the following styles:

- *turtleneck
- *mock turtleneck
- *long or short sleeve polo-style with collars
- *long or short sleeve oxford
- *specific long or short sleeve blouse*
- *no sleeveless shirts allowed*

Students must wear shirts tucked in and buttoned at all times and must be a reasonable fit.

Optional

Green Booster's sweatshirt (non-hooded type) or dark green * sweater (vest, cardigan or pullover) -- must be worn with shirt collar showing and must be a reasonable fit.

All parts of the uniform must be neat, clean, and in good condition.

***See sample uniform display in the school office or call the office to request a green uniform item description sheet to match specific colors and/or style.**

Personal Appearance

Grooming for all students should be in keeping with the students' age. Hairstyles should be plain and simple. Boys' hair must be cut above eyebrows, earlobes and shirt collar. Lipstick and makeup may not be worn in school. Natural colored nail polish only. If earrings are worn, only simple and small (one pair less than 1" – girls only) will be permitted. One necklace, one bracelet, one ring per hand allowed.

Each teacher will be responsible for seeing that his/her students are wearing proper uniforms. Violations will be handled immediately. They will be noted and submitted to the office each morning and afternoon. Parents will be called to bring the proper attire.

Non-Uniform Days

Clothing can be casual or dress but must be appropriate for school. Examples of clothing **not** considered appropriate for school include but are not limited to:

1. Clothing with a bare midriff.
2. Halter and tube tops.
3. Clothing with un-Christian or lewd printed material.
4. Clothing made of sheer material.
5. Shorts or pants that are fringed, cut off or frayed at bottom, made of spandex or sweatshirt material or torn or ripped. Writing on back of pants.
6. Shorts above mid-thigh length. Skorts (look like shorts in back, skirt in front).
7. Sleeveless shirts or blouses.
8. Skirts shorter than knee length.
9. Socks must be worn with shoes or sandals.

Jean Passes

Jean passes may be used on the second Monday of the month or other designated days. With the jean pass the uniform top must still be worn.

Special Circumstances

Parents may make written requests to the principal for variance from this Uniform Code because of special circumstances (I.E. injury, child development, etc.).

GENERAL POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND SCHOOL RULES –16-

General School Rules

These apply to classrooms, library, church, playground, bus, all parish property, and field trips.

Parents or guardians will be responsible for all damage done by children for deliberate destruction of school property (i.e. marking of desks, destruction of books, improper lavatory behavior). This will involve either the cleaning up or monetary payment for the article or damaged property.

No gum chewing or spitting in school, on parish property, or on the bus.

Students are subject to the authority of all teachers and supervising parents and other adults on field trips, in the gym, the playground, etc. Designated supervisors and their authority are to be respected and obeyed.

Students are expected to stay off the property of neighbors around the playground and on their way to and from school. All crossing of streets must be done using the proper crosswalks. Bikes must be walked across the streets and on school property.

Students are only permitted to leave school property during the school hours when they are picked up by a parent or guardian. They must be picked up and signed out in the school office.

Using vulgar and/or abusive language is forbidden. This includes verbal, written or gestures.

Students who walk to school should not arrive before 7:45 a.m. No students should be in the building until 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in their classrooms prepared for classes by 8:05 a.m. each morning.

Students are not permitted to bring any electronic equipment including cell phones, video games, DVD or music devices, etc., to school without permission from their teachers.

Throwing stones, sticks, wood chips, snowballs, etc., is strictly forbidden.

Smoking, drinking, and use or possession of illegal substances, including tobacco, is strictly forbidden on school grounds and busses at all times.

Students are expected to follow playground and/or indoor rules. Once dismissed from their classrooms, students are to be outside on the playground until the bell rings. They are not allowed in the halls or in classrooms without permission from a teacher or the principal.

Persistent misbehavior, disrespect, or violation of the rules may result in the removal of the student from the school.

Respect for teachers and students is conducive to learning in the classroom. Rudeness or

Copying or cheating is considered a serious violation.

Fighting or wrestling on school grounds is not allowed.

Students are expected to complete homework following the written school guidelines.

Violations of school rules will be handled on an individual basis, keeping in mind the severity of the incident, previous actions and personal injury to others.

Absence

Parents are requested to call the school office between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. each day that their child will be absent from school.

It is important that students be in school every day that they are able. Unnecessary absences hurt your child's educational progress. Absences due to a student's illness or death in the family are valid reasons for missing school.

Pupils are expected to make up the work that they miss during an absence. The number of days allowed for this will be equal to the number of days that a pupil is absent unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

When a child is out of school for an extended period of time, arrangements for assignments should be made with the individual classroom teachers to allow teachers sufficient time to prepare the necessary materials.

The school encourages parents to arrange family trips at the scheduled vacation times. Since children are in school one half of the year at most, attendance is crucial in affecting learning. Participation and classroom activities cannot be shared by those not present. Therefore, class grades are affected by attendance. Please notify the teacher when withdrawing a student for a family trip.

When children are absent more than ten days in one marking period, an incomplete may be given if work is not completed.

Tardiness

Parents are responsible to see that their child arrives at school in time for classes. It is imperative that children be at school no later than 8:00 a.m. in order to begin classes at 8:05 a.m. Tardiness should be rare.

Students who come to school after 8:05 a.m. or 12:25 p.m. must report directly to the office.

In order to encourage minimal tardiness, students who receive 5 unexcused tardies* will receive a formal notice in the mail addressed to their parents and be required to stay after school for 30 minutes (Grades 6-8) or miss a recess (Grades 1-5).

The letter to Junior High parent(s) will contain the recommended time and day for the student to stay after school. If the time and day selected is not possible, the parent(s) should call the school to make alternate arrangements.

* Excused Tardy: Student comes to school late due to attending or serving at morning Mass, a doctor/dentist appointment, a late ride (bus or car) due to extremely hazardous weather conditions, or a bus mechanical problem.

* Unexcused Tardy: Student comes to school late for any reason other than those considered to be excused.

Academic Quality and Integrity Policy

The administration together with the school faculty shall have the responsibility of developing criteria to ensure the integrity of a quality academic program for all students. This shall include, but not be limited to, procedures related to the following:

1. Student Retention/Promotion
2. Graduation Requirements
3. Grading, Assessment, and Reporting

Any student who fails to complete, in a satisfactory way, any portion of the necessary curriculum as determined by the teacher, shall receive an "I" (Incomplete) on the report card.

No student can advance to the next grade level here at St. Thomas or graduate from St. Thomas until the uncompleted work has been completed in a satisfactory way as determined by the teacher, and the "I" has been removed from the report card.

Any student, who has failed two or more subjects for the year, will be required to complete a summer school program, as determined by the teacher and administration, in order to continue in the next grade level at St. Thomas or to graduate from St. Thomas.

Any student who has failed two or more classes during any one semester will prompt a review by the appropriate teachers and administration. The purpose of this review is to determine eligibility for continuing in the next grade at St. Thomas or for graduation from St. Thomas.

Accidents or Injury

When minor accidents or injuries take place during the school day, the supervisor will fill out a Parent Accident Report. One copy of this will remain at school on file and another copy will be sent home with your child. When a serious accident or injury takes place, parents will be contacted and a more detailed form will be completed for insurance purposes.

Address Changes

Parents should notify the school office of any change of address or phone number.

Bicycles

Children may ride bicycles to school as long as the bicycles are operated safely and according to school rules:

1. Bicycles must be walked rather than ridden on the school grounds.
2. Bicycles must be locked while kept at the school's bicycle racks.

Boots

Many classrooms are carpeted. During the wet, muddy, snowy weather, children should wear boots. If boots are shoe boots, an extra pair of regular shoes must be kept at school.

Communications

Communications with teachers or students during the school day are made through the school office so that classroom activities are not disturbed. Important messages will be conveyed through the school office to teachers and students.

It is important that students come prepared to school. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/s to see that the child has all assignments, books, and materials necessary on a daily basis. Students are not to use the telephone to make after school plans.

There are times when students stay after school for various reasons (discipline; extra help; help teacher). Parents will be informed the day prior as to the reason and length of time that the child will stay, unless teachers can make appropriate arrangements for that day.

Often parents' schedules change due to work or personal circumstances. It is vital that the parent contacts the office with new information that will allow the school to contact the parent in an emergency. Any change of address or phone information must be conveyed to the office as soon as possible. If necessary, teachers are available to meet with parents between 3:15 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. each day. Please call the school office ahead of time to arrange a conference.

Newsletters and a monthly calendar are provided for your information. Monthly Education Commission approved minutes are placed in various locations around the school and church for your information.

All newsletters/fliers/letters must have the approval of the school office before being disseminated to students. Any parent or group wishing to have something distributed to students must bring it to the school office for approval. Approved items will be placed in teacher mailboxes for their distribution.

There are times when family situations or circumstances are troubling to a student. Parents should be conscious that this can and often does affect a student's performance both in academics and behavior. Please keep teachers informed by sharing with them the situation (in confidence), so that they can help your child through any difficult times.

There may be times when differences of opinion occur between parents and teachers. When this happens, the matter should first be dealt with in a special conference between the parent and the teacher. The principal will meet with the parent only after a prior parent-teacher conference has taken place and the difference has not been resolved satisfactorily. Should the parent be dissatisfied with the action taken by the principal, please consult the Parent Communication/Problem Solving Process and Grievance Procedure sections.

Courtesy

A courteous, cheerful student reflects Christ who abides in him/her. If this awareness of Christ's presence is instilled in the student from childhood, discipline problems can be almost nonexistent. A child's manners and behavior reflect his/her home training. It is the duty of each St. Thomas student to be courteous and to show proper respect for authority.

Daily Schedule

The students are permitted to enter the school building at 8:00 a.m. Students will be supervised in the designated area behind the school between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. and also, after school until all busses have arrived. Students being picked up in the church parking lot will be supervised until 3:15 p.m. After that time students will be brought to the office and parents will be contacted. Children are marked tardy if they arrive after 8:05 a.m. Dismissal is at 3:00 p.m.

Daily Schedule, continued

8:00 a.m.	Students enter building
8:05 a.m.	Classes begin
11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Lunch/Recess (Grades 1-5)
11:42 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Recess/Lunch (Grades 6-8)
3:15 p.m.	Dismissal

A.M. Kindergarten/Preschool
8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

P.M. Kindergarten/Preschool
12:15 - 3:15 p.m.

Damage

Parents of students will be held responsible for the replacement of property damaged, and materials damaged or lost through the negligence of their children.

Fines will be imposed for books damaged beyond what is expected in the normal use for a year.

Deliveries

Student should bring the necessities (when they come in the morning) for the entire school day. In the event that books, assignments, instruments, lunches, etc. are brought to school by parents - please report first to the office. At that time the best method of delivery will be determined.

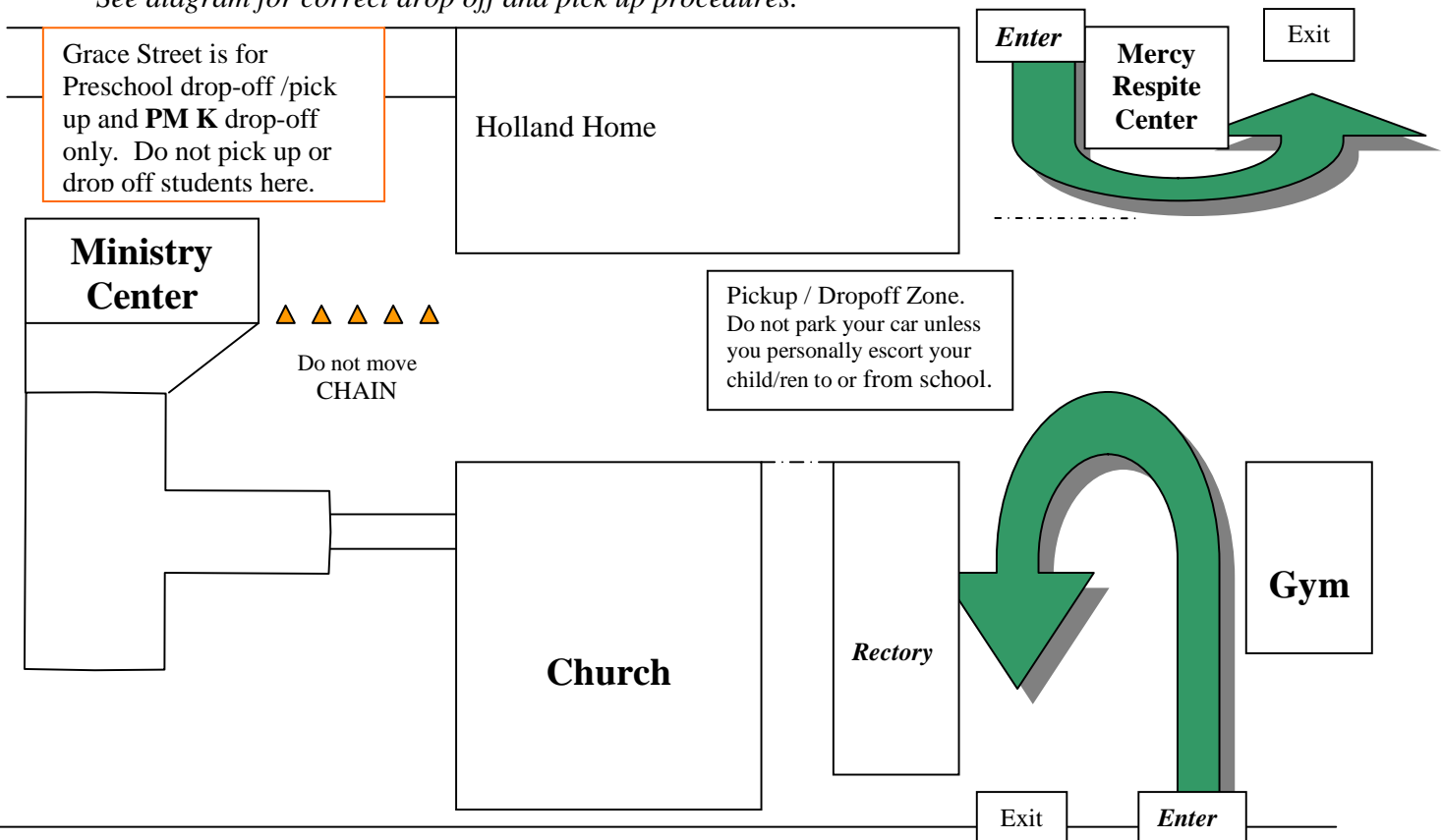
Dismissal

Except in cases of *emergency dismissal*, no child is permitted to go home during the school day unless a parent or authorized substitute is contacted and picks up the child in the school office. The parent must pick child(ren) up in the school office and sign a sign-out sheet before the child will be dismissed.

Drop Off/Pick Up

For safety sake – students are dropped off or picked up in the church east parking lot or at the gate off of Fulton Street **only**. AM Kindergartners may be picked up in the parking lot pickup zone at 11:00 a.m. dismissal. Grace Street is to be used for drop-off by PM Kindergarten students and drop-off/pick-up for Preschool students **ONLY**.

See diagram for correct drop off and pick up procedures.



Wilcox Park Drive is for bus loading/unloading only. Please do not pick up or drop off students here.

Doctor and Dental Appointments

For doctor and dental appointments during school hours, the student must bring a *written* request which should be presented at the school office and to the teacher. Please try to make appointments after school hours as much as possible. Parents must pick child/ren up in the school office and sign a sign-out sheet before the child will be dismissed.

Emergency Dismissal

Please instruct your child where he/she is to go and what he/she is to do in case of an emergency dismissal from school. It is most important that your child is well instructed and has a clear idea of the arrangements that you have made for him/her.

Parents are asked to try to refrain from calling the school at emergency times. Lines must be kept open for emergency calls and for notifying radio stations, etc. of emergency closings. Local media (radio/television/internet) will announce emergency closings.

Also, local media will report school closings in the morning (resulting from weather conditions).

Parents are free to come to the school office to get their child/ren at any time during a severe thunderstorm/tornado watch or warning. The general school population will not be dismissed during a tornado warning (a tornado has been sighted).

Tornado drills are held in school as part of the regular safety program. When a tornado warning is given, the children will go to their assigned “safe” places in the school building.

Faculty Meetings

General faculty and in-service programs for teachers are regularly scheduled. There are times when an early dismissal is necessary so that the staff can take advantage of professional growth. Parents will be informed of these in advance. Time of dismissal will depend on the nature of the in-service.

Field Trips

The school requires *written* consent of parents before a student will be permitted to go on a field trip with the group. A permission slip will be sent home in advance of the trip and it should be returned promptly. If a child does not return a signed permission slip from his/her parents, the child will not be able to participate in the field trip. Permission must be granted in writing (school law).

Field trips sponsored by the school foster educational and social development. Student behavior is expected to be reflective of the mission of St. Thomas School. Chaperones represent authority of the school, and respect is due.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted throughout the school year. During a drill the school is evacuated until an all clear signal is given.

Grace Street

Grace Street is reserved for the drop-off and pick-up of Preschool and P.M. Kindergarten students only. Wilcox Park Drive is reserved for school busses to drop-off and pick-up our students. Parents who drop-off or pick-up students in cars, will use the parking lot east of the church.

Holy Days

When Holy Days of Obligation occur on a school day, all the St. Thomas children will attend Mass together. Holy Days are full days of school which are set aside for special worship, service, and recreation.

Home and School

The Home and School Association consists of every parent enrolling his/her child at St. Thomas. All parents are asked to volunteer to help with various functions throughout the year.

Homework

The average child is expected to spend the following amount of time in study at home:

<i>Level</i>	<i>Minutes</i>
First - Second	10-20
Third - Fourth	30-40
Fourth - Fifth	40-50
Sixth - Eighth	60-80

Late assignments (when a child is not absent) will be accepted and credited only at the discretion of the individual teacher. In junior high, the student may be asked to stay after if homework was not completed. Arrangements will be made with the parents.

Hot Lunch

Hot Lunch is provided by AM Classic Creations on a daily basis. Payments can be made directly to the school office. Students may be eligible for Free or Reduced Meals through the Michigan Department of Education. Applications are available in the Welcome and Information Center or in the school office.

Human Dignity Policy

St. Thomas the Apostle School expects all persons (students, employees, volunteers, and/or others having business with the school) to conduct themselves with dignity and with respect for fellow persons. Harassing anyone, including sexual or racial harassment, will not be tolerated. Harassment is a form of discrimination.

Sexual and racial harassment are violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education-Larsen Civil Rights Act. As sexual and racial harassment are unacceptable to this school, it is against our policy for any person to sexually or racially harass another person.

Sexual Harassment includes:

1. Making unwelcome sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, or submitting any person to other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
2. Making submission to, or rejection of, such conduct the basis for decisions affecting any person.
3. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, through such conduct.

Racial Harassment includes:

1. Making negative references to a person's cultural or racial background.
2. Creating a hostile or offensive classroom environment through such conduct.

Illness

If a child is ill, he/she should remain at home. The Health Department suggests that a child who is well enough to be in school, is well enough to participate in all school activities including recess.

Internet Use Policy

Students are responsible for good behavior on the Internet as they are in a classroom or a school corridor.

The Internet is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Parents' permission is required. Remember that access is a privilege, not a right and that access requires responsibility.

Individual users of the Internet are responsible for their behavior and communications over the network. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honor the agreements they have signed.

Computer storage areas and devices will be treated like school lockers. Staff may review files and communications to insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on servers or devices would always be private.

During school, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. To the best of the staff's ability, and with the use of software filter restrictions, the teachers will oversee and guide students toward the appropriate material. Outside of the school, families will oversee and guide the Internet access of their children as such software filter restrictions may not be present at home or at other sites.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures.
2. Using obscene language.
3. Harassing, insulting or attacking others.
4. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks.
5. Violating copyright laws.
6. Using others' folders, work or files.
7. Intentionally wasting limited resources.
8. Searching, viewing or retrieving materials that are not related to school work, community service, employment or further education (thus, searching or viewing sexually explicit, profane, violent or promoting illegal materials is not permitted).
9. Subscription to any service or ordering of any goods or services.
10. Sharing of students' home address or any other information.
11. Playing games or using other interactive sites such as chats, MUDs and MOOs unless specifically assigned by a teacher.
12. Any activity that violates a school rule or a local, state or federal law.

If a student has any questions about whether a specific activity is permitted, he or she should ask a teacher or administrator. If a student accidentally accesses inappropriate material, he or she should back out of that information at once and tell the teacher immediately. (Note: The onsite filtering software system complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Library/Media/Computer Center

Each class grades K-6 have a library period once per week. Students are free to sign out books during that time. Teachers will be given overdue book lists each quarter for their class. Quarterly Report Cards will be given ONLY to those students who do not have overdue books. An envelope will be given to students who have overdue library books to be returned with the missing book or a donation if the book has been lost. Suggested dollar amounts will be given based on the replacement cost of the lost book. Once this envelope has been received by the school office, the teacher or the library coordinator, the report cards will be given to the student/parent.

Kindergarten receives computer instruction once each week. Grades 1-8 have computer instruction twice per week.

Lost and Found

Lost and found shelves are located inside the school entrance. Periodically, the shelves are emptied and donated to charity after attempts have been made to find their owners.

Lunch

If a parent would like to take their child/ren out of school for lunch, the parent must report to the office to have the child/ren called to the office to meet them. The parent(s) must sign their child/ren out before being dismissed. Students going to lunch with their parents are not permitted to bring school “guests” with them.

Children who remain at school for lunch are not allowed to leave the assigned area (school grounds and Wilcox Park) during the lunch/recess period.

A child who remains at school for lunch must bring his/her lunch or order hot lunch through AM Classic Creations.

All food -- candy included -- is eaten in the classroom or lower level of the church rather than taken outside to be eaten. Gum is not allowed unless special permission is granted by the teacher or administration.

During lunchtime we expect the children to observe the same good manners and behavior that they observe during mealtime in their own homes.

It is important that students maintain the normal routine so that we know where children are at all times.

Mass/Prayer Service

Each child in Grades K-8 shall have an opportunity to participate in a weekly celebration. Liturgy is a unique opportunity for developing a special relationship with the Lord. To enhance this development, respect and silence is to be observed.

Students are encouraged to participate fully in song and in silent – as well as vocal – prayer. Each class shall have opportunities to participate in the Mass or special liturgy on their assigned day.

Medical Problems

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the teacher(s) and principal if a student is subject to seizures, is allergic to bees, or any other physical problem that requires special attention and/or medication while the child is at school. The medical procedure to be followed by school personnel should be put in writing and signed by the parents.

Medication

The following instructions regarding medication are written to comply with state of Michigan Recommendations.

1. No school staff member may dispense medication of any kind, including prescription and non-prescription drugs (examples of non prescription drugs: non-aspirin pain reliever, cough drops, vitamins, cold medicines, etc.), without written authorization from both the parent and a physician. A Permission Form for non-aspirin pain reliever is included in the spring registration packet or in the school office.
2. All medication must be brought to the school office *by a parent* with appropriate authorization and a completed Parent Medication Consent Form must be on file in the school office. Parents should also inform the teacher with a note or voice mail.
3. Any student needing to take non-prescription medication of any kind at school should bring his/her medication and the parent authorization, including detailed instructions, to the school office.
4. All authorized medication must be taken in the presence of two office personnel.
5. Emergency medication, such as inhalers, can be carried by the student or left with the child's teacher. All appropriate authorizations of doctor and parent and Parent Medication Consent Form must be on file in the school office.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Parent/Teacher/Student conferences are held at the end of the first and near the end of the third quarters. Dismissal times for students on these days as well as times for individual conferences are announced in advance through the school newsletter.

Any parent who wishes a conference at any other time during the year is encouraged to call the office (458-4228) and arrange for an appointment with the teacher. The St. Thomas School teachers are available between 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. until 3:45 p.m. daily if any parent wishes to contact them.

Physical Examinations

Preschool and Kindergarten children are issued health forms at the time of registration in the spring of the year. These are to be completed by the family physician and brought to the school office on or before the first day of school in September.

For children in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 participating in school sports programs, a physical

examination is required for each school year.

Playground Rules

1. Show good sportsmanship and respect to all students and supervisors.
2. Students may not use inappropriate language.
3. Candy, food, gum and drinks are not allowed.
4. Use equipment properly.
 - only 10 students on the merry-go-round
 - only 4 students pushing the merry-go-round
 - do not hang or jump off the playground equipment
5. Tackle football is not allowed.
6. No fighting, wrestling, tripping, tackling, shoving or riding on one another's backs.
7. No throwing of sticks, ice, snow, wood chips, etc.
8. No taking others' property or clothing (including hats, gloves, etc.)
9. Students must stay in full view of the supervisors at all times.
 - do not go between the building and the fence at the park
 - The tennis courts are out of bounds
 - do not play on the ramp (leading to the park)
 - grades 3-8 may play on the fields staying approximately 15 feet inside the tree line along Youll and Milton
10. Students are to stay off all fences.
11. Students must line up immediately when the recess bell rings.
12. Students are to walk 2 by 2 to the park, holding all playground equipment until they reach the park.
13. Students must ask a supervisor to leave the playground. Then, they may leave with a partner only. No one may leave alone.

Recess

All students are to be outside during the recess period. Only those students who are hurt or injured will have permission granted to stay in during this period. Teachers may occasionally require a student or students to stay in during recess under the teacher's supervision. Students will not go outside when the temperature or wind chill are zero or below.

Release of Students

When a student is released from school during the school day, he/she should be met at the school office by the parent. The parent must also sign the student out before the student will be released.

St. Thomas Education Commission

St. Thomas Parish has an elected Education Commission. Meeting dates are published in the "Pieces" newsletter.

Safeties

Junior High Safeties are used on school grounds only. Safeties will be assigned to the parking lot, gate and both bus lines to assist teachers and students. Safeties will be assigned for one week at a time to the area where they normally wait to go home. Due to the volume and speed of traffic, students are no longer asked to volunteer as crossing guards at local street corners. Therefore, parents are responsible for the safe travel of their children to and from school.

School Closings

St. Thomas the Apostle School belongs to a Grand Rapids cooperative system between radio and television stations for announcing school closings or delays due to severe weather or emergency situations. While most radio and television stations will broadcast this information, we monitor Channel 8 very closely and find it to be the quickest and most accurate. Also, woodtv.com has a complete listing of the most current school closings.

School Supplies

Parents are asked to provide all school supplies as requested by the teachers.

Lunch boxes, lunch bags, sweaters, coats, school bags, etc. should be clearly marked with the child's name to minimize confusion and to avoid loss.

Please send your children with appropriate clothing for the weather such as hats, mittens, snow pants, boots, etc.

In addition to *properly covering each textbook*, please provide your child with a *school bag* or *backpack* of your choice and insist that it be used each day. Students will be held responsible for lost books or supplies. Backpacks with wheels are not allowed because they do not fit in lockers.

All students in grades 3-8 are required to have their own Bible at school. If your child does not already have a Bible, they are available through the school office.

Student Council

The student council represents student concerns and orchestrates various student activities throughout the year. Elections are held yearly. Representatives are selected from grades 3 to 8. Officers consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, and

Treasurer.

Student Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent on an as needed basis throughout the school year as a form of communication to the student and parent. These assessments focus on academic progress, effort and conduct. Progress Reports can also be accessed in grades 4-8 via the internet. Contact your child's teacher for access information.

Assessment Reports (Report Cards)

Assessment Reports are distributed four times during the school year: November, January, March/April, June. Grading is based upon specific data gained from a variety of evaluative techniques such as: direct observation, pre- and post-tests, daily performance, self-evaluations, interviews, and other methods.

Conferences

Formal conferences between parent/s, student, and teacher are scheduled twice a year, usually at the end of the first quarter and during the third.

Student Record Release Policy

Upon receipt of a completed and signed Request for Release of Records form from another school to which a student has applied for admission or which a former student is attending, all academic records and documented behavioral records will be forwarded to the requesting school. No student records will be released until St. Thomas the Apostle School receives the completed and signed Request for Release of Records form.

Substitute for Parents -- Emergency Arrangements

Each year parents are asked to provide the name of an adult whom the school can contact in case of an emergency, in the event that parents cannot be reached. This information is kept on file in the school office, and families are asked to notify the school secretary in writing when the emergency information changes. (The person you request the school to contact should be one who is available to be reached during the school day.)

School Tardy Procedure

In order to encourage minimal tardiness, students who receive 5 unexcused tardies* will receive a formal notice in the mail addressed to their parent(s) and be required to stay after school for 30 minutes (Grades 6-8) or miss a recess (Grades 1-5).

The letter to Junior High parent(s) will contain the recommended time and day for the student to stay after school. If the time and day selected is not possible, the parent(s) should call the school to make alternate arrangements.

- Excused Tardy: Student comes to school late due to attendance or serving at morning Mass, a doctor/dentist appointment, a late ride (bus or car) due to extremely hazardous weather conditions, or a bus mechanical problem.
- Unexcused Tardy: Students come to school late for any reason other than those considered to be excused.

Tuition

St. Thomas School charges tuition to cover a portion of the cost. Each spring, parents are asked to sign a Tuition Commitment Form. If at any time a financial difficulty is experienced, please contact the Financial Coordinator in the Rectory office.

Visitors

All visitors must report to the school office upon entering the building to sign in and wear the appropriate ID while in the building. This will allow school staff to know who is in the building, and will help to maintain a safe school environment.

Volunteers

The Diocese of Grand Rapids has implemented programs to ensure the safety of children and young people when they are in our care. As part of that program, all school volunteers must:

1. Sign and return the Standards of Ministerial Behavior in Dealing with Children & Young People
2. Complete and turn in the Background Check for Volunteers and Employees form
3. Attend a 3-hour Virtus Training entitled Protecting God's Children.

These forms and registration directions for the Virtus sessions are available in the school office.

Weapons Policy

In order to continue to provide a safe environment for everyone at St. Thomas the Apostle School, students are prohibited from having weapons on the school premises, at school-sponsored activities, on a school bus, or in the immediate vicinity of the school.

Any student found to be in violation of the school's policy is subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.

It is also the policy of St. Thomas the Apostle School to refuse enrollment to any student who has been expelled from a school due to possession of a weapon.

Amendments of Handbook

This school and/or its principal retain the right to amend this handbook. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

St. Thomas School has an organized sports program for the boys and girls in grades five through eight. (Teams are organized for football, basketball, baseball, track, softball, volleyball, soccer, cheerleading, and cross country. When the number of students wanting to participate in a particular sport cannot field a team, St. Thomas will merge with other Catholic schools for the purpose of fielding a team.) Students are responsible for all equipment assigned to them. Failure to return the equipment in the condition issued and on time will warrant restitution for the loss or damage before being eligible to participate in any other sport. The Greater Grand Rapids Athletic Council oversees the Athletic Programs and policies for the Catholic schools of our Diocese. Student Athletes are to receive policies, procedures, rules and schedules at the start of each session.

St. Thomas has an Athletic Director. The role of the Athletic Director is to serve as a liaison between coaches, parents and principal. Any questions or concerns regarding the school's sports program should be referred to the Athletic Director.

Eligibility

The purpose of the athletic program and extracurricular activities at St. Thomas School is to complement the home, church, and school in the development of the "whole person." Activities of these programs are for the benefit of the children, suited to their age and development. The aims are:

1. To recognize the need for the wholesome growth of the child.
2. To provide enjoyable recreational activity that develops Christian attitudes of sportsmanship and fair play.

A student may be deemed ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities (including sports) if the student's discipline, effort or coursework completion is not considered acceptable based upon the recommendation of the administration. Parents and coaches are to receive prior written notification of potential ineligibility.

Parent(s) and teachers have the responsibility to ensure that the child's effort and conduct is reflective of the mission of St. Thomas School. When schoolwork is suffering, parent(s) and teachers need to monitor the root of the difficulty and take action. Any child who is suspended or expelled from school is not eligible to participate in or be present at any practice or sporting event for the duration of the suspension or expulsion. Any student who has an incomplete on their report card is ineligible until the incomplete has been removed.

Saint Thomas School supports the concept of commitment to a team, at the same time allows parents final discretion in choosing how many sports a child may participate in at any one time. Coaches have the authority to enforce rules that reinforce the concept of commitment to a team. Parents are required to communicate with coaches prior to selecting more than one sport and prior to a game that might result in a scheduling conflict.

Sports – Spectators

The enthusiasm for sports among many spectators indicates that they play a vital role in the development of good sportsmanship. Their habits and reactions determine the quality of sportsmanship and reflects upon the reputation of their school. It is recommended that spectators:

1. Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
2. Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
3. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is unsportsmanlike.
4. Respect the property of the school and the authority of school officials.
5. Show respect for an injured player when he/she is removed from a contest.
6. Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.
7. Do not heckle, jeer, or distract members of the opposing team.
8. Never criticize the players or coaches for the loss of a game.
9. Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach. Refrain from being a second guesser.
10. Avoid profane language and obnoxious behavior which are unsportsmanlike.

St. Thomas Gym and Other Rules

1. Saint Thomas Teams will not practice on Sundays in order to allow other parish ministries the priority of Sunday activities.
2. No one is allowed in back hall.
3. No playing in front hall.
4. Students are to be seated during games (Except for going to and from concession room or bathroom).
5. No cheerleading practice allowed in the halls.

6. No one is allowed on the basketball court before, at half time or at the end of the game except players involved in the game.
7. Students are not to be running across the court to the scoring table.
8. No loitering in the concession room.

Policies

These policies embody the minimum requirements which must be observed by all the schools participating in the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Leagues. More stringent regulations may be imposed on an individual school by their parish Board of Education.

1. Each school shall be responsible for establishing, implementing, and enforcing an eligibility code which is uniform for all sports and for all grades in a manner which is dictated by the uniqueness of the local situation. All eligibility codes are to have the qualities of justice and fairness based upon performance in the areas of conduct and effort.
2. Recognizing that all students who do have the desire to participate should be encouraged to take part in the athletic programs, a no-cut policy, other than for disciplinary reasons, shall be an integral part of all athletic programs.
3. To insure total participation it shall be mandatory that any student who faithfully practices with the team be allowed to participate the **MINIMUM AMOUNT OF TIME PER GAME** as listed:

MINIMUM PLAYING TIME, continued

Sport	Grades 5 & 6	Grade 7 & 8
Soccer	10 minutes/game	10 minutes/game
Football	4 plays/game	4 plays/game
Basketball (Boys & Girls)	6 minutes/game	2 minutes/game
Baseball	2 innings or 6 outs/game	2 innings or 6 outs/game
Softball	2 innings or 6 outs/game	2 innings or 6 outs/game
Track	2 events/meet	2 events/meet

These minimum participation standards shall apply to all regularly scheduled league games, invitational tournaments, and city tournaments.

At all times the health and safety of the participant must be considered first and foremost.

It shall be the joint responsibility of each league, and the principal and athletic director of each member school to make provisions for, promulgate the information, and implement this policy of "TOTAL PARTICIPATION."

4. Students under grade five are prohibited from participating at any level.

5. Participation in 7th grade and 8th grade teams shall include specifically students from those grades. Boys in the sixth grade may participate in 7th and 8th grade football if either overweight or too old for 6th grade football. In such cases students from one lower grade may be used after obtaining written permission of the parish Board of Education and the parents of the students participating.

Students under grade six are prohibited from participating at this level. At no time shall students be placed in competition with students two grades older than them.

6. Any student who wishes to be a cheerleader and who faithfully practices must be allowed to participate for a significant amount of time except for disciplinary reasons.

7. Eligibility rules are binding on cheerleaders also.

8. It is recommended that sports banquets be limited to a simple event as a fitting tribute for good sportsmanship and participation. If recognition is given, identical inexpensive certificates and/or awards should be given to all participants, not to exceed \$5.00 in value.

9. Any student, boy or girl, who participates in the athletic programs must have on file with the principal and/or athletic director a current year physical examination, written permission of the parents to participate, and some proof of insurance coverage.

10. Practice time and number of practices for all students shall not exceed two (2) hours per day and five (5) practices per week. The time limit and number of practices set below are maximums in each sport. We encourage schools to cut time for practice and number of practices where there is an opportunity.

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Pre-season</u>	<u>Season</u>
Football		
7 th & 8 th Grade	10 hrs. – 5 practices/wk.	8 hrs. – 4 practices/wk.
5 th & 6 th Grade	10 hrs. – 5 practices/wk.	6 hrs. – 3 practices/wk.

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Pre-season</u>	<u>Season</u>
Basketball 7 th & 8 th Grade	8 hrs. – 4 practices/wk.	6 hrs. – 3 practices/wk.
5 th & 6 th Grade	6 hrs. – 3 practices/wk.	4 hrs. – 3 practices/wk.
Baseball/Softball 5 th – 8 th Grade	8 hrs. – 4 practices/wk.	6 hrs. – 3 practices/wk.
Soccer 5 th – 8 th Grade	8 hrs. - 4 practices/wk.	6 hrs. - 3 practices/wk.
Track 5 th – 8 th Grade	4 hrs. - 3 practices/wk.	3 hrs. - 3 practices/wk.
Cheerleading 5 th – 8 th Grade	4 hrs. - 3 practices/wk.	3 hrs. - 3 practices/wk.

All time limits above do not include game time during the regular season.

11. All-Star games shall be forbidden at all levels and in all sports.

12. Boys may not participate in girls' sports. Girls may not participate in any boys' sport if the school sponsors the same sport for girls or if it is a contact sport (i.e. football, basketball). Softball and baseball shall be construed as the same sport.

13. The number of games of basketball for all teams in all leagues shall be limited to twelve (12). This number will include any and all tournament games with the exception of the city tournament. No student may participate in more than (1) contest per day.

14. The Grand Rapids Area Athletic Council shall meet at the conclusion of each season to hear cases and impose penalties for any violation of the policies they set forth. Emergency meetings may be called at the discretion of the Commissioner and/or President of the Council.

15. Each member school shall have an athletic director appointed by its parish Board of Education, upon consultation with a recommendation of the principal, to be responsible to the Board and principal. (Adored 1-30-79)

16. Each league must submit their rules for the approval of the Grand Rapids Area Athletic Council prior to June 1 of every even numbered year. In alternate years, changes are to be submitted to the GRAAC two weeks prior to the first scheduled league game. (Amended 11-17-83)

17. Any student who has attained the age of 15 prior to September 1 of that school year shall not be eligible to participate in the athletic program.

Any student, who has attained the age of 13 prior to September 1 of that school year, shall not be eligible to play in any 5th grade, 6th grade, or 5th and 6th grade league.

Any student, who has attained the age of 13 prior to September 1 of that school year, shall not be eligible to play in any 5th grade league, or the 5th and 6th grade football league.

Those students who are over age may only participate at the next higher level. (Adopted 1-30-79)

18. Sanctions that have to be applied by the GRAAC shall vary according to the gravity of the situation. (Adopted 10-1-79)

19. Beginning with the 1980-81 football season, fourth graders are prohibited from participating in the Grand Rapids Catholic elementary football programs. (Adopted 10-1-79).

20. CCD students are excluded from participating in the Catholic Elementary School athletic programs. (Adopted 11-4-79)

21. All fall sports may begin practice on Monday, the week of August 15. Winter sports may begin practice on Monday, the week of November 15. Spring sports may begin practice on Monday, the week of March 1. Prior to these dates, a coach may work with a maximum of three (3) individuals at any one time. Girls' cheerleading shall be considered a sport and subject to these starting practice dates. (Adopted 11-17-83)

22. Each league must designate to the GRAAC prior to the completion of its current season, a league president who will preside over the league during the following year's season. Fall league meetings shall be held the second (2nd) week of August. Winter league meetings shall be held during the first (1st) week of November. Spring league meetings shall be held during the third (3rd) week of February. (Adopted 11-17-83)

Grand Rapids Area Catholic Schools Transportation

Transportation may be available for a fee to students who live near existing routes. Parents can contact the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Schools Transportation Office for information regarding schedule, fees, and restrictions. (Phone: 246-6470)

Transportation Policy and Rules

The Grand Rapids Area Catholic Schools Transportation provides information concerning eligibility, establishing routes, severe weather and responsibility of students, parent, transportation, and school staff. St. Thomas School will assist parents in resolving questions related to Grand Rapids Area Catholic Schools Transportation.

Student Pick-up

For safety sake – students are dropped off or picked up in the church east parking lot or at the gate off of Fulton Street only. AM Kindergarteners may be picked up in front of school at 11:00 a.m. dismissal. Grace Street is for Preschool and PM Kindergarten drop off and pick up **ONLY**.