

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL Parent/Student Handbook



Revised 2011

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ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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St. Thomas the Apostle School
1331 N. Main St.
Elkhart, IN 46514

Welcome to St. Thomas the Apostle School, a school with a distinct Catholic identity dedicated to academic excellence. This Parent/Student Handbook provides you with information relevant to the day-to-day operation of our school. Please read the handbook carefully and familiarize yourself with its contents. The policies and procedures in this handbook are not intended to be all inclusive; not all aspects of the school are covered nor are procedures included to cover all school situations. The handbook is, though, a guide that will answer most of your questions about our school.

The St. Thomas staff is dedicated to the fulfillment of its mission. The mission was developed by the school staff and is child-centered. The staff is dedicated to guiding each of our students in living the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and will provide diverse and challenging learning experiences so that academic excellence will be achieved and qualities of lifelong learning will be developed.

Parents are a child's primary educator and the school welcomes a partnership with parents. Our mutual efforts will assure your child the best that a Catholic education offers. Please participate in your child's school experience. By attending school liturgies and prayer services, volunteering your time to help in the school, and regularly supervising your children's homework, you will gain a first hand understanding of your child's academic pursuits and the school's Catholic identity.

St. Thomas the Apostle School is grateful to our parents for their continued support. We are committed to providing an excellent Catholic education for your children and to continuous improvements in our effort to do so.

Please feel free to contact the school office whenever you have questions about the school, its policies, and its procedures. We welcome your questions and comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Kolakovich
Principal

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School on the campus of St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Elkhart is a Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic elementary and middle school operating under the Diocese of Fort Wayne/South Bend.

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as the faculty. Vatican II texts are used so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At St. Thomas, we attempt to “teach as Jesus did.”

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the state of Indiana standards, are followed for the teaching of secular subject areas. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. There is emphasis upon principles and understanding rather than fact, on learning through problem solving rather than mechanical repetition. The school strives to offer programs that make use of many sources of reading materials, a wide variety of audio-visual and technology tools, and a multi-text approach to the content areas.

Vision

St. Thomas students have foundational skills bridging faith and education that promote life-long learning.

Mission

The mission of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School is to guide each child in living the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Academic excellence will be achieved through diverse and challenging learning experiences. Each student will also develop the qualities necessary to face the demands of life, while serving God and others, in an ever changing society.

Beliefs

We Believe that through the collaborative efforts of school staff, religious leaders, students, parents, and community stakeholders, St. Thomas students will achieve faith foundations and academic excellence, by understanding

- that the purpose of Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School is to communicate Christ to students so that their attitudes toward others will be that of Christ;
- that the **whole child** is to be educated;
- that all children registered at St. Thomas will be provided an opportunity for educational growth to the optimum degree of their potential;
- that the school shares with the home, the Church, and the community the responsibility for the wholesome development of the child;
- that all children have a right to a safe school environment, and the school community has the responsibility to maintain this environment;
- that to these ends, the school should develop in children the knowledge, skills, habits, understandings, attitudes, and character traits essential for a rich personal faith life – *“I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly!”*
- that the school should assist students to discover, in the light of their faith, their special vocation to live responsibly in a community with others, to share their personal lives with God, and to achieve responsible, contributing citizenship.
- that no one should be excluded from St. Thomas the Apostle School on the basis of race, ethnic background, or economic status.
- that school staff will provide a challenging, rigorous, academic experiences for diverse learners.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, we ask parents:

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child

- Gets to bed early on school nights,
- Arrives at school by 7:40 and is picked up on time at the end of the day,
- Is dressed according to the school uniform/dress code,
- Completes assignments on time, and
- Has a nutritional lunch each day.

To actively participate in school activities such as Parent/Teacher Conferences.

To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student.

To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy.

To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.

To complete and return to school any requested information promptly.

To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education.

To support the religious and educational goals of the school.

To support and cooperate with the discipline policies of the school.

To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

At St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, we consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is our right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life, mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Your choice of St. Thomas the Apostle School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with St. Thomas the Apostle School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Kindergarten through 8th grade), your child needs constant support from parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical attributes. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partners in the quest of challenging, yet nurturing, the student to reach his/her full potential. It is vital that parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you, as a parent, must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause students to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs to have adults who offer understanding, guidance, and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. The boundaries and limits provided through discipline give your child both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major test, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility extends to times of absence.

Let us work together through out the school year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to reach his/her potential and in developing the qualities necessary for your child to face the demands of life, while serving God and others, in an ever changing society.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS FOR 2011-2012

Problem Solving - All student shall demonstrate an improved application of problem solving skills across the curriculum.

Respectful Behavior - All students shall demonstrate behaviors that are respectful and considerate of others in an environment that nurtures love of Christ, the Church, and Christian values.

Accreditation

St. Thomas is a fully accredited school. Its Indiana accreditation is obtained through its North Central Association accreditation efforts.

Web Site

The St. Thomas web site, www.stselkhart.com, contains valuable school information. Parents and students are encouraged to visit the web site on a regular basis.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The principal/pastor is the final recourse and reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents will be given prompt notice of handbook amendments through normal school communication channels

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School General Information

SCHEDULE

7:00 a.m.	Doors open Students assemble in the gymnasium area, by grade level
7:40 a.m.	All students admitted to classrooms
7:45 a.m.	All students are expected to be in the classrooms.
7:50 a.m.	Tardy bell, morning prayer, classes begin for all grade levels
8:00 a.m.	Mass, Tuesday: Grades 1 through 5 Mass - Wednesday: Grades 6 through 8 Mass, Friday: All school
10:55 a.m.	Lunch grades 1-3
11: 30 a.m.	Lunch grades K, 4, 5
12:05 p.m.	Lunch grades 6,7, 8
2:45 p.m.	Afternoon Prayer
2:50 p.m.	Dismissal, all grades
3:00 p.m.	Students must leave the building and/or premises or report to the Aftercare School Program.

DISMISSAL

School is regularly dismissed at 2:50 p.m. **ALL STUDENTS MUST LEAVE THE BUILDING PROMPTLY AND NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m.** Students who do not leave the building must report to the After School Program promptly at 3:00 p.m. St. Thomas School will not be responsible for any supervision after this time. This rule applies to all after school practices and activities as well. Students are not to be in the building unless under the supervision of a teacher or sponsoring adult. If an activity starts later than 3:00 p.m. participating students must report to Aftercare until sponsor/adults come and get the participants. Participants will be charged the usual Aftercare fee.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

St. Thomas the Apostle School offers after school care. Any student, **for a fee**, will be allowed to stay at school from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. under the supervision of a qualified coordinator. Arrangements must be made, in advance, in the school office. Weekly statements will be sent home for payment.

On occasion, extra-curricular activities, including athletic practices and games, are scheduled after school. Students, if not engaged in a supervised activity, are to be checked into Aftercare if they remain on the school premises.

The school has procedures in place for students to be checked out of Aftercare to attend the practice or activity. The procedure allows coaches to check students out of Aftercare. The procedure allows any adult who has been identified in writing by parents to check students out of Aftercare.

If a parent wishes a child to attend an activity or event that is not covered by the above identified procedures, **the parent must provide a written directive stating when the child is to be released from Aftercare and to whom.**

AFTERCARE CONTINUED

Students will not be allowed to leave Aftercare to attend or participate in any activity without following school guidelines. If a parent wishes a student to be released from Aftercare to someone other than the parent, the parent is required to provide authorization. The authorization may be written or by telephone call. The call may be made to the school office during school hours or directly to the Aftercare Supervisor after school hours at 361-4848.

SAFE SCHOOL

Because we are concerned with the safety and the well-being of our students, our school and the diocese have prepared a Safe and Secure School Plan which addresses events which may threaten our students. During the school year, the school conducts drills for fire and severe weather as well as lockdown drills. In addition, the plan provides for responding to crisis situations, such as identifying evacuation sites and providing support for students, parents and staff, including counseling services provided through school counselors on the staff at Catholic Charities.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Academic Program of St. Thomas the Apostle School is based on the belief that each child should be encouraged to reach the highest potential he or she can attain in mastering the basic skills of an elementary education. These skills are taught with the understanding that all aspects of life and learning are permeated with the principles of Christianity. The CORE curriculum is in accordance with State and Diocesan regulations. The CORE Curriculum includes instruction in Religion, Mathematics, Reading, English, Social Studies, Science and Health. All K-8 students also experience Music, Art, Physical Education, and Computer as specialty area classes. In order to be promoted to another grade within or graduate from St. Thomas the Apostle School, students must have a passing yearly average in all basic and specialty subject areas.

HOMEWORK

Home study is an essential part of each pupil's educational program. Each student must be expected to spend time in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. Some assignments are long range in nature and require planned study time for their completion. Planned study eliminates the necessity of spending too much time in completing an assignment the day before it is due.

MAKE-UP WORK

When a student misses school for an excused absence, assigned school work, tests, and quizzes may be completed with no loss of credit. (It is important that students and parents understand that the classroom instruction that occurred during the absence cannot be replicated for the absent student upon his/her return to school.) The make-up work must be completed within a prescribed period. A student is allowed one day, following the return to school, for each absence date to complete the make-up work. (for example: If a student is absent for two school days, the student has two days **after** returning to school to complete the make-up work. [The student is absent Friday and Monday and returns to school on Tuesday. The student would have Wednesday and Thurs-

day to complete the work with the work being due on Friday.] A single day absence example is as follows: The student is absent on Tuesday and returns to school on Wednesday. The student would have Thursday (the day after returning to school) to complete the work with the work being due on Friday.)

At K-5th grade, the teacher provides and directs the make-up work that is required. At the middle school level, the student is responsible for obtaining make-up work upon his/her return to school following an excused absence. The student planner becomes the tool for guiding make-up work. Each middle school teacher works with his/her class and provides direction for planner entries. If a parent requests make-up work, a copy of a student's planner will be provided. Upon return to school, the student still has the responsibility to check with each teacher regarding his/her make-up work. Parent questions about make-up work related to a specific absence may be emailed to the teacher(s).

GRADING SCALE, GRADES 1-8

Grade/Percentage	Grade Points	
	Full	Half
A..... 95-100	4.00	2.00
A- 93-94	3.66	1.83
B+ 91-92	3.33	1.67
B..... 85-90	3.00	1.50
B- 83-84	2.66	1.33
C+ 81-82	2.33	1.17
C 75-80	2.00	1.00
C- 73-74	1.66	.83
D+ 71-72	1.33	.67
D 65-70	1.00	.50
D- 63-6466	.33
F..... Below 63		

REPORT CARDS - Report cards are issued at the conclusion of each trimester. Each trimester period is twelve weeks in length and contains approximately 60 instructional days. Parent/Teacher Conferences are conducted following the first and second grading periods.

STS POLICY 2008 - 2 ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School students who achieve a high level of academic success are to be recognized for achievement. The academic recognition program will recognize various levels of student achievement.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The school recognizes academic achievement by individuals. This recognition takes different forms, depending on the grade level of the student. Included in this program is the Honors Banquet sponsored by the Service Clubs of Elkhart for 7th & 8th grade students. An Awards Program is held at the end of the school year for grade levels using GPA. Students achieving Honor Roll status are recognized in the STS News each trimester.

Honor Roll - Students in grades 5-8 are recognized for the students' demonstration of excellence throughout the school curriculum and school experience. The following restrictions apply and eliminate a student from the honor roll:

- *F grades
- *B- and below in conduct at grade 5
- *A second detention at grades 6-8
- *Suspension (either in school or out of school)

Spartan Honor Roll - 3.80 GPA or higher.

Honor Roll - 3.50 - 3.79 GPA

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

The children receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time in the second grade. Parents are involved with their children in preparing for these sacraments. Children are prepared in the 8th grade for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Parents are involved in the preparation for this sacrament.

ALTAR SERVERS

All Catholic students will have the opportunity to be trained for the ministry of serving at the altar, beginning in Grade Five. Anyone interested should contact the Religious Education Office.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Students at St. Thomas participate in ISTEP (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) in grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The ISTEP tests are administered in March and April. K-8 students will take the NWEA (Northwestern Evaluation Association) Online MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test. This is a norm-referenced assessment that measures student achievement in Reading and Mathematics. It will be administered online in the Fall and the Spring. Local assessments, designed by the school staff, are administered in the fall and the spring for reading and math problem solving at each grade level, Kdg.—8.

EXTRA CURRICULAR

The extra-curricular programs at St. Thomas the Apostle School are student government, various levels of scouting for boys and girls, Quiz Bowl, newspaper, altar servers, band, and seasonal athletic teams for both boys and girls.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Through the local public school district, Saint Thomas the Apostle School shares in the testing services of a School Psychometrist. No child is tested without the written consent of the parents.

STUDENT TELEPHONE ACCESS

Students may make emergency telephone calls to parents during the school day, but they must obtain permission from a staff member to use a school telephone. Parent telephone contact with students during the school day is discouraged. The office will deliver emergency messages from parents to students. ***Cell phones, pagers, ipods, music devices and other electronic communication devices are prohibited at school. Use of such devices at school will result with the device being confiscated and destroyed.***

LUNCH PROGRAM

MILK : Milk is included in the price of lunch. Milk is also available in the ala carte line for an additional fee. Application for FREE MILK may be made during the first week of school.

LUNCH TIMES: Pupils are not permitted to leave the school property to buy their lunch unless accompanied by a parent or guardian who will have followed the procedure listed under "attendance." A menu item and snacks are provided on school days for convenience. Menus (order forms) for the following week are distributed each Wednesday and are returned by Friday.

BUS

Through the cooperation of the Elkhart Community Schools, there is limited bus service available to the students of St. Thomas the Apostle School. Children who live along a regular public school route may ride those buses if space is available to them. There is also limited service for those living in the North-east section of the Parish. For further information, contact the office. Bus service is only available at dismissal time. **Students from St. Thomas the Apostle School are subject to the code of conduct set down for the community schools. Children will be denied the privilege of bus service if they do not conform to these regulations.**

If a student is designated to ride a public school bus, the school assumes that the child will ride the bus every day. If a parent does not wish the child to ride the bus, the school must have a written note from the parent stating whether the child is to be picked up in the parking lot or go to Aftercare. A note covering all children in the family is to be sent to the school office. The office will notify the teacher(s) so that the child is directed to the correct location at dismissal time.

STS POLICY 2008—10 MEDICATION POLICY

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School shall follow Indiana State Law and Diocesan policies regarding the administration of medicine to students.

MEDICATION

Non-prescription medication administered at school must be sent to school in its original container and must be accompanied by a written note from the parent. Prescription medication administered at school must be sent to school in its original container and must be accompanied by a written note from the doctor. All medication shall be kept in the school office.

PHYSICAL EXAM FORMS

Students entering kindergarten **MUST** present a physical exam form signed by the doctor. Students entering from other schools are required to present such a form unless it is included in their forms from the previous school.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Upon enrolling in the school, pupils in grades K through 8 **MUST** present an immunization form signed by the doctor, on the entrance day. These forms are available in the office. All students entering grade 6 must have proof of MMR on the first day of school.

VISION, HEARING, AND SCOLIOSIS SCREENING

Elkhart County offers vision and hearing screening to the following: Vision; K,1, 3, 5, 8. Hearing; K, 1, 4, 7. Children in grades other than those regularly scheduled may be tested on request from parents. If you wish your child tested, please notify the homeroom teacher.

INSURANCE

All students are covered by school insurance.

CONTACT WITH TEACHERS

Teachers welcome your concern and interest in school. They are more than happy to meet with you and discuss your son's or daughter's progress. The procedure for contacting a teacher is:

1. By phone at 264-4855.
2. By email
3. Through a note sent with the child requesting the teacher to call you.
4. Should a parent/guardian need to contact a teacher during school hours, we require that you come to the office. Teachers are never free during the lunch period or during school hours. In the name of friendship and better communication, the teachers and principal invite each family to visit the school often. Please call the office to make arrangements.
5. To facilitate continuity of the learning process, parents are not to enter classrooms and interrupt the teacher during the teaching hours.

STUDENT VISITORS

All visitors must register in at the office. Students from other schools may NOT visit without prior approval of the Principal.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYS

STS follows the same emergency announcements as those put out by the Elkhart Community School System. Listen to our local radio and TV stations for the needed information. Whatever is announced for the Elkhart Community Schools will be followed at STS, including 2 hour delays.

STS POLICY 2008—8 FIELD TRIP POLICY

The school administration will pre-approve all school sponsored field trips. Approved field trips shall have specified educational objectives that are consistent with diocesan guidelines, approved curriculum, and state standards.

RECESS

St. Thomas students participate in an outside recess each day. Students are expected to have appropriate outerwear that meets the demands of the weather each day.

When the wind chill is below 20 degrees or the outside play surface is unsafe (ice covered) for children to play, students will have an inside recess. At grades K-5, the classroom teacher establishes rules for inside recess activities. At grades 6-8, students remain in the lunchroom and are provided with appropriate interactive board and card games.

STS POLICY 2008—9 BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS

St. Thomas the Apostle School shall provide Before-School and After-School Care Programs located on the school premises. The Before-School Care and the After-School Care Programs will be offered at times determined by the school administration. A fee, determined by the school administration, will be charged to parents of students participating in the After School Care Program.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS

Before School Care Program will be offered from 7:00 - 7:50 am at no charge to school families. The After School Care Program will be offered from 2:50—6:00 pm. Parents will be charged a fee for students to participate in the After School Care Program as determined by the school administration.

VOLUNTEER APPROVAL

The Diocese of Fort Wayne/South Bend and St. Thomas School adhere to a safe school policy. All school volunteers are required to be approved through a screening process. The process requires the volunteer to complete a volunteer application. The volunteer's references are checked and a limited criminal history check is completed. Following these processes, volunteers are approved to work with or near children during the school day or outside the school day in school approved extra curricular activities.

STS POLICY 2008 - 12 VOLUNTEER STUDENT SUPERVISION

Adult volunteers who work with children at St. Thomas the Apostle School in both curricular and extra-curricular activities are expected to provide supervision that promotes school citizenship and is consistent with school behavioral regulations and expectations. Volunteers shall direct students to correct poor behavior or violations of school regulations and expectations. Volunteers shall direct the students to a staff member if disciplinary action is necessary.

STS POLICY 2008 - 6 STUDENT PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

Students at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School may be placed, promoted, or retained at a particular grade level for reasons determined by the principal, teachers, and parents and in accordance with Diocesan policies related to promotion and retention.

STS POLICY 2008—5 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Each student enrolled at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School is expected to arrive at school on time and on a regular basis in consideration of the academic pursuits of all students.

STUDENT “TARDY” PROCEDURE

Any student arriving to the classroom after 7:50 are considered tardy. Students who are tardy are required to report to the school office for a tardy admit to class. During each trimester, a student may be tardy three (3) times with no consequence. Upon the fourth tardy, and for each subsequent tardy, the student will be assigned an after school detention from 2:55—3:55. The parent will be assessed **\$5.00** for each “tardy detention” to cover the cost of teacher supervision. A student accumulating ten (10) tardies in any trimester will be withdrawn from school. Tardiness for doctor appointments scheduled early in

the morning will not count toward the accumulated tardy totals if the student has a note from the doctor's office. No tardies will be assessed on days that the administration determines to be "bad weather" days.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

No one is permitted to leave the school premises during school hours without written permission from a parent or guardian. If a child needs to leave school during the day for any reason, a note **MUST** be written by the parent and turned into the office before the student leaves. Those students leaving the building for appointments during the school hours are to be picked up at the Romain St. door. If an emergency should arise, permission must be obtained at the office and the student will then be summoned. Parents must enter the school and sign the student out. Students returning from or entering school from an appointment should have a note from the doctor or dentist.

HEAD LICE

Once the school has determined that a student has nits and/or live lice on the scalp/hair, the parents/guardian will be notified to come to the school and take the student home. At this time, the school personnel shall inspect the scalp/hair of any other students that the student infested with nits/live lice has come in contact with, including any siblings and car pool families. Once the school personnel have identified any other case of nits/live lice on another student, it is the responsibility of the school personnel to alert the other parent/guardian of this discovery and ask that parent/guardian come to the school and take the student home. The parent should begin the treatment for ridding the student of nits/live lice by using the appropriate lice hair shampoo and manually removing all nits/live lice by combing the hair with a nit comb and/or removing the nits/live lice by hand. The parent will also follow the guidelines for treating the home environment as noted in the informational letter provided by the school.

The student may return to school when the scalp/hair is "nit-free" and "live lice free". This means that the parent/guardian needs to inspect the student's scalp / hair and remove all nits/live lice that are present before returning to school that day. Upon returning to school, the school personnel will also check that student's scalp/hair. If the student presents with five or less nits on the scalp/hair and it is evident that the parent/guardian is cooperating with the school and taking the nit/live lice infestation seriously, it is at the discretion of the school administration to remove the five or less nits present and allow the student to return to school. However, if the student has returned to school with more than five nits, the parent will be notified to return to school to take the student home. If an active live louse is present on the student's scalp/hair, the parent/guardian will immediately be notified and the student will be dismissed to their care. If the school is unable to successfully reach the parent/guardian by phone, the emergency contact name provided to the school by the parent/guardian will be called. After three notifications to the parent/guardian to take the student home regarding the same nit/live lice infestation, it is at the discretion of the school administration to determine whether further absences will be deemed excused or unexcused. A physician's excuse may not be accepted as a sufficient notice for the student to return to school if the school administration has a legitimate reason to believe the nit/live lice infestation is not resolved. A notification letter to the school community of the nit/live lice infestation may or may not be issued at the discretion of the school administration.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE/RASH

If a student should present to school with any undiagnosed infectious disease, open lesion, or rash, the parent/guardian of the student shall be called to the school to take the student home. The student cannot return to school until the parent/guardian can provide a doctor's note to the school administration. The note should include the diagnosis of the infectious disease, open lesion, or rash and the treatment of care. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide any necessary equipment for the treatment of care and possibly, be responsible to come to the school to execute the treatment of care.

EMERGENCY CARDS

Each child in grades Kindergarten through 8 must have an up-to-date emergency card on file in the office. These are distributed at the beginning of the school year. If any changes in the information occur during the school year, parents should notify the school immediately.

STS POLICY 2008—7 DISCIPLINE POLICY

Any faculty/staff or administrator of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School may take disciplinary action to address student behaviors that violate school policies, regulations, or behavioral expectations.

DISCIPLINE

In guiding a child's growth in the proper formation of Christian values and attitudes, a positive approach will be emphasized. Self discipline, the key to effective overall discipline, is accomplished through firmness, consistency, and a *positive* outlook. Order and self discipline are the outgrowth of good teaching and parenting. This principle of self-discipline must start at home and be maintained in the learning atmosphere. In the final analysis, the combined efforts of teacher and parent are the key to achieving an atmosphere of responsible behavior and Christian attitudes. The student must understand that choosing one form of behavior over another brings with it certain consequences. Thoughtless or deliberate disregard of regulations on the part of the student will be addressed with corrective measures fitting the inappropriate behavior. Parents will be informed at the beginning of each year of the specific regulations for each department regarding everyday behavioral expectations. As stated in the school philosophy, all discipline at St. Thomas the Apostle School will be directed by School Administration and Faculty members with a constant attitude of true concern for the student and the students in the school.

St. Thomas uses Discipline With Purpose as a formal approach to developing consistency among the grade levels and classrooms. It is, though, the individual teacher's responsibility to develop standards of conduct that create an atmosphere conducive to learning. These standards should be in line with those set forth through the schools' philosophy, DWP, and staff determined expectations. Further, each classroom should develop a climate which fosters 1.) the integrations of religion with all learning experiences, 2.) the formation of a faith community among all members of the St. Thomas school family, and 3.) the preparation of students for effective service to the Christian community.

DISCIPLINE WITH PURPOSE

Discipline with Purpose is the disciplinary program used in all classrooms and areas at St. Thomas. The program emphasizes positive behaviors in a Christian setting. The program utilizes a card system that includes appropriate warnings for misbehaviors. Frequent communication with parents when repeated misbehaviors occur is accomplished through the “red card.” The “red card” identifies the inappropriate behavior, offers the students’ response to modify the inappropriate response, and requires a parent acknowledgement signature.

THE ST. THOMAS WAY

The Olweus bullying prevention program is incorporated into the school’s DWP efforts. Together, these two programs make up *The St. Thomas Way*. Within this framework, students are taught about bullying behaviors and provided with skills to prevent bullying in the school community environment. Students are taught that “a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.”

Students are taught the four rules of *The St. Thomas Way*.

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will help students who are being bullied.
3. We will include students who are left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home and expect them to do something about it.

The St. Thomas Way includes weekly class meetings. During the class meetings, the teacher is the leader. The class meeting may center upon teaching a particular DWP skill or a bullying prevention skill. The class meeting may be structured around student comments and student identified issues related to bullying prevention.

THE BIG THREE

Three anti-social behaviors are identified as the “Big Three.”

1. Physical or verbal abuse of others
2. Out of control behavior
3. Placing self or others in danger

If a student violates one of the “Big Three,” a referral to the principal is immediate. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Step 1 - The teacher immediately removes the student from the class or supervised group.
- Step 2 - The teacher completes a brief written report of the incident.
- Step 3 - The student is sent to the principal’s office along with the teacher’s written report of the incident.
- Step 4 - The principal meets with the student and determines an appropriate consequence.

DWP CARD SYSTEM

A card system is the basis for the DWP progressive discipline used at St. Thomas School. The card system evolves from a 4 card system used in the primary grades to a one card system used in the middle school.

Kindergarten

- 4 cards Blue - Warning to think over the action that caused the card to be pulled
- Green - 5 minute time out from activity
- Yellow - 5 minutes lost a next recess period
- Red - Child composes a note home to parent detailing what caused cards to be pulled.

First/Second Grades

- 4 cards Blue - Warning to think over the action that caused the card to be pulled
- Green - 5 minute time out from activity
- Yellow - Time Out - Student writes the skill
- Red - Time out and student writes a note to go home. The DWP form is attached

Third/Fourth Grades

- 3 cards Green - Warning - violated skill is circled
- Yellow - Student writes about behavior and the skill violated
- Red - Cards goes home. Student leaves the room to complete the DWP form that is attached to the red card.

Fifth Grade

- 3 cards Green - Warning - Student marks the violated skill
- Yellow - Student writes about the behavior and the violated skill
- Red - Student completes the DWP form that is attached to the red card. Form and card go home for parent signatures. Student may be required to call parent if appropriate.

Middle School

The Middle School does not utilize the DWP card system, but DWP Skills are taught, reinforced, and expected of all students.

- Step 1 Teacher will issue a verbal warning while communicating the specific nature of the infraction.
- Step 2 After school detention is assigned. Detention paperwork is sent home to be signed by parent.

Non-Structured Areas of the School, (including Specialty Classes), Lunchroom, Recess, and Aftercare

1 two-sided orange card

Step 1 - Student is verbally informed that he/she is to receive a card. The skill area is circled to indicate the nature of the infraction.

Step 2 - The supervisor provides a brief written description of the offense on the back of the card, and the card is given to the homeroom teacher.

Step 3 - The homeroom teacher at grades K-5 pulls a card in the classroom as though the infraction occurred in the teacher's own classroom.

Step 4 - At Grades 6-8, the specialty teacher discusses the offense with the student and may determine, if the student offense warrants, to give the student a red card and a after school detention.

Aftercare—The process for the Orange card, described above, is followed by Aftercare staff. In addition the following steps are to be followed:

Step 1 - The student receives and automatic timeout. The length of the timeout is left to the discretion and judgment of the supervisor.

Step 2 - The parent is notified of the incident and consequence when the child is picked up from Aftercare.

DAMAGED PROPERTY

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, building facility, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. A student will be assessed a fine or replacement cost for damaged or lost textbooks before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are issued.

PARENT/STAFF GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

According to Diocesan Guidelines, there is a Grievance procedure to follow when parents have concerns about their students.

1. Talk with the student's teacher
2. Talk with the principal
3. Talk to the Pastor

The parents should treat the faculty and staff with the same respect which the faculty and staff treat the students. The school is a partnership with the administrators, faculty, staff, and parents all working together to make the Catholic learning experience for the students the best it can be.

CHRISTMAS AND SPRING MUSIC PROGRAMS

Student music performances are presented at Christmas (grades 5-8) and in the spring (grades K-4) under the direction of the music teacher. **Student attendance at the Christmas and Spring Music Programs is required.** A large portion of the music grade, determined by the music teacher, for the trimester is based upon student attendance at the performance.

Academic Eligibility Policy for Participation in Y.A.C. Sponsored Activities at St. Thomas the Apostle School

The academic and athletic programs at St. Thomas the Apostle School work together in complementary fashion so that each enhances the other. Students must maintain a determined academic standard for participation in the Y.A.C. programs.

Athletic Eligibility

A student participating in Y.A.C. sponsored athletics must maintain a “C” (1.66) average in all subjects, including academic and specialty classes.

An “F” in any subject renders a student ineligible for participation.

Report Card Grades and Progress Reports

Report card grades are the only means used to initially determine a student’s athletic eligibility.

The Progress Report (electronically generated every two weeks) will not render a student ineligible to participate in athletic activities. The Progress Report serves to place the student on athletic probation and as a warning to the student and the student’s parents of potential grades.

Procedure for Identifying Ineligible Students

The following procedure will be used when students receive failing grades or when the academic average is lower than a “C” (1.66).

1. If a student receives an “F” or an academic average lower than a “C” (1.66) on a report card, the **student is academically ineligible** to participate in athletic programs for a minimum of five (5) weeks. (This five-week period begins with the day the report card is issued.) During this period, the student may not practice nor participate in any Y.A.C. sponsored athletic activity.
2. **Parents are notified** with a letter from the principal. A list of ineligible students is provided to the Y.A.C. athletic director who will inform each coach of any ineligible students.

At the conclusion of the period of athletic ineligibility, a **special academic status report** will be issued for the student. This special report will report grade progress in all classes. If the student’s grades at this time include no “F” grades and if the academic average is no lower than a “C” (1.66), the **student will regain eligibility** for athletic participation. The eligibility will be communicated to the Y.A.C. athletic director who will inform each coach of the student athletic eligibility status. If the grades on the special report are not high enough to regain athletic eligibility, the **student remains ineligible until the next report card is issued.**

The procedure described above, applies to each grading period.

3. If the last report card of the year or final grades of an incoming or current St. Thomas student do not meet the academic eligibility requirement, the student is ineligible for the first five weeks of the school year. At the end of the first five weeks of the school year, the student will be issued a special academic status report. If the student's grades at this time include no "F" grades and if the academic average is no lower than a "C" (1.66), the student will regain eligibility for athletic participation. If the grades on the special report are not high enough to regain athletic eligibility, the student remains ineligible until the next report card is issued.
4. Any student suspended from school is ineligible to participate in any Y.A.C. athletic activity for the term of the suspension.
5. In the event that a student's athletic ineligibility is reviewed, the review will be conducted by the principal. The principal's decision is final in all such reviews.
6. The school reserves the right to remove a student from an athletic activity if his/her grades are significantly below passing at any point during a trimester. The principal will determine the length of the suspension and will communicate this in writing to the parent and the athletic director.

STS POLICY 2008—11. TRAINING FOR ATHLETIC COACHES

The Youth Athletic Committee shall provide training in "The Play Like a Champion Today—Sports as Ministry" program for all St. Thomas sports program coaches. The Youth Athletic Committee shall cover the cost of training for the coaching participants.

STS POLICY 2008 – 14. PARENT TRAINING FOR ATHLETICS

A parent, or guardian, of any St. Thomas student wishing to participate in any St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School extra-curricular youth athletic program must participate in and complete the "Play Like a Champion today" education/ministry program, or their child(ren) will be prohibited from participating in St. Thomas sports programs. The Youth Athletic Committee shall be responsible for providing the said parent education/ministry program at a reasonable time, place, and cost.

STS POLICY 2008 - 1. UNIFORM/DRESS CODE

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School shall establish a uniform/dress code. The uniform/dress code shall detail appropriate student attire that promotes a positive school atmosphere, modesty in dress, and student engagement in serious academic pursuit. The St. Thomas uniform/dress code will focus on uniformity.

St. Thomas the Apostle School
Uniform Dress Code
2011-2012

St. Thomas the Apostle School requires that students follow a specific Uniform Dress Code. Compliance to the Uniform Dress Code is a condition of enrollment at St. Thomas the Apostle School. The school uniform is utilitarian and basic. As a Catholic school, St. Thomas promotes modesty in dress and appearance. All school clothing is to be clean and free of holes, frays, tears, or tatters. School clothing is gender appropriate. Sources of school apparel may be found at the end of the Uniform Dress Code.

Uniform Dress Code for Grades K - 5

Shirts - Boys and girls may wear plain navy blue or white polo shirts or turtlenecks in shirts only. Shirts may be long or short sleeved in style. Shirts must be long enough to be worn tucked in at all times so that the trouser waistband is visible. Solid white t-shirts may be worn under shirts but may not show anywhere except at the neckline. Shirts are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school. Shirts may be embroidered (available from several vendors) with the school name above the left breast.

Pants and Trousers – Boys and girls may wear solid color navy blue or khaki colored dress pants/trousers in a classic cut. Pants may be made of cotton blends, corduroy, or wool. Fabrics blended with spandex are inappropriate. No patch pockets, metal studs, zippers, notched cuff, elastic around the ankles, stirrups, cuffs dragging on the floor, bell bottoms, flares, or wide legs are allowed. The pants/trousers must fit and be worn at the natural waist with the waistband resting above the hip. Pants and trousers are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school.

Shorts – Boys and girls may wear navy blue or khaki walking/dress shorts of the same material and design as the pants and trousers as described above. The shorts are to be an appropriate knee length. Shorts may be worn from the start of the school year until October 31st and from April 15th to the end of the school year.

Skirts/Jumpers – Girls may wear solid navy blue, khaki, or Marymount plaid (available only through the Dennis Uniform Company) skirts, skorts, or jumpers. They may be made of cotton blends, corduroy, or wool. The bottoms of the skirts/jumpers may extend to an appropriate knee length. No patch pockets, metal studs, zippers, decorative embroidery, fringe or labels are allowed on any skirt or jumper.

Sweaters – Navy blue or white (solid in color) sweaters in cardigan, pullover v-neck or crew neck, and vest style sweaters are acceptable. Sweaters are to be loose fitting with a mid-hip length. No decorative accent colors, manufacturer or designer labels, ruffles, zippers, piping, embroidery of any size or description are allowed. Sweaters may be embroidered with the school name above the left breast. Sweaters must be worn with a solid colored polo style shirt that meets the guidelines for shirts found above.

Stockings/Socks – Socks must be worn at all times. Socks and tights must be plain (no fancy trim, logos or visible signature label marks) and of a solid color in white, navy or black. Socks must be visible above the top of the shoe. Leggings and thigh highs are not acceptable.

Belts – Belts are not required at grades K - 3. Belts are required at grades 4 and 5 must be either black or brown plain leather (includes woven leather belts) with a plain, unadorned buckle.

Shoes –Shoes are to compliment the uniform rather than detract from it. Plain leather dress shoes (low heels only) or athletic shoes and laces in any color combination of brown, gray, black, white, or navy blue are acceptable. No prints or patterns that detract from the school uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school.

Other Regulations

Boys – A watch, ring, and a cross or medal on a metal chain are acceptable. No earrings are allowed. Hair is to be well groomed and styled with the sides no longer than the bottom of the ear, the back cut in a manner that no hair falls onto the shirt collar, and bangs must be cut above the eye brow. Fads, extreme styles, unnatural colors, tails, or designs shaved into the hair are not permitted. No hats/caps are to be worn in the school building.

Girls – A watch, ring, small ear rings (no dangles or hoops), and a cross or medal on a metal chain are acceptable. Hair adornment (limited to solid colors in forest green, navy blue, black, brown, white or Marymount plaid) is to complement the uniform rather than detract from it and may not include long, flowing ribbons or bands. Hair should be well groomed. Bangs must be either cut above the eye brow or pulled back so that the bangs do not cover any part of the eyes. Extreme or fad hair styles (including corn row braided hair with beads or other ornamental items) or unnatural hair colors are not permitted. Make-up, including lip gloss and nail polish, is prohibited at grades K – 5.

Contact Lenses – Special effect contact lenses, including halogen lenses, are not appropriate for school wear.

Gym Wear – Required to Participate in Gym Classes

Grades Kindergarten – 2nd – Students in these grades are to come to school dressed for gym to save valuable instructional time that would otherwise be spent on changing in and out of gym wear to regular clothing. It is imperative that students be dressed properly for gym class to ensure safety and freedom of movement during gym activities.

Students are to wear gym shoes and socks.

Students are to wear a pair of dress code appropriate tie or Velcro athletic shoes and socks. Color restrictions do not apply. No prints or patterns that detract from the school/gym uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school/gym. These shoes are to be worn exclusively in the gym. The shoes need to have non-marking soles that are not slippery. Try them out in the store before purchasing. Maroon or gold short

sleeved solid t-shirts with no printing or design except the St. Thomas insignia, if desired.

Maroon or gold shorts

Students may wear sweat pants and sweatshirts instead of shorts in cooler weather. The sweat pants may be maroon, gold or gray.

All gym clothing is to have some type of student name or identification on the inside of the clothing.

Students not in proper gym clothes participate in gym class but will receive an "F" grade for the day

Grades 3rd – 5th – Students will be required to change clothes for gym class. Students are to wear gym shoes and socks.

Students are to wear a pair of dress code appropriate tie or Velcro athletic shoes and socks. Color restrictions do not apply. No prints or patterns that detract from the school/gym uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school/gym. These shoes are to be worn exclusively in the gym. The shoes need to have non-marking soles that are not slippery. Try them out in the store before purchasing. The gym shoes (following the same guidelines as established for athletic shoes in uniform/dress code) must be used only for gym and not worn as street shoes.

Maroon or gold short sleeved solid t-shirts with no printing or design except the St. Thomas insignia, is desired.

Maroon or gold shorts

Students may wear sweat pants instead of shorts in cooler weather. The sweat pants may be maroon, gold or gray.

All gym clothing is to have some type of student name or identification on the inside of the clothing.

Students not in proper gym clothes participate in gym class but will receive an "F" grade for the day

Girls Uniform Dress Code for Grades 6 – 8

Shirts - Girls may wear plain navy blue or white polo shirts in solids only. An additional shirt option for middle school students is a black polo shirt with a school monogram on the sleeve. (This shirt is available only by special order through the school office for \$18.) Shirts may be long or short sleeved in style. Shirts must be long enough to be worn tucked in at all times so that the pant waistband is visible. Solid white t-shirts may be worn under shirts but may not show anywhere except at the neckline. Shirts are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school. Shirts may be embroidered (available from several vendors) with the school name above the left breast.

Pants – Girls may wear solid color navy blue or khaki colored dress pants in a classic cut. Pants may be made of cotton blends, corduroy, or wool. Fabrics blended with spandex are inappropriate. No patch pockets, metal studs, zippers, notched cuff, elastic around the ankles, stirrups, cuffs dragging on the floor, bell bottoms, flares, or wide legs are allowed. The pants must fit and be worn at the natural waist with the waistband resting above the hip. Pants are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school.

Shorts – Girls may wear navy blue or khaki walking/dress shorts of the same material and design as the pants described above. The bottom of the shorts must be no shorter than two inches from the floor when the student is kneeling on the floor and may not extend more than two inches below the knee. Shorts may be worn from the start of the school year until October 31st and from April 15th to the end of the school year.

Skirts/Jumpers – Girls may wear solid navy blue, khaki, or Marymount plaid (available only from Dennis Uniform Company) skirts, skorts, or jumpers. They may be made of cotton blends, corduroy, or wool. The bottoms of the skirts/jumpers may extend to a length no shorter than five inches from the floor when the student is kneeling on the floor. No patch pockets, metal studs, zippers, decorative embroidery, fringe or labels are allowed on any skirt or jumper.

Sweaters – Navy blue or white (solid in color) sweaters in cardigan, pullover v-neck or crew neck, and vest style sweaters are acceptable. Sweaters are to be loose fitting with a mid-hip length. No decorative accent colors, manufacturer or designer labels, ruffles, zippers, piping, embroidery of any size or description are allowed. Sweaters may be embroidered with the school name above the left breast. Sweaters must be worn with a solid colored polo style shirt that meets the guidelines for shirts found above.

St. Thomas Pullover – Students in the Middle School, grades 6, 7, and 8, may wear the St. Thomas pullover (black with STS lettering) in place of a sweater. The pullover must be ordered through the school office. This item is limited to Middle School students.

Stockings/Socks – Socks must be worn at all times. Socks and tights must be plain (no logos or visible signature label marks) and of a solid color in white, navy or black. Socks must be visible above the top of the shoe. Leggings and thigh highs are not acceptable. Girls in grades 6 – 8 may wear flesh colored pantyhose.

Belts – Belts are required to be worn with pants and shorts. Belts must be either black or brown plain leather (includes a woven leather belt) with a plain, unadorned buckle.

Shoes – Shoes are to compliment the uniform rather than detract from it. Plain leather dress shoes (low heels only) or athletic shoes and laces in any color combination of brown, gray, black, white, or navy blue are acceptable. No prints or patterns that detract from the school uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school.

Other Regulations

Jewelry – A watch, ring, small ear rings (no dangles or hoops and limited to one ear ring per ear lobe), and a cross or religious medal on a metal chain are acceptable.

Hair - Hair adornment (limited to solid colors in forest green, navy blue, black, brown, white or Marymount plaid) is to complement the uniform rather than detract from it and may not include long, flowing ribbons or bands. Bangs must be either cut above the eye brow or pulled back so that the bangs do not cover any part of the eyes. No extreme or fad hair styles (including corn row

braided hair with beads or other ornamental items) or unnatural hair colors will be permitted.

Make-Up – Girls in grades 6 – 8 may choose to wear clear lip gloss. No other make up, including nail polish and artificial nails, is permissible for school.

Contact Lenses – Special effect contact lenses, including halogen lenses, are not appropriate for school wear.

Gym Wear – Required to Participate in Gym Classes

Students are required to change clothes for gym class.

Students are to wear one pair of dress code appropriate tie or Velcro athletic shoes and socks. Color restrictions do not apply. No prints or patterns that detract from the school/gym uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school/ gym. These shoes need to have non-marking soles that are not slippery. Try them out in the store before purchasing.

Maroon or gold short sleeved solid t-shirts with no printing or design except the St. Thomas insignia, if desired.

Maroon or gold shorts

Students may wear sweat pants instead of shorts in cooler weather. The sweat pants may be maroon, gold or gray.

All gym clothing is to have some type of student name or identification on the inside of the clothing.

Students not in proper gym clothes participate in gym class but will receive an “F” grade for the day

Boys Uniform Dress Code for Grades 6 – 8

Shirts - Boys may wear plain navy blue or white polo shirts in solids only. An additional shirt option for middle school students is a black polo shirt with a school monogram on the sleeve. (This shirt is available only by special order through the school office for \$18.) Shirts may be long or short sleeved in style. Shirts must be long enough to be worn tucked in at all times so that the trouser waistband is visible. Solid white t-shirts may be worn under shirts but may not show anywhere except at the neckline. Shirts are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school. Shirts may be embroidered (available from several vendors) with the school name above the left breast.

Trousers – Boys may wear solid color navy blue or khaki colored dress trousers. Trousers may be made of cotton blends, corduroy, or wool. Fabrics blended with spandex are inappropriate. No patch pockets, metal studs, zippers, notched cuff, elastic around the ankles, stirrups, cuffs dragging on the floor, bell bottoms, flares, or wide legs are allowed. The trousers must fit and be worn at the natural waist with the waistband resting above the hip. Trousers are to be loose fitting and appropriate for school.

Shorts – Boys may wear navy blue or khaki walking/dress shorts of the same material and design as the trousers described above. Shorts must be no shorter than two inches from the floor when the student is kneeling on the floor and may not extend more than two inches below the knee.. Shorts may be worn from the start of the school year

until October 31st and from April 15th to the end of the school year.

Sweaters – Navy blue or white (solid in color) sweaters in cardigan, pullover v-neck or crew neck, and vest style sweaters are acceptable. Sweaters are to be loose fitting with a mid-hip length. No decorative accent colors, manufacturer or designer labels, zippers, piping, embroidery of any size or description is allowed. Sweaters may be embroidered with the school name above the left breast. Sweaters must be worn with a solid colored polo style shirt that meets the guidelines for shirts found above.

St. Thomas Pullover – Students in the Middle School, grades 6, 7, and 8, may wear the St. Thomas pullover (black with STS lettering) in place of a sweater. The pullover must be ordered through the school office. This item is limited to Middle School students.

Stockings/Socks – Socks must be worn at all times. Socks must be plain (no logos or visible signature label marks) and of a solid color in white, navy or black. Socks must be visible above the shoe.

Belts – Belts are required for boys. Belts must be either black or brown plain leather (includes a woven leather belt) with a plain, unadorned buckle.

Shoes – Shoes are to compliment the uniform rather than detract from it. Plain leather dress shoes (low heels only) or athletic shoes and laces in any color combination of brown, gray, black, white, or navy blue are acceptable. No prints or patterns that detract from the school uniform are permitted. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights are inappropriate for school.

Other Regulations

Jewelry – A watch, ring and jewelry of a religious nature (cross or medal on a metal chain) are acceptable. No earrings are allowed for boys.

Hair - Hair is to be well groomed and styled with the sides no longer than the bottom of the ear, the back cut in a manner that no hair falls onto the shirt collar, and bangs must be cut above the eye brow. Fads, extreme styles, unnatural colors, tails, or designs shaved into the hair are not permitted at school. Boys must be clean shaven.

Contact Lenses – Special effect contact lenses, including halogen lenses, are not appropriate for school wear.

Gym Wear – Required to Participate in Gym Classes

Students are required to change clothes for gym class.

Students are to wear a pair of dress code appropriate tie or Velcro athletic shoes and socks. Color restrictions do not apply. No prints or patterns that detract from the school/gym uniform are permitted. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels, and shoes with flashing lights

are inappropriate for school/gym. These shoes are to be worn exclusively for gym. The shoes need to have non-marking soles that are not slippery. Try them out in the store before purchasing.

Maroon or gold short sleeved solid t-shirts with no printing or design except the St. Thomas insignia, if desired.

Maroon or gold shorts

Students may wear sweat pants instead of shorts in cooler weather. The sweat pants may be maroon, gold or gray.

All gym clothing is to have some type of student name or identification on the inside of the clothing.

Students not in proper gym clothes participate in gym class but will receive an "F" grade for the day

Dress Code Violations – Following the Uniform Dress Code is a condition of enrollment at St. Thomas the Apostle School. Violations of the dress code are treated as willful acts of disobedience.

The following steps are included in the dress code violations procedure:

1st Violation - Written notice is sent to the parents to be signed and returned to school.

2nd Violation – Written notice is sent home and student is advised of the consequences of a third violation.

3rd Violation – Student meets with principal, a written notice is sent home, and the student receives a lunch detention.

4th Violation – Student meets with the principal, a written notice is sent home, and the student receives two lunch detentions.

5th Violation – Student is withdrawn from school.

At the beginning of each trimester, the student starts with a clean slate.

The school administration and teaching staff have the final determination as to the appropriateness of clothing and/or other regulations listed under the Uniform Dress Code.

Sources of Appropriate School Clothing - School apparel may be purchased from the following alternatives. Each of these alternatives provides a green shirt that meets the St. Thomas color requirements.

1. J. C. Penney Uniforms
2. Dennis Uniform Company
3. Lands End – Classic cut
4. French Toast Uniform Company

05/15/09

TUITION AND REGISTRATION

SCHOOL TUITION: Information concerning tuition can be received by calling the School Office.

LATE REGISTRATION POLICY: There is a \$25.00 Late Fee charged to all current school families who register after a given date each year.

TUITION PAYMENTS: Tuition costs will be determined by diocesan policy. Tuition payments are due on the 15th of the month unless a prior change in due date was made to your contract. **IMPORTANT REMINDER-WHEN THE 15TH FALLS ON A WEEKEND, PAYMENT IS DUE IN OFFICE ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE.** Business Office Hours: Monday—Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (Mailed payments will be accepted by the "Postmark Date".)

LATE TUITION CHARGES: There is a \$25.00 Late Fee charge if your first tuition payment is received after office hours on the day it is due. There is a \$5.00 Late Fee charge for all remaining tuition payments received after office hours on the day it is due.

POLICIES REGARDING OUTSTANDING TUITION OR OTHER FEES: While school is in session, if your tuition payment is 2 weeks late, you will receive a late letter, if payments are not made, or arrangements are not established for payment, your child/children will be excluded from school.

Report cards will be withheld if tuition payments are not up-to-date or if there are any other outstanding fees.

Diplomas will be withheld until all past due fees are paid in full.

If you are having difficulty in meeting your tuition obligation, or extenuating circumstances have arisen, such as unemployment, contact the pastor to review your payment plan.

PARISH DONATIONS: Parishioners are also expected to use their parish envelopes to contribute to the support of the parish, beyond the cost of the tuition, to send their children to St. Thomas School.

SPECIAL GIFTS: Special gifts are appreciated. Gifts can be assigned to specific educational areas.

St. Thomas the Apostle School
Registration Policy

The following policy has been established for the purpose of enrolling students to St. Thomas the Apostle School.

CURRENTLY ENROLLED: Preference will be given to children presently enrolled at St. Thomas, regardless of religion. Preference includes allowing kindergarten aged children of parents who have children currently enrolled at St. Thomas to register before new parishioners or applicants.

To register as a St. Thomas the Apostle parishioner the following procedure applies (the 3 R's):

REGISTRATION— as a Parish member
REGULARITY—of Church giving
RECOGNITION—is determined by the Pastor

Being an active member of this parish means:

PARTICIPATE at Saturday evening or Sunday morning liturgies on a REGULAR basis.

INVOLVED in sharing some of their time and talent in the service of the parish and school on a volunteer basis.

DEMONSTRATE a regular pattern of financial support of the parish through the use of their church envelopes.

CURRENT in their payment of tuition and/or fees.

REGISTERED as a member of St. Thomas the Apostle parish.

Registration Packets will be sent to St. Thomas the Apostle School parents before the registration period begins.

1. Registration packets will NOT be sent to any family that is not current with tuition and fees, or if arrangements have not been made.
2. The registration fee must accompany completed registration forms.
3. Payment of book and technology fees must be made by April 28th.

NEW REGISTRATION

New applicants for school registration will be accepted in the following order:

1. Parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle have priority following the registration of current families.
2. Applicants from surrounding Catholic Churches without their own school will have third preference.
3. Applicants from surrounding Catholic Churches with their own school will have fourth preference.
4. Applicants of other religious affiliation or no religious affiliation will have fifth preference.

STS POLICY 2008—13 KINDERGARTEN STUDENT REGISTRATION

The administration of St. Thomas the Apostle School shall determine the date, time and process for kindergarten student registration each year. The priorities for registration of kindergarten students are

- 1.) siblings of students currently enrolled at St. Thomas School,
- 2.) children of active, contributing members of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, 3.) children of active, contributing members of area Catholic churches, and 4.) other applicants.

TUITION ASSISTANCE: The financial assistance will be available to active PARISHIONERS of St. Thomas the Apostle only.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP—DIOCESAN POLICY

Enrollment in St. Thomas the Apostle School is subject to the approval of the Diocese and the St. Thomas School administration. In order to foster an environment which promotes the optimum educational and spiritual development of the student, every parent/guardian of each student is expected to act as a cooperative partner with the Diocese and School and comply with all policies and rules which are established by the Diocese or School. The School retains the right to rescind approval for the enrollment of any student if it determines that there is a lack of cooperation on the part of the student's parent/guardian and, as a result, the withdrawal of the student would be in the best interest of the student, the School, other students attending the School, or the fulfillment of the School's mission.

SCHOOL BOARD

The school board is established by the pastor, in accordance with diocesan policy, to assist him and the principal in the governance of the parish school. Once the board reaches consensus on a matter of policy, the decision is effective and binding when and if it is approved by the pastor. The board is consultative in the following sense: the members cannot act apart from the pastor and principal and cannot make decisions binding on the parish school without the approval of the pastor. Board policy and decisions shall be binding throughout the parish when they are accepted, approved and promulgated by the pastor. Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month except June and December.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

VOTING MEMBERS

There shall be eleven (11) voting members of the School Board. Nine (9) voting members of the School Board shall be appointed. At least six (6) of these members shall be parents or guardians of children registered at the school, and a maximum of three (3) shall be from the general membership of the St. Thomas the Apostle Parish community. The Presidents or designees of the St. Thomas Parent Organization and the Youth Athletic Committee shall also serve as voting members on the

School Board.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

There shall be three (3) ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board: the pastor or associate pastor of the parish, the principal of the school, and a teacher’s representative.

STS POLICY 2008 - 3 AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT POLICY

The administration or other named person of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School shall have the authority to implement all Board approved policies.

STS POLICY 2008 - 4 POLICY REVIEW

St. Thomas the Apostle School Board will review the school policies every three years and update as needed.

**Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
Policies**

STUDENTS

Enrollment (Diocesan Policy 4010)

I. School Admissions Policy

Diocesan schools shall comply with state laws and regulations regarding school enrollment and attendance to the extent possible, as consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church and diocesan policy.

II. Nondiscrimination Policy

Diocesan schools shall follow and promote an open enrollment policy accepting students without regard to color, race, gender, or national origin, and reasonably accommodate the disabled in its educational programs.

III. School Entrance Requirements

A child can be enrolled only by a person having the legal custody of the child. A certified copy of the student's birth certificate or a baptismal certificate shall be required for original entrance at all grade levels. Proof of legal custody may also be required in cases where a child does not reside with both natural parents.

If these required documents are not provided to the school within thirty (30) days of the student's enrollment or appear to be inaccurate or fraudulent, the school shall notify the Indiana Clearing House for Information on Missing Children (See P4030) and will cooperate with local authorities if the child has been reported missing.

The custodial parent or legal guardian shall provide the name and address of the school the student last attended, if any. The school shall request the records from the last school the student attended within fourteen (14) days of enrollment.

Written proof that the child meets state and county health requirements (immunization record) for enrollment shall also be required.

IV. Kindergarten Waiver

Any child who attains the age of 5 before September 1 of a school year will be eligible to enter the kindergarten program of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. If the child is younger than 5 years of age and the child's birthday falls no later than September 15 of the applicable school year, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child wish to enroll the child in a diocesan kindergarten program, they may attempt to do so by making application to the local Catholic school.

The appeal procedure will be handled in the following manner:

- A. The custodial parent or legal guardian applying for a waiver to the Kindergarten Entrance law, must complete a waiver form received from the local Catholic school. The parent/guardian must provide verification of the student's birth date at this time. Questions for the preschool teacher's letter of review will be distributed to the parents when they initiate the waiver process.
- B. The completed form and a letter of review by the child's preschool teacher will be submitted to the local school office no later than May 15 of the school year prior to the school year of the date of requested entrance.
- C. Determination of early entrance will be decided by the local school principal based on the following:
 1. Whether or not space is available in the kindergarten program at the school which the child will attend.
 2. Any and all information submitted by the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of the child with the application.
 3. A recommendation of the preschool teacher for the child's entrance. In the case of a child who did not attend a pre-school, the principal may require a conference with the kindergarten teacher, parent/guardian and *principal* about whether early entrance is in the best interest of this child.
 4. Administration of the Gesell Assessment of Developmental Readiness is optional for determining eligibility for an entrance waiver to kindergarten. In no case may the Gesell assessment of development be used as the sole determining factor for a decision about a waiver. Financial responsibility for the assessment is a local school decision.

NOTE: A child coming into a diocesan school from an out-of-state kinder-

garten program or an in-state kindergarten program and who does not meet the Indiana state age-eligibility requirement, should be admitted to a kindergarten program, unless it can be determined that enrollment in such a program was intended to circumvent Indiana law.

V. First Grade Entrance Requirements

A child entering first grade must be six years old on or before September 1. The academic program of the Catholic schools is such that a waiver for age is not acceptable unless the child has demonstrated the successful completion of a kindergarten program.

Students enrolling in a diocesan school after successfully attending kindergarten in another accredited/recognized school that has different age requirements shall be allowed to continue in school without interruption because of chronological age.

VI. Children with Exceptional Educational Needs

Children with exceptional educational needs requiring special class placement are accepted if their needs can be reasonably accommodated in the school. Initial enrollment should be on a tentative basis with the understanding that in the event the exceptional needs of the child cannot be reasonably accommodated by the school, the custodial parents or guardians will agree to enroll their child in another school system which can accommodate the special needs of exceptional children.

Ordinarily when a diocesan school cannot reasonably accommodate the exceptional needs of a child, a recommendation for special class placement will be made to the custodial parent or guardian by the principal, after consultation with the child's teacher(s). This recommendation will be either for special class placement within the Catholic school or referral to a public school for evaluation or placement. If the custodial parent or guardian does not accept the school's recommendation, it is expected that he/she will place the decision in writing. In some instances the custodial parent or guardian will be required to withdraw the child if the child's continued presence, in the opinion of school personnel, would pose an undue hardship on the student or the operation of the school, or poses a threat of harm to the student, other students or school personnel.

VII. Students or Prospective Students with Communicable Diseases

Catholic schools shall comply with all applicable state law and all Board of Health policies regarding school enrollment and attendance in relation to a student or prospective student having a communicable disease.

Prospective students who meet all entrance requirements may not be denied admission solely on the basis of a diagnosis of a communicable disease unless required by applicable state law or board of health policy; similarly, students may not be excluded merely on the basis of a diagnosis of a communicable disease.

However, as with any prospective student who is diagnosed as hav-

ing or is suspected of having a communicable disease, a child with a communicable disease may be excluded, if after an individualized assessment of the child's condition, in accordance with the school's communicable disease policy/procedure, it is determined that the child's presence in the classroom would expose others to significant health and safety risks.

Upon being informed that a child is diagnosed as having or is suspected of having a communicable disease, a review team consisting of the student; his/her parent/guardian; his/her physician; a physician representing the school, parish or diocese; and school or parish administrators will be established to determine whether the child's admission or continued presence in the school would expose others to significant health and safety risks. In making its determination the review team, will conduct an assessment of the child's individual condition. The review team's inquiry will include findings of fact, based on reasonable medical judgments given the state of medical knowledge about:

- A. the nature of the risk - how the disease is transmitted;
- B. the duration of the risk- how long the carrier is infectious;
- C. the severity of the risk- the potential harm to third parties;
- D. the probabilities the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm; and
- E. whether a reasonable accommodation exists and/or is required.

The review team must also take into consideration the scope of the problem, education-related civil rights, and the student's right to confidentiality.

The recommendation of the review team and the decision of the parish and school administrators shall be considered confidential and will be submitted for review only to the Superintendent of Schools, Vicar of Education, and diocesan attorney.

In the event it is determined that a child is unable to attend regular Catholic day school, the parish, school and diocese will assist the parent or guardian in locating alternative educational services and obtaining religious and catechetical instruction.

Attendance (Diocesan Policy 4040)

The diocesan schools consider the development of good attendance habits as a vital and desirable undertaking for two essential reasons. First, it is difficult for young people to learn if they are not in class: the teaching-learning process builds upon itself. Secondly, research shows that educational *achievement* is directly related to attendance. A student who misses a day of school misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved in its entirety.

I. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibility: Parent/legal guardians are responsible for having their children in school. Indiana law prescribes that parents must have their children in public or private school from the age of seven (7) until the date on which the child:

- A. Graduates;
- B. Reaches at least sixteen (16) years of age or less than eighteen (18)

years of age and:

1. the student and the student's parent or guardian and the principal agree to the withdrawal; and
2. at the exit interview the student provides written acknowledgment of the withdrawal and the student's parent or guardian and the school principal each provide written consent of the student to withdraw from school.
3. reaches the age of eighteen (18) years.

II. Absences from School

Absences from school shall fall into one of the four following categories:

A. Absences which are counted as present

1. Serving as a page in the Indiana General Assembly;
2. For students in grades 7 through 12, serving on a precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or political party on election day with prior approval of the principal;
3. Court appearances pursuant to a subpoena;
4. Active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days in a school year;
5. Placement in a short-term inpatient treatment program which provides an instructional program;
6. Homebound instruction;
7. Religious observances; and/or
8. For high school students, serving on the state standards task force. The student must provide a written verification from the chairman of the task force indicating the date and times the student was to be in attendance at the meeting and verifying the student's attendance.

B. Excused Absences

1. Illness of the student (with written statement by parent/guardian or doctor after 5 days)
2. Funerals
 - a. for death in the immediate family
 - b. for persons outside of the immediate family with parental permission
3. Medical and legal appointments - Such appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.
4. Out-of-school suspension (Make-up work is NOT accepted.)
5. School/college visits (2 days) - parents need to check with the individual school's policy for arranging such visits.
6. Prearranged activity approved by the principal.

C. Unexcused Absences

1. No parent contact with the school giving an explanation for the absence on the day of the absence.
2. No physician's note to excuse an absence once more than 5 days of absence have occurred (see Frequent or Prolonged illness below).
3. Family Vacations. (See D on the next page)

4. Absences other than those defined as excused.

D. Family Vacation Absence

When students are absent from school for family vacations, the following form is to be completed by the parent.

Pursuant to Diocesan Policy 4040, certain school absences are determined to be unexcused absences. School absence related to family vacations is one of the school absences determined to be an unexcused absence. St. Thomas the Apostle School has established the following policy related to the student absence for family vacations:

- In the event of a family vacation, the parent shall submit the following form to the school office **at least one week before the planned vacation.**
- A determination shall be made regarding make-up work for the unexcused absence. No make-up work will be allowed for school absences that extend the school designated Christmas Break and Spring Break.
- If make-up work is allowed, the teacher in grades K-5 will provide the students with make-up work on return to school.
- If make-up work is allowed, students in grades 6-8 are required to request make-up work from each teacher whose class was missed during the unexcused absence.
- **No school work will be provided in advance of the absence.**
- For family vacations of one to two school days, a student will have one day to complete the make-up work; for family vacations of three to five school days, a student will have three school days to complete the make-up work; for family vacations in excess of five school days, a student will have five days to complete the make-up work. In no case will the number of days to complete make-up work extend beyond five school days.

My child, _____
Student Name Grade

will be absent from school for a family vacation from _____to

- I recognize that this absence from school is an unexcused absence as defined by Indiana statute and Diocesan Policy.
- I understand that the classroom teacher is unable to replicate the instructional experiences that are missed during my child’s absence.
- I understand that the make-up work that may be required to be completed accounts only for the practical application of skills taught during my child’s absence.
- I understand that make-up work will be provided following the guidelines listed above.

III. Truancy

A student is truant when s/he is absent from school or class without the permission of his/her parent or guardian and the school. Students who are habitually truant shall be reported to the juvenile authorities in accordance with applicable state law and following diocesan procedure

Habitual Truancy may be evidenced by the following:

- A. Refusal to attend school in defiance of parental authority.
- B. Accumulating a number of absences from school without justification over a period of time, such as a grading period. Habitual truancy is not evidenced by a single isolated incident of unexcused absence.
- C. Three (3) or more judicial findings of truancy.

IV. Reporting an Absence

A parent/guardian shall contact the school to report a student's absence. Each school has established procedures for reporting absences. **Absences will not be excused and the student may be considered truant if the procedure for reporting an absence is not followed. (School: Absence must be called in before 8:00 am.)**

A written explanation for any absence and signed by a custodial parent/guardian is required upon the return of the student to school. The school is not required to provide credit for makeup of assigned work missed because the student's absence is unexcused or the student is truant.

V. Frequent or Prolonged Illness

If a student is absent for five consecutive days due to illness, or has contracted a contagious disease, a physician's statement is required in order for the student to return to school.

VI. Response to Irregular Attendance

If an irregular attendance pattern begins to develop, the school may use the following procedure to encourage the student's return to a pattern of regular school attendance.

- A. Call daily from school (secretary, principal, or attendance clerk), to parent/guardian to verify absence and to determine reason.
- B. After a student is absent 6 days per school year, a school administrator, attendance clerk, or counselor will make contact with the student's parent/guardian. The date and content of this contact shall be documented.
- C. After a student is absent over 12 days per school year, a conference shall be held with the parent/guardian and the student. An attendance contract may be established at this time and documentation shall be kept.
- D. After a student is absent over 15 days per school year, a referral shall be made to the principal. If the principal is unable to fully resolve the attendance problem, a referral may be made to the intake officer of the local Juvenile Probation Department.**

Grounds For Suspension or Expulsion of Students (Diocesan Policy 4520)

- I. The grounds for suspension or expulsion below apply to student conduct which occurs:
 - A. On school grounds;
 - B. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
 - C. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;
or
 - D. At any other time when the principal determines that the student's conduct either causes harm or could potentially cause harm to the other students, school employees or property, or the reputation of the School or the Diocese.
- II. The following types of student conduct constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion subject to the school 's provisions for disciplinary review contained in P4530. This listing is not intended to be exhaustive of all types of conduct:
 - A. Any conduct which, in the opinion of school officials, is contrary to the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church.
 - B. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
 - C. Causing or attempting to cause damage to property belonging to any other person, student, school employee or the school, stealing or attempting to steal property belonging to any other person, student, school employee, or school.
 - D. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way that, in the opinion of school officials could cause physical injury to any person.
 - E. Threatening or intimidating any individual for whatever purpose.
 - F. Possessing, handling or transmitting a knife or any other object which under the circumstances and in the sole opinion of school officials could be considered a weapon. A student who must use a knife as part of an organized activity held by an organization that has been approved by school officials is exempt from this rule so long as the knife is used as a part of or in accordance with the approved organization.
 - G. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicant of any kind. The prescribed use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this rule.
 - H. Engaging in the unlawful selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes and/or educational function.
 - I. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision.
 - J. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Indiana that interferes with school purposes or education function.
 - K. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that are, in the opinion of

the school officials, necessary in carrying out school purposes and/or educational function.

- L. Possessing or using on school grounds during school hours an electronic paging device or a hand-held portable telephone in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
- M. Engaging in any unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity is considered by school officials to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

Disciplinary Review for Students (Diocesan Policy 4530)

Any student accused of wrongdoing in violation of school or diocesan policy that could result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the school will be given:

1. An explanation of what the student is accused of doing that is wrong; and
2. An opportunity for the student, in the presence of the student's parent(s), to respond to the accusations before either the principal or an impartial tribunal established by the school's administration for the purpose of making a recommendation on the matter to the principal.

The Principal (in consultation with the pastor in the case of an elementary school) shall be responsible to make a final decision on all such matters. The principal's decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

Parent/Legal Guardian Concerns Procedure (Diocesan Policy 2310)

To facilitate and promote the orderly and efficient resolution of concerns, parents/legal guardians wishing to address and/or question an academic area or situation regarding a specific teacher or classroom procedure must follow the grievance procedure below:

Step 1: Address the issues with the classroom teacher (or the person with whom he/she has the problem).

Step 2: Address the issue with the Principal.

Step 3: Address the issue with the Pastor (elementary schools only).

Step 4: If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then the parent/guardian should place his/her concerns in writing to the person involved and his/her supervisors (e.g. pastor and principal).

Parents/legal guardians should follow the steps set forth in this policy, except where a situation is specifically covered under another school or Diocesan policy which provides for a different reporting procedure (e.g. harassment).

Access to Official Student Records (Diocesan Policy 4170)

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) of 1975, any natural parent, guardian, or individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian of a student has a right “to inspect and review” his/her minor student’s education records, unless the school has been provided with a court order, State statute, or legally-binding document that specifically precludes such inspection and review. In addition, a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education will have all access rights that his/her parent or guardian would have had prior to that time. Absent such court order or legally-binding document, a non-custodial parent has the same right to inspect and review as a custodial parent.

I. All schools shall follow the diocesan policy and procedure regarding requests for access to student educational records, in accordance with FERPA.

A. A “parent” means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian.

B. An “eligible student” means a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institute of post-secondary education.

C. All student records are confidential and may be accessed only by those authorized to do so. (See I. G.) This includes health records, psychometric testing, and student academic records but does not include counseling reports/files protected by statute.

D. The following list of the types of personally identifiable information is on all student records. Such personally identifiable information will not be released without the prior written consent of the parent or eligible student unless such information is required by judicial order or subpoena and the parents are notified of such orders or subpoenas in advance of disclosure.

Name	Grades
Address	Attendance Record
Birthdate	Programs/Related Services Provided
Telephone#	Year Student Exited from Special Education

E. Parents and eligible students will be annually notified of their rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) through the local school parent/student handbook.

F. All student files are maintained in a secure place including files of graduates.

G. Parents are permitted to inspect and review any educational records relating to their child who is under the age of 18 and who has not entered college which are collected, maintained, or used by the agency under IDEA-B and State rules and regulations. These rights transfer from the parents to the student when the student becomes eighteen (18) years of age (i.e., an eligible student, or enters an institute of post-secondary education), unless the student has been adjudicated incompetent.

H. The parent or eligible student has authority to inspect and review records relating to the student and is given full rights of inspection and

review.

- I. The right to inspect and review educational records include:
 1. The right to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records by the school;
 2. The right to receive copies of the records from the school if failure to provide those copies would effectively prevent the parent from exercising the right to inspect and review the records;
 3. The right to have access to records within a reasonable time
(no more than 45 days after the request);
 4. The right to receive a copy of the student's educational record from the school to use in a contemplated or pending hearing within the school.
- J. The school may disclose a student's records without a parent's or eligible student's permission to the following individuals:
 1. Other school officials who have legitimate educational interests;
 2. Officials of other schools in which the student intends to enroll, provided that the parents are notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing;
 3. Authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and administrative head of an educational agency, or state educational authorities;
 4. Appropriate persons in connection with a student's application for receipt of financial aid;
 5. State and local officials to whom such information is required to be disclosed by state statute adopted within a certain time frame;
 6. Organizations conducting studies on behalf of educational agencies to develop, validate or administer predictive tests;
 7. Accrediting organizations;
 8. Parents of a dependent student of such parents as defined by section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code;
 9. In connection with an emergency, appropriate persons if knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons; and
10.
 - a. The entity or persons designated in a Federal grand jury subpoena;
 - b. The entity or persons designated in any other subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose.
- K. Each educational file has a record of each request for accesses to and each disclosure of personally-identifiable information from the file. The record of access includes:
 1. The name of the party,
 2. The date access was given, and
 3. The reason the party had in gaining access to the

information.

(The Record of Access and Review of Official Student Records form is found in the Administrative Handbook.)

L. Upon request, the parent or eligible student may obtain a copy of the record that was disclosed.

M. The school requires written dated consent of a parent or eligible student before it discloses personally-identifiable information from the student's educational record, except in the situations described in I.G. above. The written consent specifies:

1. The records that may be disclosed
2. The purpose of the disclosure, and
3. The person or class of persons to whom the records may be disclosed. (In such instances, the parent or eligible student, upon the parent's request, shall be given a copy of the record disclosed.)

N. The school permits a parent or eligible student to request correction of the student educational records where such information is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of student's rights of privacy or other rights. If the school decides not to amend the record, the school shall inform the parent or eligible student of its decision and his or her right to have hearing on such decision in accordance with FERPA. If the school, after the hearing, decides the record is not inaccurate, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a statement in record commenting on the contested information in record or why he or she disagrees with the decision.

O. In compliance with FERPA, the following statement will appear annually in the local diocesan school's Parent/Student Handbook:

Such natural parent, guardian, or individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian of a student may request the amendment of his/her student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the principal decides not to amend the record as requested, such natural parent/guardian/acting parent is entitled to a hearing on his/her request. 20 U.S.C. 1232(g); 34 C.F.R. Part 99

Annual Notification of Parental Access to Rights to Student's Records Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Any natural parent, guardian, individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian of a student of a diocesan school, or a student or former student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education has the following rights, (unless there is a court order, State statute, or other legally-binding document precluding these rights):

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Request the amendment of the student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or other wise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;

3. Consent to disclosure of personally-identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the regulations authorize disclosure without consent;

4. File with the U.S. Department of Education in complaint under 34 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning alleged failure by the agency or institution to comply with the requirements of the Act and this part; and

5. Obtain a copy of the diocesan policy (P4170 - Access to Official Student Records) and procedure for access to student's records. Parents or eligible students may review copies of the diocesan school's policies and procedures for inspecting and reviewing a student's records and requesting amendments to a student's records. These policies are kept in the principal's office of each diocesan school and may be reviewed during regular school hours.

See Procedure to P4170.

See "Record of Access and Review of Official Student Records" form in the School Administrative Handbook.

See Guidelines for Transcripts and Health Records, IDOE, January 1996; Care of Indiana Public School Records: A Records Creator's Guide, IDOE, September 1995.

Religious Issues (Diocesan Policy 4410)

The teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church are the guiding principles of behavior for all students while enrolled in a diocesan school.

I. Pregnancy—Elementary Student

Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and his or her life must be respected and protected from the moment of conception until natural death. When a student(s) becomes involved in a pregnancy, the Catholic school must act to provide assistance and support for the student and his or her family.

While the first responsibility for the pastoral, spiritual, and psychological care of students involved in a pregnancy belongs to the parents/guardians of the student(s), the Church and the school also bear serious responsibility.

When a pastor/principal is made aware that a student(s) is involved in a pregnancy, the following action shall be taken:

A. The pastor and principal should meet with both parties, the male and female, and their parents/guardians to investigate the situation and to assure them, if necessary, that the young people involved will be provided the opportunity to complete his/her education in the Catholic school without interruption.

B. Both parties, the male and female, should then be referred for pastoral counseling given by a priest and a social worker or psychological counselor. This counseling must emphasize the teaching of the Catholic Church on the sanctity of human life from the first moment of conception.

C. The pastor and principal must seek to assist the young people to ensure that the child is born, not aborted.

D. The pastor and principal should seek to assist the young people to ensure that the child is cared for properly before and after birth.

Because pregnancy is a public matter, the principal, in consultation with the pastor, reserves the right to undertake whatever additional action(s) seem appro-

priate for the well-being of the student(s) involved and the school as a whole.

II. Abortion

Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God, and his or her life must be respected and protected from the moment of conception until natural death. The Church views abortion as a grave violation of this principle and the Catholic school must convey the seriousness of this act by its inclusion of this issue in its teaching at appropriate grade levels and of its policies.

Therefore a student enrolled in a diocesan school who obtains a completed and verified abortion or who aids or induces another person in any manner whatsoever in procuring such an abortion shall be suspended immediately and may be denied the privilege of continuing his or her education in a diocesan school, as determined by the Bishop.

A confidential meeting shall be held with the student(s) and parent(s) involved, the pastor, the school principal, and a person(s) designated by the Bishop, if so desired. The purpose of this meeting will be to ascertain the facts relevant to the commission of the abortion, to provide appropriate pastoral assistance, and to make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding the student's suspension or expulsion.

Failure or Refusal of Parents/Guardians/Custodians to Participate in a Disciplinary Proceeding (Diocesan Policy 4420)

The failure or refusal of parents/guardians/custodians to participate in diocesan or school discipline proceedings concerning their student's improper behavior maybe considered educational neglect and the child may be considered a "child in need of services" in accordance with I.C.31-6-4-3-(a)(7), and, in that case, the matter shall be referred to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Public Welfare.

Student Accused of a Non-School Related Criminal Act (Diocesan Policy 4550)

A student accused of a non-school related criminal act which does not subject the student to suspension or expulsion pursuant to Policy 4520 is presumed innocent and no academic or disciplinary penalties will necessarily be imposed regarding that alleged criminal act unless the student is proven guilty or admits guilt through the civil law process.

Some circumstances, such as a need to protect the safety and/or privacy of the student or others, may necessitate such student's removal from the normal academic setting pending the outcome of the civil law process. In this case, the wishes of the student and/or custodial parents/legal guardians will be considered, but the final decision regarding removal is the principal's, after consultation with the pastor and/or Superintendent of Schools. Should such a removal be deemed necessary, a program of home study will be developed and imple-

mented for the student.

See P4520 - Grounds for Suspension or Expulsion of Students

Gun-Free Schools (Diocesan Policy 4560)

Students are prohibited from bringing firearms to school or school functions. Further, students are prohibited from possessing firearms en route to or from school or school activities or on school property. A violation of this policy carries an automatic expulsion from school of not less than one calendar year. This penalty supersedes any penalty which may be attributed by a local school discipline policy.

Principals will provide information to the Catholic Schools Office annually concerning the following:

A. A description of circumstances surrounding any expulsions imposed under the policy;

B. The number of students expelled from the school under the policy; and

C. The types of firearms concerned. For purposes of this policy the term “firearm” means:

1. Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; or
2. The frame or receiver of any such weapon; or
3. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
4. An antique firearm; or
5. Any destructive device. The term “destructive device” means:

A.) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas;

1.) bomb

2.) grenade

3.) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces

4.) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce

5.) mine, or

6.) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses;

B.) any type of weapon by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter; and

C.) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device in subparagraph (A) or (B) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

Substance Abuse (Diocesan Policy 4570)

The Diocese of Fort Wayne– South Bend recognizes that substance abuse (drugs and alcohol) is a disease and not a manifestation of character weakness. Persons afflicted with this disease are entitled to the same compassion and treatment as anyone afflicted with any other disease.

If a principal becomes aware of facts or circumstances which gives the principal reason to believe that a student is experienced a substance abuse problem, the principal and/or the school’s counselor shall meet with the student and arrange a conference with the student’s parent(s)/legal guardian(s) at which time the underlying problem and treatment options will be explored, as appropriate. The principal reserves the right to require that a student see a substance abuse counselor for an evaluation and to require that recommendations for treatment be implemented and followed by the student. If the student and/or parents/guardians refuse to cooperate, the principal may require the student to withdraw from school .

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the principal reserves the right to discipline a student, up to and including expulsion, for any violation of the school’s policies or rules and regulations of student behavior, regardless of whether the violation involved was related to a substance abuse problem.

Sexual/Racial Harassment Prohibition (Diocesan Policy 4580)

It is the policy of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to maintain a leaning and working environment that is free from sexual or racial harassment.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee of the Catholic schools to harass another employee or student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined in Section I of the Procedure to this policy or of a racial nature as defined in Section II of the Procedure to this policy. It shall also be a violation of this policy for any student to harass another student or employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined in Section I of the Procedure or of a racial nature as defined in Section II of the Procedure. The use of the term “employee” in this policy also includes non-employees and volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities.

Student Locker and Vehicle Searches (Diocesan Policy 4590)

All students who enroll in a diocesan school must consent to the search of their person and personal belongings, lockers, school desks, vehicles, etc., at any time and for any reason consistent with this policy.

I. Persons and Personal Belongings

The school reserves the right to examine the content of the student’s pockets, purses, back packs, book bags, or other personal belongings when an administrator has reason to suspect they may contain inappropriate or illegal materials or items. This right of inspection is effective at all times while the student is on school premises or at a school-sponsored event.

II. Student Lockers

All lockers, school desks, cloak rooms, etc., (“lockers”) made available for student use on the school premises, including but not limited to, lockers located in the hallways, physical education and athletic dressing rooms, industrial education classrooms, and art classrooms, are the property of the school. These lockers are made available for student use in storing personal effects such as clothing, coats, etc., school supplies, and personal items necessary for use at school, but the lockers are not to be used to store items which cause or could cause injury, an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or which are inappropriate or forbidden by federal state law or diocesan or school policy or rules. The student’s use of the locker does not diminish the school’s ownership or control of the locker. A student may not expect to have privacy in a locker or its contents.

The school retains the right to inspect the locker and its content to ensure that the locker is being used solely in accordance with its intended purposes.

Each school shall develop rules and procedures for the inspection and maintenance of school lockers.

III. Vehicles

Parking facilities may be made available to students upon approval of the school administrators. The school, however, reserves the right to establish rules for the use of such parking facilities including the right to examine the contents of any vehicles while parked on school premises when an administrator has reason to suspect that the contents of such vehicle may include items or elements which are in violation of school or diocesan policy, inappropriate, illegal to possess, have been stolen or lost, or present a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff.

Diocesan Internet Acceptable Use Policy (Diocesan Policy 4620)

I. Background

The Internet is an “electronic highway” connecting millions of computers all over the world and millions of individual users, allowing students access to communicate with fellow students all over the planet.

The Internet is an international collection of thousands of independent networks. It links tens of thousands of computers with the ability to communicate as if on a single network. The Internet provides a means for people to interact and associate with others.

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in many of our Catholic schools. The access is being offered as part of a collaborative project involving the school and local Internet Service Provider. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to the preparation of citizens and future employees during and Age of Information. It is expected that staff will blend thoughtful use of such information throughout the curriculum and assist students in the appropriate use of such resources.

Use of the Internet enhances the present curriculum of diocesan school. The Internet is a tool for motivation for increasing reading and writing skills. It is a resource for information and for classroom research projects and other studies related to the curriculum. It provides communication with professionals in every field.

II. School's Responsibility

The diocesan Catholic schools will each employ a statement of policy stating the Acceptable Use of the Internet in the school and utilize written Internet User and Permission Agreements. These written agreements are to be signed by students, their parent/guardians, and teachers. They outline the agreed to terms and conditions of Internet use and shall be kept on file. The policy specifically sets out acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, and access privileges. It also covers the penalties for violations of the policy, including security violations and vandalism of the system. A sample policy is provided for all schools by the Catholic Schools Office.

All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes and Christian mission of Catholic schools. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The network is provided for students to conduct research and to communicate with others. Access to network services will only be provided to students after they agree to act in a Christian, considerate and responsible manner.

Independent student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission forms that include guidelines for the student's responsibilities. Based upon the acceptable use guidelines outlined here, the catholic school administrators will deem what is appropriate and inappropriate and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request the principal to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts when violations occur.

The school is not liable for information stored on school diskettes, hard drives or servers; for information retrieved through school computers, networks, or on-line resources; for personal property used to access school corporation computers, networks, or on-line resources; or for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of Diocesan resources and accounts to access the Internet.

III. Acceptable Use

The use of the Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives, purposes, and mission of the Catholic schools. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for these networks.

Individual users of the computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. It is imperative that users comply with the school's standards and honor the agreements they have signed.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. School administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using the system responsibly and consistently with the acceptable uses outlined herein. Users should expect that files stored on school servers will not be private.

A defined network etiquette is followed.

IV. Unacceptable Use

The use of the Internet connection in the school is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The Catholic school administrators will deem what is appropriate and inappropriate, and their decision is final. The following are not permitted:

- A. Accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing immoral, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials.
- B. Sending or displaying unchristian, immoral, offensive, violent, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit messages or pictures.
- C. Using violent, abusive, obscene or sexually explicit language.
- D. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others.
- E. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks or attempting to harm or destroy data of another user.
- F. Violating copyright laws.
- G. Unauthorized use another's password.
- H. Trespassing in others' folders, work, or files.
- I. Intentionally wasting resources.
- J. Employing the network for commercial purposes.
- K. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal, state or local law, regulation, rule or ordinance.

Additionally, malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or

damages the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.

V. Consequences For Violations of the Privileges

The faculty, staff, or parents/guardians may request the administrator or designee to deny, revoke, or suspend a specific student user's access to the Internet and related technologies due to unacceptable use. Internet policy is stated in the school handbook. Additional disciplinary action may be taken at the school in accordance with existing disciplinary practice as stated in the school handbook and/or Diocesan policy. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

VI. Parents'/Guardians Responsibility

During school, teachers will guide students in accessing appropriate materials. Outside of school, families must bear responsibility for such guidance as they also must with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media.

It is the family's right to decide whether or not to apply for the student's independent access to an Internet account. The school administration and teachers believe that the benefits to students from access in the form of information and resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Parents/guardians accept responsibility for guidance of internet use, setting and conveying standards for the child to follow when selecting, sharing or exploring information and media. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any financial obligation incurred through the use of Internet and related technologies that is not specifically previously approved and included as part of the school's budget.

Parents/guardians are required to sign a Permission Form and an Acceptable Use Policy with their child. Students may not access networked computer services such as electronic mail and the Internet without this express permission. Individuals and families may be held liable for violations.

Parents/guardians will be notified that their children will be using school resources and accounts to access the Internet. Parents/guardians have the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access.

VII. School Professionals' Responsibility

The students will, in most cases, be closely supervised during usage of the network. Precaution will be taken that they are instructed on proper usage when they are working independently. Students may pursue electronic research independent of staff supervision only if they have been granted parental permission and have submitted all required forms. Permission is not transferable and may not be shared.

Staff will provide at least two class periods of training in the proper use of the network. They will provide developmentally appropriate guidance to

students during students' use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies related to the school curriculum. As much as possible, access to the network will be designed to point students to resources which have been evaluated by staff, and students shall be provided with guidelines and lists of information particularly suited to the learning objectives.

The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the ones who use it. They must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines include the responsibilities of not violating the privacy of other users, the right of free expression, and not plagiarizing other users' works.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the contexts of the school setting and the school's purpose and Christian mission. In some schools a limited precaution has been taken to restrict access to controversial materials by using special software (for example, Surfwatch or Cybersitter).

The technology facilitator is responsible for determining and uncovering incorrect usage of the Internet and also for informing school authorities and the student in question. The facilitator reserves the right to inspect accounts when there is suspicion of misuse. The student is responsible for adhering to all rules and guidelines while online with the Internet.

See (Individual) "Catholic School Internet Acceptable Use Policy"; "Internet User and Parent/Guardian Permission Agreement"; "Acceptance of Parent/Guardian Form", and "Acceptance of Sponsoring Teacher/Technology Facilitator Form" in the School Administrative Handbook.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke (Diocesan Policy 5430)

Effective January 1, 1995, all facilities (buildings which are enclosed) where kindergarten, elementary, and/or secondary education or library services are being provided to children shall be smoke free. No one, whether an administrator, an employee, a student, or a visitor is allowed to smoke in these buildings while such services are being provided to children.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: Please sign, detach and return to the school office the Parental Acknowledgment form located at the back of the handbook. This form must be returned to homeroom teacher's on the first

St. Thomas the Apostle School

Handbook Enclosure, Acknowledgment 2011-2012

Dear Parents/Guardians/Students,

In accordance with Diocesan Policy number P4320, please sign below to verify your receipt of a copy of our 2011-2012 Student/Parent Handbook, including the Discipline Policies and Expectations for Student Behavior. I also agree to support the staff and administration in their efforts to maintain these policies and expectations.

This signed verification MUST be returned by your child, to his/ her home-room teacher, on the first day of school, Wednesday, August 18, 2010. If more than one student from the family attends St. Thomas, the parent/guardian and oldest student should sign. The other students are to be listed and the parent/guardian merely initials next to each student's name. (Parents also list and initial for students in Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2.)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Parent/Guardian

Student

Student

Student

Student

Student

Student

**St. Thomas Parent Teacher Organization
Notice to Parents**

Parent involvement is essential to a good teacher. Various school activities would not function effectively without parents. Your help is sincerely and gratefully accepted. The presence of parents in various activities enhances our school atmosphere.

Thank You to the PTO for having this Hand Book Printed