

August 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School. The succeeding pages furnish a basic outline as to the policies and practices we follow in providing our families with a quality Catholic education for their children. We ask that you read through this handbook and share with your children those elements that are appropriate to them.

The faculty, staff, and administration of this school readily understand that parents are the first and most important *teachers* in the lives of their children. We also understand that we can only build on and contribute to the basic Catholic identity that has been taught and fostered in the home. For school and home to succeed in developing the most complete spiritual, social, and academic growth environment as possible, there must exist a relationship of mutual trust, support, and encouragement. Let us all pray that such is always the case.

Please feel free to contact us anytime as questions or concerns arise. While we make every effort to communicate clearly and frequently with parents, we are more than willing to respond personally to your inquiries.

Sincerely,

Deanne Roy, Principal
Mary Pomili, Assistant Principal

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MISSION

The school family of St. Thomas the Apostle School of Crystal Lake, Illinois provides faith formation and academic excellence for all students desiring a Catholic elementary education. The uniqueness of each child is developed and celebrated within an environment where God can be encountered. By teaching and modeling Gospel Values, we enable our students to become socially responsible Catholic leaders of the Third Millennium.

Teaching Philosophy

As an academic faith community reaching for excellence, we at St. Thomas the Apostle School commit ourselves to develop within our students a strong sense of faith community based on Catholic doctrine and Christian values. Students will be encouraged to dream and envision the future, with all the possibilities and challenges allowed to them to make a difference.

Each child will be respected as a unique person with special gifts and talents. We will strive to provide opportunities for each child to deepen his/her respect for each person. We will create a climate within the school that will enable children to build on their life experiences and to become problem solvers who witness their faith in an ever-changing world. We will enable students to use their gifts to make socially just, responsible, creative, and moral decisions that can impact their environment now and in the future. We will stress the importance of living a life nurtured by prayer. We will promote activities that foster Catholic leadership and services for our students.

School Governance

St. Thomas the Apostle School is run under the auspices of the St. Thomas the Apostle Church and the Diocese of Rockford and is supported by both St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parishes. Final authority for the school rests with the pastor of St. Thomas Parish through the school principal. In addition, the pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, who is an ex-officio member of the Education Commission, works very closely with both the pastor of St. Thomas and the school

principal along with the Education Commission, in formulating and supporting the Catholic philosophy of the school.

St. Thomas the Apostle Education Commission is a consultative body working directly with the pastors and principal for the purpose of providing our families and students with the best and most authentic Catholic education possible. The nine member Commission that comprises members from both St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishes have the primary responsibility of making recommendations on, and monitoring the long-term strategic direction of the school and its organizations.

It should be remembered that legally, as a parochial school, St. Thomas the Apostle School is subject only to the regulations and policies that are approved by the pastor of the parish and the Diocese of Rockford and is not bound by some of the practices, regulations, and laws that affect the public sector.

Admission

St. Thomas School does not have a traditional tuition program but has a Fair Ability approach to tuition. No child will ever be denied admission based on an inability to pay. To enter kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before September 1st. To enter PK 3, a child must be three years of age on or before September 1st. To enter PK 4/5, a child must be four years of age on or before September 1st. All students must have physical/health records on file with the school nurse before registration is considered complete. This includes a physical examination and all needed immunizations before entering preschool, kindergarten and sixth grade and dental exams before entering kindergarten, second, and sixth grades. A vision exam is also required prior to entering kindergarten. Students in all grades coming from out of state will also need an updated physical and immunization record. **All health records are due before the first day of school.**

Admission Policy and Enrollment

Enrollment: Children will be accepted in St. Thomas School based upon their ability to prosper in the educational program presented by St Thomas School. Final determination of enrollment will be the responsibility of the school administration.

Admission Priorities: Each school year, students who register but cannot be admitted to St. Thomas due to full classes in the appropriate

grade will be placed on a Waiting List. The Waiting List will be managed by the School Administration according to the following priorities.

- I. Returning Student - Any student who attended Saint Thomas the Apostle School during the prior school year and whose registration for the coming year is completed before the registration date for new students.
- II. Each sibling will be placed on the Waiting List for the appropriate grade immediately following any returning students in the order which a completed enrollment package is received.
- III. Baptized Children of ***Practicing Catholic Families** registered in Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton or Saint Thomas the Apostle Parishes as follows:
 - A. Siblings of Alumni who attended St. Thomas School for four or more years.
 - B. Children of Alumni who attended St. Thomas School for four or more years.
 - C. Children of newly registered parish families who are transferring directly from another Catholic School.
 - D. Earliest date of parish registration.
- IV. Children of ***Practicing Catholic Families** of other parishes, in the order in which completed enrollment forms are received.
- V. Children of non-Catholic families in the order in which completed enrollment forms are received.

Waiting List Administration: The admission priority list will be used to establish the waiting list for each year at the close of the scheduled Fair Ability registration dates. The waiting list for each year will expire on the last day of school for that year.

An Admission Review Committee consisting of the pastors of both supporting parishes and the school principal will review special enrollment situations which may affect the waiting list.

Enrollment deposits for waiting list students not admitted will be returned as soon as practical after the first day of school. Enrollment deposits will not be returned to waiting list families who decide to withdraw their names from the waiting list.

* **“Practicing”** shall mean families who regularly attend Sunday Mass and participate in the parish by giving of their time, talent, and treasure. Determination shall be made by known involvement in parish activities or programs, regular use of Sunday envelope and for families new to either parish, a former pastor or parish staff member’s recommendation.

Non-Discriminatory Policy For Admission

All Catholic schools in the Rockford Diocese shall admit students of any race, gender, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, scholarship and loan program, and athletic and other school administered programs. St. Thomas School does not have a traditional tuition program but instead offers a Fair Ability approach. No child will ever be denied admission based on an inability to pay. In some situations, at the principal’s discretion, a student may be refused admission when he/she has academic, social, or behavioral problems for which the school does not have adequate resources. Also, it is the policy of Saint Thomas the Apostle School that seventh and eighth grade students may be refused admission because of the difficulty of entering the curriculum cycle in these grades. Exceptions may be considered by the principal and/or the pastor.

Acceptable Use Policy for Internet / Network

Access to worldwide communication and information services is a vital educational priority for students and educators. This Acceptable Use Policy provides an opportunity to educate the user on the school’s expectations and the responsibilities of the user.

The guidelines are:

- Do use the network in accordance with the school’s code of conduct.
- Do cite the sources of information properly, remembering proper “Netiquette and Computer Ethics” as discussed in class.
- Do not degrade or disrupt equipment or system performance.
- Do not change computer settings.
- Do not gain access to accounts other than the account assigned to your class.
- Do not waste storage space on the network.
- Do not access personal e-mail during school. Do not enter chat rooms, social networking sites, or other firewall protected sites.
- Do not download any files without permission of the teacher.

Students should report to the teacher any unsolicited messages, security problems, or information that makes them feel uncomfortable.

St. Thomas Network is guarded by content filtering software, however, no software is 100% secure. Students must notify a faculty member immediately if they discover something questionable, so that the inappropriate site can be added to the filtering system.

The students are held responsible for their actions and activity on the St. Thomas Network. Unacceptable uses of the network will result in the suspension or revoking of these privileges or disciplinary action by the school administrators.

Parental access to the Gradebook Program for grade 3-8 is a privilege and a convenience intended to promote parental involvement and home-school communication. However, this access may be denied if any fees are unpaid or school property is missing or damaged. These include but are not limited to the following items: overdue or damaged library books, missing athletic uniforms, missing state required medical or dental forms, outstanding ET tuition, unpaid fair ability tuition, damaged textbooks, etc. In addition, the last week and the first week of a quarter, the Gradebook Program will shut down for the processing of grades to all families due to high volume nationwide.

Attendance / Student Sickness / Injury

School attendance is compulsory under state law until a student reaches his/her 17th birthday. Students at St. Thomas must attend all classes as assigned by the principal. Students may not leave school grounds without direct permission of parents and notifying the school office personnel. Students absent for more than one-half the school day or who are sent home ill will be ineligible to participate in extra curricular, after school, or evening events, including practices and all sports activities.

Student absences must be reported to the school office (815/459-0496) before 8:30a.m. Parents will be contacted if no notification is received. A report may be left on the school's voice mail system but please do not use e-mail for reporting absences or dismissal procedures. All contagious illnesses must be reported to the school as soon as possible. If a student is absent more than five straight days, a doctor's excuse must be sent to school before the child may attend classes again. While regular attendance is closely related to academic success, parents are urged not to send students to school when they are ill. The presence of sick students in school is detrimental to the health of other students and staff and is not at all beneficial to the sick child. Parents or the persons identified on each child's emergency procedures

form (which must be on file for each student) will be notified at once when it is determined that a child is ill or injured.

Determination of when to send a child home is based on some of the following criteria: a temperature of 99.6 or higher, vomiting, rash, red or swollen sore throat, severe headache, injured joints or head injuries. Parents or emergency contacts will be asked to take the child from school as soon as possible if any of the above items are present. Parents are asked to keep the children home until their temperature is stabilized at 99.5 (without fever reducing medication) or less **for at least 24 hours**.

The school nurse (or in her absence, the secretaries or administration) will determine what is just cause for a student to be sent home from school. We ask that you respect our decision as we have the best interest of all children in mind.

Students absent from school will be given one day for each day absent to make up their missed work. Make-up work will be available (upon request) at the end of the school day, if the request is given to the teacher by 10:30 a.m. that day via voice mail.

Athletic Program

The athletic program in our school is administered by the Athletic Association Board under the authority of the Pastor and the school administrators. Presently, programs for boys and for girls are offered to students in grades 5 through 8. Parents with questions about the program or who wish to volunteer their help may contact the Athletic Director, Mr. Marty Caselton. Parents of students who are non-athletes are also encouraged to volunteer with the athletic programs. Student eligibility rules are included in the Athletic Handbook.

Band

The Band program is provided by an outside organization and is available to students in grades 4 through 8. Students who are involved in Band are responsible for any classroom or homework assignments that may be assigned during their band period. Band students are required to meet all classroom and homework deadlines set by the classroom teacher. Students must have passing grades in all subjects in order to remain eligible for this extra curricular activity. There is a separate cost to families who wish to have their students participate in Band.

Behavior / Discipline

In order to provide a proper Christian learning atmosphere, order, discipline, and good behavior must prevail. Students are expected to obey all school rules and regulations and to respect the authority that enforces them. Parents are expected to instruct their child(ren) to respect and obey all school authorities: administrators, teachers and other staff (including all adults when acting with the authority granted by the school when those adults are supervisors such as in the lunchroom, on the playground, on class trips, etc.).

A student may be removed from school or any school related activity by the administration for behaviors inconsistent with school regulations, practices, and/or policies. The following problems are examples of (but not limited to) unacceptable behaviors that could result in correction, penalty, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

1. Excessive absence or tardiness
2. Failure to do assigned work
3. Inattentiveness in class
4. Failure to follow the uniform/dress code
5. Lack of cooperation
6. Repeated disobedience
7. Continued disruption of class
8. Disrespect towards others
9. Fighting or encouraging others to fight
10. Vandalism or theft
11. Possession, use, or distribution of any drug, including but not limited to, over-the counter and prescription medications, vitamins, alcohol, smoking materials, etc.
12. Possession or use of a "weapon"
13. Any other inappropriate behavior (as determined by the teachers or administrators).

The administration has the authority to prohibit participation in school and related activities, to suspend, and to recommend to the pastor the expulsion of students.

Consequences for misbehavior may include, but are not limited to, verbal correction, notification to parents, after school detentions, Saturday detentions, parent-teacher (and/or administrator) conferences, suspension, and/or expulsion. Parents will be notified as to any assigned detentions at least one day in advance.

Bicycles

Students may ride bicycles to and from school but **MUST WEAR A HELMET**. They are to be “walked” on school property and must be locked in one of the racks provided.

Birthdays

Birthdays are recognized each day during opening announcements and students may bring treats for their classmates. We do, however, ask that flowers, balloons, decorations, etc. NOT be brought or sent to school. We will not accept delivery of those items.

Invitations to private, out of school parties may not be brought to school unless there are invitations for each student in the homeroom and they are given out at the direction of the teacher. Naturally, the same applies to giving out thank you notes to those students who did attend. It is probably best to just mail the invitations and the thank you notes instead of risking the hurt feelings of any children.

Bus Regulations

Transportation is provided free to students who live in District 47 by District 47 buses. Special arrangements can be made to students living outside the District 47 area. Call the school office for more information about this. All students may only ride their assigned routes. Use of the bus service may be denied for repeated violation of the following rules.

- Students must be on time at the designated bus pickup area.
- Students must be seated at all times while on the bus. If assigned seats are given by the driver, students may not change seats.
- Students must avoid loud or boisterous conduct, teasing, scuffling, eating/drinking, or gum chewing.

Drivers will write up students who cause problems on a “Bus Referral Form” which will be given to the assistant principal and then sent home to parents. Repeated transgressions of the bus rules may lead to school discipline measures being used and/or suspension from and/or denial of bus riding privileges.

Due to the space limitations, insurance and safety, students will not be allowed to ride any bus other than the one to which they are

assigned unless there is an emergency situation that is approved by the principal or assistant principal. Please contact the office as early in the day as possible if your child is not riding his regular bus home.

Calendar / Daily Schedule

While our school follows the basic District 47 school calendar, exceptions will include our own staff in-service days and certain holidays. Parents will be notified in advance of “no bus” days.

The school day begins at 7:45 a.m. with a tardy bell at 7:50 a.m. The day ends at 2:15 p.m. (dismissal). Students who ride District 47 buses will be dismissed at 2:12.

Upon entering the building, students are to go directly to their room. If they have business at the office they should take care of that business AFTER going to their classroom and checking in with their homeroom teacher. Students are not permitted in classrooms before 7:45 a.m. unless they have a pass from a teacher. Students should put away their things promptly and sit down at their desks.

Students are to leave school and school grounds promptly after dismissal unless they have written parental approval to work with a teacher. Bus students must be dismissed promptly.

Staff supervision of students begins at 7:30 a.m. (at the bus drop-off) and ends at 2:15 p.m. **Students should not be at school before 7:30 a.m. in the morning and must be picked up by 2:15 p.m. in the afternoon.** In the event of an unforeseen circumstance where a parent may be running late, the office should be contacted immediately so his/her child can wait at the school office. Parents who arrive after 7:45 a.m. to drop their children off or after 2:15 p.m. to pick their children up, must park, walk into school, and sign their children in/out.

The lobby right outside the main office is a very busy place first thing in the morning and again at dismissal. Whenever possible, we ask that you wait in your car or in the school courtyard when waiting to pick up your children. Please help us insure the safety of all students by not standing outside the main office so that we can handle student “traffic” in the safest and the most efficient manner as possible.

Cars / Student Drop Off

Drivers picking up or letting off children for school are expected to respect the parking regulations as marked. You are urged to avoid loading or unloading students at any point where it is then necessary for students to cross a street. If crossing the street is unavoidable for some reason, then students are expected to cross only at corners. Students are not to be dropped off on Lake Street in the morning. For safety reasons it is also important for parents to follow the traffic pattern established for student drop off at the Washington Street Lot. Parents should drop students off only on Pierson Street at the blacktop parking lot (on the same side as the parking lot so students are not required to cross the street). Students are required to follow all line up procedures established by the school administrators. Parents should not drop students off or pick up students on Washington Street. That is reserved for school busses only. Homeroom teachers will review these procedures with their students at the opening of school.

On days when there are no dismissal buses, we ask that families whose last names begin with A – H pick their students up on King Street, those with last names beginning with I – Q pick up on Washington Street, and those whose last names beginning with R – Z pick up on Lake Street.

Code of Conduct

All employees and volunteers of St. Thomas the Apostle School and the Rockford Diocese are required to be trained in the “Protecting God’s Children” program regarding child sexual abuse. Volunteers need to attend one of the training sessions before they are allowed to volunteer their time at school. All employees and volunteers must read the Diocesan booklet entitled Code of Conduct and then sign and return the signature page before they can volunteer in the school.

All employees and volunteers of St. Thomas the Apostle School are required by State of Illinois law to have a current criminal background check on file with the St. Thomas the Apostle School office. Please contact the school office secretary for forms and information.

Communication

- **Honeywell Instant Alert Messaging System**

St. Thomas the Apostle School will be using an Instant Alert Messaging System which shall be used for automatic phone and/or e-mail notification. The system may be used to automatically alert families of emergency school closings, changes of dismissal times, as well as general school information (reminder of no bus days, etc.). Parents will be responsible for updating their contact information as well as their preferred method of contact by logging onto the Honeywell website via the link our school website.

General Communication Guidelines

- Please notify school of any change of address and/or phone and emergency numbers as soon as possible. **It is crucial that we are able to reach you or another emergency contact during the school day, between 7:30 – 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday.**
- With our phone system, communication between home and school is greatly facilitated. The school office number is 815/459-0496. After school office hours, follow the prompts to access individual voice mail. **Please do not call teachers or other staff members at home, unless they request the call. We ask that you respect their privacy and time with their families.**
- Students will not be called out of class to accept phone calls. In the case of an emergency, please ask for the principal or if appropriate, explain the situation to the office staff.
- Students are not to use cell phones. Cell phones for students should be kept in a backpack only and turned off. If they are seen or heard by a staff member during the school day, they will be confiscated and held by the administration for parents to pick up. After the first offense, cell phones will not be returned until the end of the school year.
- Weekly communication is posted on our website each Wednesday.. Please make it a point to promptly read all school communication as it is the primary way we have to communicate important school information. On occasion, we may still send home a Wednesday Family Envelope with some enclosure. **Parents are asked to read and empty the contents, then return the family envelope by Friday of the same week.** If you have something you want included in the Wednesday family communication (i.e. Boy Scout flyer, athletic info, PTO news, etc.) it must first be approved by the principal. **All Family Envelope enclosures need to be emailed to Ms..Michelle Boppart at mboppart@stthomascl.org by 9:00**

a.m. on the Monday morning preceded the Wednesday you want it included. No fliers/information can be handed out to students via individual teachers/classrooms. All correspondence needs to go to the school office and be posted/distributed through the family newsletter.

- **If there are questions or concerns for a specific teacher, that teacher should be contacted as soon as possible.** Normally, the principal would only become involved in a discussion about a problem after the matter has been discussed with the teacher. If necessary, conferences about student progress or other concerns may be asked for by the parent, teacher, or principal at any time during the school year.
- The principal and assistant principal are available for parent or student questions during the school day. Because of meetings and other responsibilities, however, it is suggested that parents call ahead to make an appointment to discuss important issues.

Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities

These activities are events that occur under the school's sponsorship outside of the regular school day. These events include all athletic contests/practices, school social events, some field trips, school designated class outings, retreat experiences, intramurals and club events, and the Raue Center and Christmas plays.

Unless otherwise specified by the administration, all school policies apply to these extra activities. Participation in any of these activities is subject to parent permission and student eligibility as determined by the appropriate school personnel. (See page 16 for more information on ineligibility.)

Fines

Fines may be assessed to students and their parents for various reasons throughout the school year. These can include library fines for late or lost books, damage to school property (textbooks, lockers, desks, etc.) late pick-up/no-show fines, cost for nail polish remover, etc.

Special Note on Late Pick-Up and No-Show Fines:

Children who are left unattended by a parent after 2:15 p.m. or who are late picking up students from after school activities such as Math Group, Chess Club, ET, etc. will be charged a service fee of \$10 per 15 minutes.

Fines may also be charged for being a 'no-show' to appointments and detentions at the same rate of \$10 per 15 minutes.

Report Cards will not be distributed to students who have any outstanding fines. Access to Gradebook will also be suspended for those who have any unpaid fines.

Grades and Honor Roll

The Grading Scale for Grades 3-8

A (93-100%) = Exceptional Achievement

A+ = 100

A- = 93

B (86 – 92%) = Above Average Achievement

B+ = 92

B- = 86

C (75 - 85%) = Average Achievement

C+ = 85

C- = 75

D (70 – 74%) = Below Average Achievement

D+ = 74

D- = 70

F (69 – 0%) = Failure

Quarterly Honor Roll for Grades 6-8

High Honor Roll: 93 – 100%

Honor Roll: 86 – 92%

The following core subjects are included when calculating the honor roll: religion, math, science, reading, social studies, spelling, and English.

NOTE: Students with one F or two D's in ANY subjects (including Specials such as art, gym, music, p.e., and Spanish) will automatically be disqualified from Honor Roll status

Health

All Kindergarteners, sixth graders, and all students transferring from another state are required by state law to have a physical examination. All students participating in sports must have a yearly physical and a copy of

their medical insurance card on file, with the school office before the first day of practice.

State law requires that students in Kindergarten receive a lead assessment, dental exam and vision exam and students in grades 2 and 6 receive a dental exam. Students with incomplete health records may be excluded from entry into school or may have grades withheld.

Homework

Homework is an important part of the school program. Not only does it provide parents with an opportunity to monitor student progress, but it is also an integral part of the learning experience. Homework can be comprised of written assignments, projects, study, or oral work. Just because there might not be a written assignment, does not mean there is no homework. It should be remembered that homework is for the child to do. Parents are asked to look over completed assignments or to help with understanding of directions, etc. Students should have a quiet place to study, good light and materials, and be free of distractions (TV, telephone, computers, video games, etc.).

“How much homework should my child have?” is a frequently asked question. Our guidelines are as follows:

Grades K-1	Little formal homework, however, teachers may ask parents to practice reading, and review some number and letter facts etc.
Grades 2- 3	15 – 30 minutes
Grades 4 – 6	30 – 60 minutes
Grades 7 – 8	60 – 120 minutes
Accelerated Classes	May require additional time

It must be understood that these times will vary considerably depending upon any number of factors (using study time wisely, work habits, etc.). There can be a BIG difference between how much time a student spends *doing homework* and how much time it *should take them to do* their homework.

In the event an emergency prevents completion of a homework assignment, a note of explanation should be written by a parent/guardian explaining the problem. This does not mean that a student is necessarily excused for that late assignment. That decision is left up to the teacher.

*****With the exception of long-term projects or reading assignments, minimal homework, if any, will be given over the weekends.**

Heading of Papers: All assignments (for in-class completion or homework) should have the following standard heading: Student's first and last name, date, subject, and page number of the assignment (if applicable). The format for all grades 2-8 are as follows:

First and Last Name

Date

Subject, Page Number

Ineligibility of Extra-Curricular Activities

In order to actively participate in extra-curricular activities, students must meet the requirements in all subject areas including Spanish, art, music, physical education and computers. **A letter grade of F in any subject area makes a child ineligible to participate in any school related extra-curricular activities including athletics, band, play practice, etc.). Conduct and effort ineligibility are determined by the principal in consultation with the teachers.**

Parents will be notified weekly if their child is ineligible or in danger of becoming ineligible. The ineligibility becomes effective the following Monday (which means s/he may participate that first weekend) and continues through Sunday. The purpose of our entire eligibility program is to instill in our students the importance of doing their best academically.

Insurance

The Rockford Diocese does not offer student insurance. All students involved in extracurricular events (practices, games, etc.) must provide proof of their own insurance.

Liturgical Celebrations

Parents and friends are always welcome at our school liturgical celebrations. Please consult the weekly Family Envelope and the monthly school calendar for times and dates of school Masses and other liturgical events.

Lockers and Desks

As with all school property, students are responsible for keeping their assigned locker neat, clean, and free from damage. **NO TAPE OR OTHER ADHESIVES ARE ALLOWED INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE**

LOCKERS. The inside and outside of lockers and desks should never be decorated for birthdays, etc.

Locks may be purchased **for 7th and 8th grade students only and must be purchased directly from school.** For obvious security reasons, students should not share their locker combination with anyone else. Tampering with ones own locker or the locker of someone else is cause for disciplinary action. The administration holds a master key to all lockers and reserves the right to inspect any student locker for any reason and without prior notification.

Lost and Found

PLEASE mark all belongings including each article of clothing with your child's name. The Lost and Found is located on the side entrance to the main office. Periodically, we ask students to check for lost items. Unclaimed items will be forwarded to Little Christopher Resale Shoppe for resale after a week or so.

Lunch and Playground

Lunches may be brought from home or students may participate in our hot lunch program, which is offered Monday through Friday. The hot lunch program is scheduled to begin on the first full day of school. Hot lunch orders are selected monthly, in advance. The cost is \$3.25 per day for a hot lunch, a salad, or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, plus sides.

Parents may make deposits into their children's lunch account as needed, with checks made out directly to Papa Saverio. Statements will be emailed from Papa Savario Restaurant, our food service provider, regularly to keep you informed of when you need to make another deposit.

Bag lunches should be marked with the child's name and homeroom. We ask that gum NOT BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL, even in lunches!

Milk is available separately and is sold for a yearly cost of approximately \$20.00. NOTE: "FREE AND REDUCED MILK" is available to all eligible participants without regard to race, color, sex, age, and disability of national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write to: Food and Consumer Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302. Please contact the school office for additional information.

Adults supervise students at lunchtime. Students are expected to obey and show respect to these supervisors. Students who do not, may be asked by a supervisor to sit out for the remainder of the recess and may possibly be sent to the administration for further disciplining.

Lunchroom Guidelines

STUDENTS

While you are inside

- 1.) Stay seated at your table, no table hopping.
- 2.) Walk, do not run.
- 3.) Do not throw food, cartons, wrappers, napkins, etc.
- 4.) If you make a mess, clean it up.
- 5.) Get permission before getting up.
If you need to get up for the restroom, spoon/fork, napkin, etc. raise your hand and ask for permission first. If going to the restroom, take a pass.
- 6.) Do not shout or scream, and do not use inappropriate language.
- 7.) After Prayer, remain seated at your table until you are dismissed.

While you are outside

- 1.) Walk on the sidewalk to and from your assigned play area.
- 2.) Never enter the street without an adult present.
- 3.) Play safely.
No pushing, shoving, tackling, running up the slides, etc.
- 4.) Play kindly.
Do not interfere with other people's games; if you want to join in, please ask, as all students are to be included if they want to play; no name calling. Motto: everybody may play or nobody plays.
- 5.) Leave nature alone.
No picking up or throwing snow, no climbing trees, no playing with sticks, digging holes, etc.
- 6.) Respond immediately to the bell.
Line up promptly once the bell has rung signaling the end of the recess.
- 7.) Return all play equipment to the lunchroom.

Student Consequences

Students who do not follow the rules and display unacceptable behaviors could result in a verbal warning, penalty, detention or suspension.

Please note: Students who forget their lunch will be given a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and sides. Parents will be billed \$3.00 to cover that cost.

Parents are discouraged from bringing in fast food lunches for their children. If you want to celebrate a special occasion with your children such as a birthday, we ask that you take them out during their regular lunch period. Please be sure to sign them out and back in at the office.

Students should dress appropriately for the weather. We will go outside unless it is raining or unless the temperature or wind-chill is too extreme. It should be noted that on occasion, the older grades will go out for a time at noon while the younger grades might not.

Lunch / Playground Times

Grades 7 & 8	10:20-10:40 am recess / 10:40-11:00 am eat
Grades K & 3	11:00 am - 11:20 am eat / 11:20 am - 11:40 am recess
Grades 4, 5, & 6	11:20 am - 11:40 am eat / 11:40-12:00 pm recess
Grades 1 & 2	11:45 am - 12:05 pm recess / 12:05 pm - 12:25 pm eat

Materials (School Books, Supplies. etc.)

It is the responsibility of each student to have all materials and other items needed for each school day. In the event that a forgotten item is brought to school for a student, it **must be brought to the school office, not to the classroom.** We cannot guarantee that the child will get the forgotten item on time (i.e. gym clothes before gym class) because we will not interrupt a class to call them to the office to pick it up. We will do our best to deliver it to the classroom.

- Students will not be allowed to call home for missing assignments, gym clothes, lunches, etc.
- All student textbooks must be covered (no “stick-on” book covers) and should be carried to and from school in a book bag or backpack. All cloth book covers must be **jumbo** size so as not to damage the binding/corners of the textbooks. In some cases where the textbooks are too large even for jumbo covers to fit, teachers may inform students that only paper book covers are allowed in order to preserve the bindings on our textbooks.
- Replacement of lost or defaced school property will be charged to the child/parent.

Medications

All medications and over the counter drugs must be held in the school office and have the appropriate permission forms (provided upon request by the school nurse) on file. State law and Diocesan regulation provides us with guidelines for the giving of medication. **Non-prescribed medication should not be brought to school, including cough drops, Tylenol, etc.** Students are prohibited from carrying any kind of drug or medication in school unless other arrangements have been approved by the administration. Obviously, students are prohibited from giving to another child any kind of drug or medication in or around school, or during school-related activities.

Physical Education

Children are excused from gym or recess only with a doctor's note. If a child has a minor physical problem that does not merit a visit to the doctor but which might limit his/her ability in gym, please send a note apprising the teacher of the problem and the student's participation in that day's class will be limited accordingly. Also, students excused from P.E. on a given day are ineligible to participate in any athletic program activity (game or practice) on that day. If a child's participation is limited for more than one week, then a doctor's note is required.

P.E. Uniforms

Grades K- 4	Grades 5-8
T-Shirt - navy / gold	Reversible – navy / gold
Shorts - navy / gold	Shorts – navy / gold
Gym Shoes – non scuffing	Gym Shoes – non-scuffing (Note: Special Uniform Notes Below)

NOTES:

- Gym uniforms will still be worn even on “no uniform” days.
- Gym uniforms must be from Dennis Uniform Company only.
- Students in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade may wear their gym uniforms and gym shoes to and from school on gym days only. In cooler weather, we ask that they wear a blue or blue/gold sweat suit over their gym uniform.

Sacramental Preparation

Second grade students receive instruction for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion as part of their basic religion class. Students in 8th grade begin receiving instruction as part of a two year preparation program for the sacrament of Confirmation.

School Records

Both permanent and temporary student records are kept as prescribed by State Law and Diocesan Policy. Parents may see their child's records by contacting the school principal and setting up an appointment.

Tardiness

The tardy bell rings at 7:50 a.m. Students who arrive after 7:50 a.m. must stop at the office with a parent to sign them in. Students will then be issued a pass to be admitted to the classroom. It is very important that students be in their room and ready for work by that time. It is very disruptive to have students arriving late, both for the office and especially for the classroom. Punctuality is a virtue to be practiced. Students who are late must report to the office, give a reason for their tardiness and receive a pass to enter their classroom. Students in grades 6 – 8 will receive a detention after accumulating three tardies in one quarter. After accumulating three detentions in one quarter due to tardiness, the student will have an additional consequence such as missing a field trip or other activity/special event. **Parents of children who are excessively tardy for school will be contacted to set up a conference with the administration.**

Uniforms / Out of Uniform Days

Uniforms will be worn on all school days unless parents are notified in writing. It is expected that routine cleaning of uniforms, etc., will take place so as to not interfere with the school days. On rare occasions, an accident could render a uniform "un-wearable" and in such cases, the parent should send a written note to the teacher. School sweatshirts (only from Dennis Uniform Company) may be worn on spirit days, and field trips. The sweatshirt is not part of the regular/required uniform.

All uniform items listed below (except belts, socks, and shoes) must be purchased from Dennis Uniform Company.

GRADES K-5

Girls
• Navy and White (Marymount) plaid jumper
• Navy Sweater: pullover, cardigan, or vest
• Solid white button-down Oxford or Peter Pan collared Blouse
• Solid white, navy or black socks or tights
• Solid black, brown or navy dress shoes or solid black leather gym shoes. (See “Special Notes on Uniforms.”)

Optional Items for Girls (K-5)
• Navy or khaki twill pants or corduroys with a solid blue, Black or brown belt (when there are belt loops)
• Solid white jersey or pique polo, navy polo
• Solid white turtleneck
• Navy or khaki walking shorts with a solid, blue, black or brown belt (when pants have belt loops)
• Sweatshirt with St. Thomas embroidery (See “special notes on uniforms”) only on Spirit Days or field trips.

Boys (K-5)
• Navy or khaki twill pants with a black, brown or navy belt (when pants have belt loops)
• Navy sweater: pullover, cardigan or vest
• Solid white button-down Oxford (long or short sleeves)
• Solid white, navy or black socks
• Solid black, brown or navy dress shoes or solid black leather gym shoe (See “Special Notes on Uniforms”)

Optional Items for Boys (K-5)

• Solid white jersey or pique polo, navy polo
• Solid white turtleneck
• Navy or khaki walking shorts with a solid blue, black or brown belt (when pants have belt loops)
• Sweatshirt with St. Thomas embroidery (See “special notes on uniforms”) only on Spirit Days or field trips.

NOTE: BELTS ARE NOT REQUIRED IN GRADES K and 1 for either boys or girls.

GRADES 6-8

Boys and Girls
• Navy twill pants with a solid blue, black or brown belt (when pants have belt loops)
• Navy sweater: pullover, cardigan or vest
• Solid white-button down Oxford (long or short sleeves)
• Solid white, navy, black or khaki socks
• Solid black, brown or navy dress shoes or solid black leather gym shoes. (See “Special Notes on Uniform”)

Optional Items for Boys and Girls in Grades K – 8
• Khaki twill pants with a solid blue, black or brown belt (when pants have belt loops)
• Navy corduroys
• Solid white or navy jersey or pique polo shirts
• Navy or khaki walking shorts with a solid blue, black, or brown belt.
• Sweatshirt with St. Thomas embroidery (See “Special Notes on Uniforms”) Spirit Days or field trips.

**GIRLS AND BOYS K-8
Special Notes on Uniforms**

- Shoes: All students must wear a solid black, brown, or navy shoe with little or no heel (no more than one inch.) A solid black leather non-scuffing gym shoe is also acceptable. Platforms, clogs, soft soled shoes (such as ballerina style) moccasins, Berkenstock, strapless or high-heeled shoes will not be allowed. Gym shoes for gym class must also be non-scuffing.
- Make-up (including all nail polish, except clear) may not be worn.

French manicures are not allowed. (School will charge \$.50 for each time the office has to supply nail polish remover)

- NO EARRINGS (except girls may wear small **non-dangling** post-type earrings, one per earlobe). Post earrings should not dangle or hang below the earlobe but should lie flat against it.
- Cartilage and other body piercing are not permitted.
- NO necklaces or bracelets (except religious medals/symbols which are limited to one each and must be conservative in style and color. They may not be disruptive in any way.)
- Girls' hair accessories must be conservative in color and style so as not to be a distraction to themselves or others.
- Hairstyles must be appropriate and non-disruptive (as determined by the teacher/principal). No beaded braiding or braiding with multi colored ribbons, rubber bands, etc is allowed. Boys' hair must be above the collar, above the eyebrows, and above the ears. No dyes, extreme styles, shaved or carved areas, long sideburns, etc., or otherwise inappropriate styles will be allowed. No facial hair is permitted.
- Pants and shorts must be worn at normal waist level. Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in (fully) at all times on school grounds. A belt must be worn in grades 2 – 8, whenever belt loops are present.
- Girls' jumpers are to be at an appropriate length as determined by the teacher and/or administration.
- All uniform shirts and undershirts must be solid white with no writing or logos.
- Only regular solid colored, white, navy, black, or khaki socks may be worn.
- Non-school clothing such as sweaters, sweatshirts or jackets may not be worn during school hours.
- NO slacks, sweatpants, leg warmers, etc., may be worn under the skirt/jumper during school hours.
- School dress shoes and gym shoes (both non-scuffing) must be worn with socks.
- Uniform sweaters are required to be worn during school hours beginning October 15 through April 15.

***** Students not in compliance with all elements of the uniform code may not be permitted to attend class until they are in compliance. Repeated infractions could lead to student detention or suspension. Parents are asked to monitor their child's appearance before they arrive at school. **We will tend to have a conservative interpretation of "appropriate" so if there is doubt, don't, or ask first.**

Out of Uniform Days

On average, once a month there will be a “no uniform” day for students wanting to participate in giving to a needy cause. Students are encouraged to donate \$1.00 to that month’s cause. Generally, these days are the first Friday of the month. Parents will be notified in advance and the following guidelines will apply:

1. Clean, no rips, T-shirts, polo, dress shirt, or blouse (no improper logos, pictures and writing, etc.) No spaghetti straps, tube tops, short shirts, or sleeveless tops are allowed.
2. Clean, no rips, slacks, jeans, skirts or shorts are acceptable (skirts and shorts must be a proper length as determined by the administration). Again, **when in doubt, DON’T wear it!**
3. All other uniform code rules (jewelry, hair, etc.) apply.
4. During hot weather, sandals are allowed on no uniform days but they must have a heel strap (no flip flops).

Picture Day

Students are to dress up. No shorts, no jeans, and no t-shirts are allowed. Only dress shoes (low heel) or uniform school shoes are allowed.

Vacations / Missed Days

Parents asking to take students out of school during the school year must notify the homeroom teacher and the school office in advance. Parents are urged to consider the impact any **extended** absence might have on their child’s academic development and to consult with the teacher on that impact. Parents should understand that **teachers are not required to give homework in advance or to provide long-range individual plans and assignments**. Any missed homework will have to be made up upon the child’s return to school with one extra day given for every day missed.

Regarding “Take Your Child to Work Day,” while we have no problem with the basic concept of the day, we do question why this kind of activity could not take place during the non-school months of the year. We urge parents to ask their employers to move this activity to a less school intrusive time. You can understand that when a large number of students are missing, it makes for a less than desirable teaching situation.

Visiting School

ALL VISITORS and volunteers need to sign in and out at the office and wear an I.D. badge. (Formal classroom observations need to be discussed with the teacher and scheduled in advance.) Parents may not go to classrooms without consent from the teacher and signing in at the office.

Volunteers

Volunteer opportunities exist within all major school organizations. The Education Commission, the PTO, Athletic Committee, Art Moms, Lunch Volunteers, Sunshine Committee, Room Parents, and Copy Moms, are but a few. Please contact the school office to be connected with any of these groups.

Weather Concerns

In the case of inclement weather, we will follow the lead of District 47 because we use their buses. If they cancel school, so will we. School cancellation announcements are made via local Radio Station, Star 105.5 and Chicago Radio Stations WGN and WBBM. TV Stations include WGN and WBBM. Families will also receive a phone call from the school principal from our Honeywell Alert System if school will be closed. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure their contact information is updated on the Honeywell Alert System.

When dropping car riders off in the morning, if the weather is too cold, rainy etc. or if the Washington lot is not safe for children (icy, etc.) a red circle will be placed in the office window and the principal's window. A red circle means students are inside for morning arrival and a green circle means they are outside. On inside days, students in grades K-4 and room 5B report to the lunchroom and students in grade 6-8 and 5A report to the gym hallway where staff will supervise them until the morning bell. Both locations are supervised by staff members who will lead the children to their classrooms before the 7:50 tardy bell.

If school is closed (snow day, community emergency, unsafe conditions, etc.) a blue dot will be placed in the office window and the principal's window.

Conclusion

While every effort has been made to include in this handbook as much of the information that parents need, no handbook can be all-inclusive. From time to time, changes, additions, or deletions will need to be made and those alterations will be communicated to parents via the weekly letters

home. All parents are invited and urged to contact the teachers and/or principal at any time they have questions or concerns.

You may choose to print this page, sign, and return your signature to the school office to indicate that you have read and agree to follow the school policies set forth in this handbook, or simply email Mrs. Boppart as such at mboppart@stthomascl.org.

Yes, I have read and agree to the St. Thomas School Policies set forth in the Parent/Student Handbook

Family Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____