



STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK  
2024-2025

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*St. Thomas High School reserves the right to modify this handbook at any time.  
Please review the handbook on a regular basis to stay familiar with our  
policies and procedures and to identify any ongoing changes.*



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# INTRODUCTION

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**This handbook is provided as a guide for both parents/guardians and students.**

**By becoming familiar with our procedures you will be able to cooperate with the Basilian Fathers, faculty and staff of St. Thomas in our endeavor to educate your son.**

**By registration and enrollment at St. Thomas, each student and his parents/guardians agree to accept, observe and abide by the provisions of this handbook and regulations of St. Thomas High School.**

**Included in this handbook is important information for students and parents. Please review this information with your son and then download the Student-Parent Handbook Acknowledgment and Agreement Form from your Magnus Health account. You and your son must sign the form and upload or fax the completed form to Magnus Health, reflecting actual signatures. For returning students, this Acknowledgment and Agreement form must be digitally re-authorized in your Magnus Health account before the first day of each school year.**



## MISSION STATEMENT

Teaching goodness, discipline, and knowledge is the tradition of the Basilian Fathers and the sacred mission of St. Thomas, a Catholic college preparatory high school.

## VISION

A man of St. Thomas is a faith-filled, life-long learner who thinks critically, communicates effectively, and prepares thoroughly to excel in college and in life. He actively serves his community, integrates Christian morality into all aspects of his life, and measures his success by the standards set forth in the Gospels.

## PHILOSOPHY

The St. Thomas family nourishes the faith of all its members. Together and as individuals, members of the community share responsibility for actively bringing Christ's message to society at large. We continue to work and foster a learning environment with a...

- safe, positive learning atmosphere conducive to social and academic success
- strong academic curricula preparing students for the challenges of college
- program of athletics designed to develop strong Christian young men
- technology program that prepares students for a globally oriented society
- fine arts department inspiring creativity and fostering a love of the arts

The faculty of St. Thomas is made up of professionals who strive to demonstrate expertise, enthusiasm and eagerness for their field of study. The faculty possesses...

- Christian values
- mutual respect and professionalism
- strong individual teaching styles
- appreciation and respect for the socio-economic, ethnic and racial differences of each student

A graduate of St. Thomas is a spiritual young man who...

- embodies Christian values in a Catholic tradition
- integrates Christian morality into all aspects of his life
- participates actively in a faith community
- respects the religious, socio-economic and cultural diversity in all people

A graduate of St. Thomas is an academic achiever who...

- accepts responsibility for his life-long learning
- thinks critically and communicates effectively
- is prepared to excel in a college program
- is technologically equipped for success in a globally oriented society
- appreciates and is knowledgeable of the fine arts

A graduate of St. Thomas is a responsible citizen who...

- commits to Christian social justice
- respects and practices conservation of the environment and natural resources
- participates (actively) and leads in community service
- understands and appreciates diversity in society
- participates in the democratic electoral process



## HISTORY OF ST. THOMAS

It was 1900 when forty-four sturdy little scholars gathered to form the first classes at St. Thomas College School. The faculty of that Downtown were three priests of the Basilian Fathers led by the School's founder and first Principal, Rev. Nicholas Roche, CSB

In 1929, Rev. T. P. O'Rourke, CSB, a native Texan, negotiated the purchase of a tract of land at the western outskirts of Houston on the banks of Buffalo Bayou at Memorial Drive and Shepherd Drive. It was there that the buildings of the present structure took shape.

St. Thomas is conducted by the priests of the Congregation of St. Basil. They are an international community of religious priests, who live a communal life and bind themselves to God by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They dedicate themselves to the service of the Church in any priestly ministry, but have centered their apostolic work on the education of youth since 1822.

The Congregation was originally founded in Annonay, France after the French Revolution. The Basilian's special patron is St. Basil the Great, a fourth century Archbishop of Caesarea, Instructor of Youth, and Doctor of the Universal Church. The Basilian Fathers first came to North America in 1850 and established a school in Toronto, Canada in 1852. From this center, the Basilian Fathers established schools, colleges, missions and parishes across Canada, the United States, Mexico and Columbia.

Through its first forty years, the School's name was St. Thomas College. Later, with the Basilian Fathers parenting the University of St. Thomas a few miles away, a suitable accommodation was found in the designation, "St. Thomas High School." Today, St. Thomas is Houston's oldest college preparatory high school for young men.

## STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

At the heart of St. Thomas is a culture defined by respect, balance, integrity, curiosity, leadership, as well as our commitment to the safety and health of students. All members of the community have an obligation to know and uphold the School's values and strive to embody them in word and deed.

We therefore expect that all members of the community will:

- Respect other people and their privacy and property, both within and beyond the School.
- Treat all human beings with dignity, refraining from behavior that intimidates, insults, threatens, bullies, coerces, abuses, exploits, harasses, humiliates, or demeans, acting with tolerance, courtesy, and thoughtful regard.
- Have an open mind and heart to the views and experiences of others, creating space for all to belong and thrive.
- Support and promote a school climate that does not discriminate against any individual or group.
- Use words constructively, avoiding gossip and other inappropriate or unproductive sharing of information.
- Maintain high standards of honesty, avoiding deception, half-truths, and deliberately misleading words or behavior.
- Exemplify principles of responsibility and fairness in daily life.
- Observe safe behavior and promptly report unsafe conditions or practices.
- Cultivate caring and compassion, seeking to serve others, both within and beyond the School.

Our School cultivates a school environment in which all members of the community feel valued and safe. Part of living our values includes every member's responsibility to support a safe school environment by refraining from harmful and unsafe behavior and promptly reporting such behavior when observed. In addition, we prohibit all boundary crossing behavior between adults and students (as outlined in our Student/Adult Interaction and Communication Policy) and sexual misconduct (whether among students or adults and students). Adults are expected to identify and immediately report suspicions of harassment, abuse, and sexual or other misconduct and will not engage in such behavior themselves.

In addition, School employees are mandated reporters of suspected abuse, neglect, or abandonment as specified by state law.



The School has conducted and will continue to conduct training for adults and students on these important issues and encourages all students and their parents to timely report any concern about boundary crossing behavior, sexual misconduct, or any other situation that impacts the safety, health, or security of any member of our community to their Division Head or the School President.

All adults have an obligation to model through both language and behavior the values and expectations we have as a school, being especially conscious of their actions at times and places when student can observe them. Students must be mindful of the power they have in various roles at school. They must use their roles constructively, always avoiding intimidation and abuse of authority. Older and returning students must take seriously the power of their example on younger and newer students, accepting the responsibility to model and transmit our School values.

These community standards apply to our words and behavior not only in personal interactions, but also in all forms of electronic media and communications.

All members of the community help others to develop a sense of belonging, encourage empathy and compassion, and promote an environment that is safe, kind, and inclusive. As members of this community, we acknowledge that our actions reflect not only on ourselves, but also on the School as a whole and therefore strive to live in a way that is consistent with our values.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The School admits students regardless of race, color, creed, ethnic, or national origin who possess the motivation, ability, and character which would enable them to succeed in our School community to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School and the School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, ethnic, or national origin.

## **ACADEMIC LIFE**

### **Registration**

Registration for incoming freshmen takes place in early April. Re-registration of currently enrolled students is completed in the spring. Registrants will be required to have their course requests approved by their parents or guardians. Absent extenuating circumstances, no course change requests are considered after May 1. All requests for changes will be dependent upon available space as well as meeting course requirements.

A \$550 Registration fee and a \$500 Tuition deposit are required at time of Registration. Registration is not considered complete until each family has opened an online account with Smart Tuition and fully paid the deposit and registration fee to Smart Tuition. No student is considered registered without full payment. No exceptions will be made to the registration policy. Both fees are non-refundable.

### **Re-enrollment**

Enrollment as a freshman does not guarantee enrollment for all four years at St. Thomas.

Re-enrollment for the following year generally takes place each March. Acceptance of re-enrollment is solely at the discretion of the Principal or President of St. Thomas. Completing enrollment paperwork and/or making the required registration fee and tuition deposit DOES NOT guarantee re-enrollment.

A pattern of low grades, poor work habits, poor conduct, excessive absenteeism or tardiness, the parents' failure to meet financial obligations, or a parent or family member causing disruption to the School or the School's educational mission can jeopardize a student's continued or future enrollment. Entrance into the next grade will be based on the classroom performance of the student, observations of the teacher, and appropriate testing. The School may, at its sole discretion, withhold reenrollment contracts for any reason.

## **Tuition and Fee Policy**

Tuition and registration fees are determined annually. Registration and enrollment fees are to be paid in accordance with the School's Enrollment Contract. A Student's parent(s) and/or guardian(s) is responsible for the payment of tuition. All tuition payments are to be made through Blackbaud TuitionManagement.

A student's tuition account must be current before a student is allowed to participate in a parent-paid STH trip. Students with outstanding tuition will not be allowed to go on a trip until their tuition balance is paid. Payments made for trips will be applied to outstanding tuition balances. With regard to a parent-paid trip, any student that has not paid for the trip before the trip departs is not allowed to go on the trip.

If tuition or other fees are not paid promptly, the School reserves the right to suspend a student until his account is brought current.

Admittance to semester examinations requires a "Permit to Exam" card indicating all financial obligations and other school requirements have been fulfilled. The School reserves the right to suspend a student from School for unmet financial obligations including tuition, fees, and other monies owed to St. Thomas.

Report cards, transcripts of grades, college and other recommendations, and diplomas will be issued when financial obligations have been paid.

## **Tuition Assistance**

St. Thomas is supported by tuition, fees, and donations. It is a fully private institution. Through the work of many volunteers and the generosity of its benefactors, St. Thomas is able to offer limited financial aid to admitted students in cases of demonstrated need. Because of limited resources, St. Thomas cannot promise to meet the financial needs of all students.

Tuition assistance is available by application through filing a confidential statement by February 1st for financial aid. The link is on the St. Thomas website. This deadline is firm. The prior year's tax return is a non-negotiable requirement.

Application is made online and the link is provided on the St. Thomas website under the Admissions tab. Once all the necessary information is received, the application will be presented to the Tuition Assistance Committee for review. Awards are communicated to families mid to late March. Parents must submit a new application annually.

Aid may be withdrawn due to lack of timely payment of balance, disciplinary issues, academic concerns or other situations that may arise.

Students receiving financial aid or scholarships are required to maintain good attendance, conduct, and academic standing as well as sell at least one quota of Round Up raffle tickets to support the assistance program. The School provides multiple opportunities to help each student be successful in this commitment.

There is no financial aid for summer school programs of all types. All students taking summer school classes or participating in athletic camps or workouts need to have the tuition paid before the class begins.

## **Class Attendance Policies**

St. Thomas families and students should be aware that leaving school before the dismissal time, and/or accumulating excessive absences or tardies, not only jeopardizes student academic progress, but it also disrupts the learning environment of fellow classmates. The School requests that parents and students thoughtfully consider the impact of any absence other than one of a medical or family emergency. Families are discouraged from taking students out of School prior to or immediately following a School break. Absences for vacations will be considered unexcused. Whenever possible, regularly scheduled medical appointments should be made after School hours. Students with excessive absences or tardiness, excused or unexcused, may be subject to discipline, denied re-enrollment or promotion, or dismissed from the School.





Students are expected to be in class and ready to begin work at the beginning of the day when the final bell rings for the first period and each subsequent instructional period.

Students are to be present for all classes as outlined on their schedule. A student must not be absent from any one class more than eight (8) times during any one semester. At the discretion of the Assistant Principal, a student may lose credit for a semester course if absences in that course exceed eight (8). The Dean of Students' Office will notify families when students exceed five (5) absences for a semester. In addition, if a student is absent five (5) times or more during any quarter, the student may be asked to not participate in extracurricular activities for the remainder of that quarter. Students are allowed one (1) pre-approved college visit per semester that will not count toward the above-mentioned totals. A student who is absent for more than half a school day (four (4) periods or two (2) periods on block days) may not participate in any extracurricular activities later that day.

School sponsored or sanctioned activities are exempt from and do not count toward the total absences per quarter and per semester for the above stated purposes. One (1) pre-approved college visit per semester is also exempt from and does not count toward the total absences per quarter and per semester for the above stated purposes.

In the event of extenuating circumstances (documented extended illness or hospital confinement), consideration may be given to extending the above limits. A doctor's statement and medical documentation will be required for extended absences.

The Dean of Students' Office reserves the right to put a student on an attendance contract for students with excessive tardies (to school or individual class periods), absences, and/or early dismissals. Failure of parents and the student to abide by the terms of the contract may result in dismissal from St. Thomas.

## **Absence Notifications**

When a student is absent from school, parents must notify the Dean of Students' Office directly; not the teachers or counselor. If the Dean of Students' office is not notified of an absence within two days, failure to do so may result in the absence being considered "unexcused" no matter what the reason.

## **Excused Absences**

**The following are excused absences if proper notification and procedures are followed:**

1. Illness of the student (a medical absence extending beyond two school days may require a doctor's note).
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. Funerals of relatives and close friends.
4. Doctor's appointments that cannot be made after school hours. An official appointment card or signed note from the doctor's office is required to verify any appointment.
5. Verified Court appearances or Department of Public Safety appointment.
6. School-sponsored trips and activities.
7. Pre-approved college visits (see below for additional information).
8. School-related activities or events

Any student not well enough to attend all of his classes during the school day may not participate in any co-curricular, extra-curricular, or fine arts or athletic activity that afternoon or evening, except with the specific approval of the Dean of Students' Office.

St. Thomas is aware that there may be absences that will not fit directly in one of the excused categories below. However, the Dean of Students' Office must approve any personal absences at least five (5) school days in advance or the absence will be unexcused and subject to penalty.



The Dean of Students' Office reserves the right not to approve a personal absence due to but not limited to: excessive absences, dismissals or tardies, critical timing of requested absence (near midterms, end of quarter, near finals, etc.), etc. If a personal absence is approved by the Dean of Students' Office, the student must contact his teachers immediately to plan in advance for missed work.

Students may be denied the opportunity to participate in school related activities/events that require a school absence if a student has missed an excessive amount of school; is extremely behind in his work; is failing a class; or as a disciplinary consequence. Teachers and/or administrators may withdraw permission for the student to attend.

### **Pre-Approved College Visits**

For college visits, a college visit form must be completed and turned into the Dean of Students' Office for approval at least five (5) school days in advance or the absence will be unexcused and subject to penalty. The St. Thomas form for college visits is located on the School website (under Dean of Students' Office or Counseling) or in the Counseling Office.

The Dean of Students' Office reserves the right not to approve a college visit due to but not limited to: excessive absences, dismissals or tardies of the student, academic standing, or critical timing of requested absence (near midterms, end of quarter, near finals, etc.), etc.

Once approved by the Dean of Students' Office, the student must contact his teachers immediately to plan in advance for missed work.

After returning from an approved college visit, the student must provide documentation by the college confirming the visit.

### **Make-up Work Policy for Excused Absences**

It is the responsibility of the individual student to see their teacher(s) to make up any graded work missed because of an excused absence. Students will have one (1) day plus the number of days he was absent to complete work due after he returns. After this, make-up work may be accepted at the discretion of the teacher. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, the student may not fax or email the assignment to the School, unless explicitly approved by the teacher.

Make-up tests, if applicable, will be scheduled at a time designated by the teacher. If a student fails to make up a test and makes no other arrangement within the allotted time, at the discretion of the teacher, the student may not be given the test. Students or parents may request homework assignments for extended absences. A student returning to School during the school day is required to locate the teacher of each class missed to get any assignment(s) and/or take any test(s) missed.

Students are required to check with their teachers before a School-related absence (all day, early dismissal, etc.), to make a plan for missed work, test, quiz, etc. Work due that day must be turned in before leaving for the activity. Tests or quizzes missed must be made up the next day.

### **Unexcused Absences**

All other absences from School will be considered unexcused, subject however to the review and discretion of the Dean of Students. When an absence is considered unexcused, students are not permitted to make up tests, examinations, or quizzes that are missed. These guidelines apply to all school days including those immediately before and after vacations. In the case of truancy, the student receives a "zero" on all tests, quizzes and assignments due that day. Excessive absenteeism, excused or unexcused, may result in termination of enrollment, non-renewal of future enrollment, denial of grade promotion or other disciplinary consequences.

## **Absence policy before and after a holiday or break:**

Students shall not be absent on the day or consecutive days before or after any major holiday. This includes, but is not limited to Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas break, MLK Day, Spring Break, and Easter Break. All absences will be considered unexcused unless the family is able to produce a valid excuse from a certified physician for illness or a serious family situation as determined by the Dean of Students Office at least five school days in advance. Any tests, assignments, or other deliverables due on these days will not be excused and students will receive a zero (0) for the assignments. Tests, assignments, and deliverables for these days may not be taken early or late.

One day may be missed before or after a holiday to accommodate a college visit or college-recruiting event. In accordance with our handbook, this absence will count as a pre-approved excused absence if the following protocol is completed and approved at least five (5) school days prior to the college visit or showcase. The STH College Visit form must be completed in both instances and presented to the Dean of Students Office at least five (5) school days in advance. Once approval is granted, students are required to contact their teachers immediately and make a plan for all work that will be missed (also no later than five (5) in advance). Upon their return, students must provide evidence of the college visit/event to the Dean's Office.

## **Tardiness**

Students who are late to school must go directly to the Dean of Students' Office and present their ID card to be admitted. The Dean of Students' Office will issue a tardy pass for the student to be admitted to class.

Students who fail to check in through the Dean of Students' Office (even if arriving between class periods, lunch, or flex times) will be considered truant for classes missed and face the consequences of truancy.

Tardies to the first period of the school day are considered unexcused unless the Dean of Students' Office has received prior notification of late arrival from the parents/guardians, and the tardiness is due to illness, doctor's appointments, court appearances, or pre-approved personal issues.

Traffic congestion, trains, pre-scheduled road construction are not considered a legitimate excuse for an excused tardy. Only mitigating traffic issues such as but not limited to closed lanes due to a traffic accident may be considered for an excused tardy at the discretion of the Dean of Students' Office. Students are allowed three (3) unexcused tardies per semester before the student receives consequences, allowing a window of opportunity for adjustments to departure times, routes, taken, etc.

Students who arrive late due to a late night extra-curricular event will be considered unexcused. The only exception is if a school coach or moderator contacts the Dean of Students' Office before the school day begins about unusual mitigating circumstances warranting the late arrival.

After every three (3) unexcused tardies (including morning and class period tardies) students will be required to meet with the Dean of Students to determine the corrective actions required. Subsequent unexcused tardies will result in further requirements such as parent conferences, detentions, and/or loss of extracurricular privileges.

For parents to view total tardies to all class periods, parents may look in their STH portal on the progress page under Attendance Summary and click on view totals.

Excessive tardiness may result in termination of enrollment, non-renewal of future enrollment, denial of grade promotion or other disciplinary consequences.



## **Early Dismissal**

When it is necessary for a student to leave school early, the parent must email or call the Dean of Students' Office (the day before or the morning of before 7:45 a.m.) stating the reason and time for the dismissal. Students must get an early dismissal slip before 7:45 a.m. from the Dean of Students' Office.

Except for an emergency, the Dean of Students' Office may not be in a position to immediately retrieve a student and pull them out of class for an early dismissal. Parents must properly notify the Dean of Students' Office or it may not be possible for the student to be released early.

For a medical early dismissal, a doctor's note must be provided to the Dean of Students' Office before the next day.

No student may leave campus, even with a parent, without first checking out through the Dean of Students' Office.

If a student is returning to campus later in the school day after a dismissal, the student must check back in at the Dean of Students' Office before resuming campus activity (even if arriving between class periods, lunch or flex times).

No student will be released during the school day to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or parent designee.

Doctor's appointments and other non-school business should be carried out on days when there is an early dismissal, when possible.

## **Dismissal**

If a student's regular routine of pick-up changes, a parent must first inform the Dean of Students' Office. If School personnel are not familiar with the person who comes to pick up the student, a State issued ID will be required, as well as prior authorization from the parent by fax or email (the School cannot accept authorization over the phone).

## **Medical Excuses for Physical Education**

Medical excuses from Physical Education class for more than one day must be in writing from the doctor or a penalty will be imposed on the student's grade. A doctor's note to miss Physical Education must be turned into the Dean of Students' Office.

## **Academic Policies**

The student course load is seven (7) subjects and no more than one study hall per semester. Students will earn credit in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies each year.

To be eligible for honors courses, a student must meet established criteria which may include placement tests, academic prerequisites and/or teacher accommodation. Current students may appeal teacher recommendations between May 1 and May 15 if second semester averages meet the academic prerequisites.

Student schedules are not created or changed based upon requests for specific teachers, to accommodate friendships, or for specific semesters. Schedule and/or teacher changes will be initiated by the School when operational needs require or when the administration believes the change will be in the best interests of the student and/or institution. Please understand that the School and administration often place students in particular classes to ensure a quality mix of students and to enhance everyone's learning experiences.

Course selections are based on curriculum requirements, previous courses, grades, and electives selected by the student. Final course selections determine staffing requirements, class sizes, classroom selection, and teacher daily schedules. For these reasons, student course selections for the following academic year cannot be changed after May 1.

Underclassmen are not permitted to repeat a failed course during the fall/spring semesters. It must be taken in summer school. Seniors who fail a required course in the fall semester must make it up in night school during the spring semester.



All summer recovery courses must be approved in advance by the Principal or Assistant Principal. At its discretion, the School may require the student take the summer recovery course at St. Thomas if offered by the School rather than at another institution. No credit will be given for summer recovery courses taken at another institution unless pre-approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Generally, if a course is offered by St. Thomas in the summer alternative courses at other institutions will not be approved regardless of family scheduling conflicts, vacations or other issues.

## Failures and Summer School Credit Recovery

A student who fails to earn credit for a required course must acquire the credit in St. Thomas' summer school credit recovery program. If a student fails a course that is not offered in St. Thomas' summer program, students may recover credit in another pre-approved summer school in order to recover the credit needed to return to St. Thomas the following year. Pre-approval for summer programs is determined by the Assistant Principal and communicated by the student's academic counselor.

The only exception to the credit recovery policy is for full-year courses in Math and World Languages. These courses have content that is scaffolded upon first semester content and skills. In this case, if the student earns a second semester average of C- or higher, the first semester failing grade will be changed to a D-. Senior or AP level courses are not included in this exception.

Credit recovery courses taken at St Thomas High School will become part of the school record and will be included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average (GPA). Both the original course and the credit recovery course will be on the transcript. Pre-approved courses not taken at St. Thomas will not be included in the computation of the cumulative GPA but will be listed on the transcript.

Students earning less than a C- in a core course during the school year may have the option of taking the course again in the St. Thomas summer credit recovery program during the summer immediately following that school year. After successful completion of the summer program, the student's transcript will be updated as follows:

Summer School Grade	Change to Transcript
90 or Above	C+
80 to 89	C
75 to 79	C-
Below 75	No Change to Transcript

## Parent-Teacher Communication

In the event that any parent needs to contact a teacher or administrator, the parent should do so via email. Addresses can be found on the St. Thomas Website ([www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)) and the STH Portal.

Parents/guardians may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time by making arrangements in advance with the teacher via email or by contacting the School Office. In consideration of the great demands placed on teachers, the administration requests that parents/guardians refrain from engaging teachers in a discussion at times when their attention needs to be on their class. Parents and students may not call teachers or the administrator at their home and should refrain from communicating with them on personal email addresses or cell phone numbers.

## **STH Portal**

Parents and students may access class LAPs (Learning Action Plans) and student grades on STH Portal, our learning management system. Parents and students are provided with log-in instructions.

### **Semester Examination Policy**

1. Students are not excused from scheduled semester exam times except for extenuating circumstances such as a serious illness verified by a doctor's note or family emergency such as a death in the family.
2. After notifying the Dean of Students' Office and documentation of illness or emergency is submitted, students will reschedule their final exams at a time set by the Assistant Principal.
3. Any other extenuating reason must be submitted to the Dean of Students' Office at least one month in advance and approved by the Principal. Otherwise, students who miss exams will receive a zero for that exam.
4. For students who receive pre-approval for other extenuating reasons, the exam(s) time will be administered at a time and date to be determined by the Assistant Principal and will cost \$100 per exam to cover the cost the proctor.
5. All semester exam grades are final.
6. The semester average is determined by a combination of 40% first quarter, 40% second quarter, and 20% final exam or final project.
7. Cheating or violation of testing protocol on a semester exam may result in a zero on the exam or other disciplinary consequences at the determination of the Dean of Students' Office.

### **Report Cards**

All grades will be reported electronically and parents can access grades through the STH Portal. Electronic reporting of grades will be blocked until all school accounts are settled. Additionally, the School may in its discretion withhold a student's transcript until the family's financial account is current.

### **Academic Due Process**

1. In the event of a question regarding grades or other academic matters, the concerned parties should contact the teacher, present their grievance and allow the teacher a reasonable time to deal with the grievance. In extreme circumstances, the concerned parties may reach out to the Department Dean or Principal directly.
2. If the issue is not resolved, the parties should first consult the Department Dean, then the Assistant Principal. The teacher may be informed that they have been consulted.
3. If the issue is not resolved, the requests may be taken to the Principal.

### **Senior Exemptions from Final Examinations**

Exemptions from the final exam are possible for seniors during the first semester in ½ credit semester courses and in all second semester courses. To be eligible seniors must have at least a 90 average in the class and not have more than five absences from the class period during the semester (school related excused absences and one excused college visit do not count toward the five absences).

### **Junior Exemptions from Final Examinations**

Exemptions from the final exams are possible for juniors in the spring semester, in full year courses.

To be eligible juniors must have at least a 90 average in the class and not have more than five absences from the class period during the semester (school related excused absences and one excused college visit do not count toward the five absences).



## Academic Probation and Ineligibility

If a student is failing two or more subjects at the end of the semester, he will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. If at the end of the probationary period, the student is still failing one or more subjects, he may be subject to dismissal for poor academic performance. Any student who is not carrying a 2.0 grade point average or greater by the end of his freshman year, or at the end of any subsequent semester, will be placed on academic probation. A student who has not earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or greater by the end of the fall semester of his sophomore year, or any subsequent semester, will meet with the Principal and Assistant Principal. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss best options for said student, including the possibility of withdrawal or dismissal from St. Thomas.

A student who fails more than one subject at the end of the first quarter, the second quarter, the first semester of the third quarter will be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities. Such student will not be allowed to participate in practices, games, contests, meetings, performing arts, or any other extracurricular activity. If a student is deemed ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities due to poor grades, the student's moderator or coach may, once every three weeks, request the student's grades be re-evaluated by the Assistant Principal to determine if the student is eligible to return to his extracurricular activity. Students may be barred from missing classes for extracurricular/athletic events if the student has missed an excessive amount of school, is extremely behind in his work, or is failing one or more classes.

## Grading Scale

St. Thomas does not rank students. To compute cumulative grade point average, courses are weighted according to the following criteria:

1. Grade point averages are based on a 4-point scale
2. Advanced and Advanced Placement courses will be given an additional point when calculating GPA.
3. The Physical Education grade is not calculated in the GPA.
4. Cumulative GPA is rounded to the nearest hundredth of a decimal point.

**Below is the grading scale to translate grades into a 4-point scale:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>GPA Regular</b>	<b>GPA Weighted</b>
A	93-100	4.0	5.0
A-	90-92	4.0	5.0
B+	87-89	3.3	4.3
B	83-86	3.0	4.0
B-	80-82	3.0	4.0
C+	79	2.3	3.3
C	77-78	2.0	3.0
C-	75-76	2.0	3.0
D+	74	1.3	2.3
D	71-73	1.0	2.0
D-	70	1.0	2.0
F	0-69	0	0



## Academic Honesty - Plagiarism and Cheating

Academic dishonesty in any form, on any assignment, is a serious matter, and the determination of instances of academic dishonesty and resulting academic and/or disciplinary action are at the sole discretion of the teacher and the Dean of Students' Office.

All work that students complete for which they receive credit must be their own. A student who asks or allows another person to complete or submit the student's work is responsible for the actions of the other person.

Cheating and plagiarism are academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is the presentation of the words, ideas, concepts, images, or works of another as one's own. Material (in whole or paraphrased) taken from a primary or secondary source without following standards of conventional attribution, and/or without appropriate reference citation is considered to be plagiarized. Cheating is obtaining (or attempting to obtain) something by dishonest or deceptive means. A failing grade will be recorded for any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or, completed by means of academic dishonestly, or deception.

Lending homework to a fellow student to copy is considered cheating by both participants. Discussing the items on a test before all students have taken the test is also considered cheating by all participants. Cheating also includes, without limitation, dishonestly storing information on calculators, computers, and cell phones, as well as text messaging, emailing, or instant messaging information to others.

Situations involving cheating or plagiarism on schoolwork (tests, quizzes, homework) will result in a zero, and further disciplinary action in the discretion of the School.

Honest students are troubled when they see instances of cheating. Students often witness behavior that is not observed by a teacher. Academic honesty is jeopardized and class grades may be affected.

Students should discuss concerns with their teachers. Students may help other students by warning them that cheating is a violation of St. Thomas principles and policies. Seeing or observing another student engage in any act of academic dishonesty and not reporting this act imperils academic integrity and is considered a conduct violation because it is behavior inconsistent with the mission and values of St. Thomas.

### **Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:**

1. Using unauthorized notes, texts, study aids, calculators, "cheat sheets" or electronic based information, as identified as unauthorized by the teacher
2. Giving or receiving information or observing the work of another student during classroom assignment, quiz, test, or exam
3. The use of a cell phone for any reason or having a phone, smartwatch, camera pen or other electronic device on one's person during a test or examination
4. Violations of a teacher's classroom testing policy or collaborative work
5. Staying in class while a teacher discusses a test that you have not taken and not reminding the teacher you have not taken the test
6. Altering a graded work assignment or altering a graded work after it has been returned and then submitting it for re-grading
7. Allowing another person to do one's work and then submitting it under one's own name
8. Submitting identical or similar papers in two different classes for credit
9. Telling someone who has not yet taken a test or quiz what is on the test or quiz
10. Asking someone who has already taken a test or quiz what is on the test or quiz
11. In a foreign language, using a "translation engine", either purchased software or a translation website or using an English translation of a work





12. Acquiring answers for any work of examination from any unauthorized source, as identified as unauthorized by the teacher
13. Copying homework or class work or allowing a student to copy your homework or class work, regardless of either party's intention
14. Sharing or showing your work to another student who has had or has the same assignment
15. Agreeing with any person to commit any act of academic dishonesty
16. Submitting material that is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source
17. Using the ideas of another without crediting the source of paraphrasing sentences or phrases written by another without crediting the source
18. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from any source including the internet
19. Using the internet as a source of material for essays, reports, or projects and not crediting the website
20. Falsifying or inventing any information, data or citations
21. Stealing, reproducing, circulating or gaining access to examination materials, either classroom exams or finals
22. Stealing, retaining, possessing, using or circulating previously given examination materials, either classroom exams or final exams, without specific authorization of the teacher
23. Failure to complete an assignment individually. Students should assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless their teacher explicitly authorizes otherwise
24. Using Cliff's Notes or similar published study guides or guides available on the Internet and not reading a literary work
25. Skipping a class to avoid any academic activity
26. Signing another's name to a document, including but not limited to a Progress Report
27. Providing false information or failing to cooperate in any inquiry regarding academic dishonesty
28. Copying or altering computer files that are not one's property is stealing or vandalism
29. Purchasing or selling review sheets for final examinations

## Homework Policy

The faculty of St. Thomas High School believes that homework should enhance learning, prepare students for learning, or provide opportunities for additional practice. Homework at St. Thomas is carefully designed to aid teachers in assessing student learning and to enhance student learning. Homework is any expectation that a student will use time to do work outside of class. This could include reading, written work, research, studying, etc.

### Teacher Responsibilities

- Teachers believe that homework should never be a replacement for direct instruction of a learning objective.
- Teachers have the freedom to decide if and when homework is needed to support student learning.
- Homework assignments will be designed to enhance learning, prepare students for a lesson, or to provide additional practice of skills learned and demonstrated in class.
- Homework assigned will be used in a purposeful manner in the following class period as evidenced by the LAP or teaching plan for that course.
- Prior to a homework assignment, teachers will fully explain the purpose of the homework and review the directions for the assignment.
- Freshman & Sophomore teachers will include time at the start of each lesson to guide and support students adding assignments to their planner.
- Teachers will check for homework related emails and respond by the end of business each day.



## **Student Responsibilities**

- Students will use a planner or calendar to organize their academic responsibilities as noted on the LAP or STH Portal.
- Students will organize and maintain notes or class materials so that they can reference them as they complete assigned homework.
- Students will submit assignments by the posted deadline or meet with the teacher prior to the deadline to discuss impediments to their progress with the assignment.
- Students will arrange meetings with teachers and LEC specialists to request assistance with homework or class material when they feel challenged or uncertain about the material. Additionally, students understand that they may be expected to attend mandatory tutorials held by a teacher or LEC specialist.
- Students who are ill or absent will meet with teachers to create a make-up plan for missing assignments or assessments. Students who are absent for an extended period of time will meet with their counselor to create a make-up plan.
- Students will complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, upholding the values of Goodness, Discipline & Knowledge.
- Students should check their email, at minimum, twice daily to ensure that they are aware of any important academic announcements, including changes to the LAP.
- When making videos, a power point presentation, or writing a report, students must refrain from making inappropriate sexual, drug, alcohol, violence, or cigarette/vaping references or innuendoes.
- Students must not ridicule others because of their disability, sex, religion, ethnic, national origin, or racial characteristics at any time.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

- Parents will provide an appropriate space at home for their sons to do their homework.
- Parents should check their son's assignments and grades once a week, and have a discussion about his planner, and any zeros or missing assignments. When a student's grades meet or exceed his personal goals, parents are encouraged to give their son's praise.
- Parents should support homework completion. This can include helping students clarify instructions, acquiring resources, helping with time management/organization, discussing effective learning habits, and reinforcing the relevance or importance of the task. Parent support should not include completing content for the student.
- Parents should encourage and coach students to self-advocate and communicate directly with teachers if they are struggling with homework expectations.
- If a student is struggling or consistently receiving low grades, parents should collaborate with faculty (teachers, counselors, LEC) to formulate and implement a support plan.
- Recommended Homework Guidelines
- Non-advanced or Non-AP elective courses are encouraged to limit homework to one assignment per school week. Students understand that specialty classes like Band, Choir, or Yearbook may require additional time outside of class for assignments or performances.
- Teachers should only assign homework for the day on which a course meets. EX: Mr. Bryant's 12th Grade AP Fencing Class meets on an A Block day. He will assign 20 minutes of practice that evening. Mr. Bryant will not assign additional practice for the next night as that time is for the work assigned by B block teachers.



- Recommended Time for Homework:
  - Freshmen Block Days: 25 minutes per class (40 minutes if in an Adv. / AP Class)
  - Freshmen 8 Period Days: 10 minutes per class
  - Sophomore Block Days: 30 minutes per class (40 minutes if an Adv. / AP)
  - Sophomore 8 Period Days: 10 minutes per class
  - Juniors / Seniors Block Days: 30 minutes per class (50 minutes if Adv. / AP)
  - Juniors / Seniors 8 Period Days: 15 minutes per class
    - When it is expected that students spend time outside of class studying for a major grade assessment or when a class is engaged in a long-term project, research paper, or lab report, the teacher is encouraged to account for this activity in their allotted homework time.
    - Recommended minutes are estimates based on general student performance. Individual students may need more time to complete work based on their educational background and executive functioning skills.

**Sample Freshman Homework Load (Non-advanced)**

<b>Block A</b>	<b>Block B</b>
Math - 25 minutes	Spanish 1 - 25 minutes
English - 25 minutes	Theology - 25
Speech - (potential 25 minutes)	World Geography - 25 minutes
Study Hall	Biology - 25 minutes
<b>75 minutes total or 50 minutes</b>	<b>100 minutes total</b>

**Sample Senior Homework Load**

<b>Block A</b>	<b>Block B</b>
Math - 30 minutes	Theology - 30 minutes
AP English - 50 minutes	Film Studies - (Potential 30)
Drawing 2 - (Potential 30)	AP Gov. - 50 minutes
Study Hall	Physics - 30 minutes
<b>110 minutes total or 80 minutes</b>	<b>140 minutes total or 110</b>



## Standardized Testing

Standardized tests are administered to students each year. Students are tested in several academic areas including English/language arts, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The purpose of the testing program is to monitor student achievement. The results of such tests are used to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in academic areas, and may be used to determine eligibility for promotion to the next grade or the need for summer School. Also, test results are used to determine the effectiveness of educational programs and how programs can be improved.

## St. Thomas Club and Honor Roll

St. Thomas Club students must maintain a 4.0 GPA. Honor Roll students must maintain a 3.5 GPA

A permanent member of the St. Thomas Club is a student who has been on the St. Thomas Club for seven (7) consecutive semesters.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian are announced at the annual Academic Awards Night. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined at the end of seven (7) semesters. The student with the highest grade point average and the second highest grade point average in January of their senior year will be declared Valedictorian and Salutatorian, respectively. A student must have been in attendance at St. Thomas for at least five (5) consecutive semesters in order to be declared Valedictorian or Salutatorian. The grade point average considered will be the grade point average found in the School portal (rounded to the hundredths). In the event of a tie between two (2) or more students using the letter grade scale, numeric averages received in each course will be averaged to determine who is named Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

## Graduation Requirements

All students must successfully complete twenty-eight (28) credits for graduation.

Theology	4 credits (required of all students)
Mathematics	4 credits*
English	4 credits
Social Studies	4 credits
Science	4 credits
Health/Phys. Ed.	1.5 credits
Foreign Language	2 credits
Computer	1 credit
Fine Arts	1 credit
Speech	.5 credit
Electives	2 credits (minimum)
Total	28 credits

*\*Students must take at least eight (8) semesters of Math.*

Students may not take more than 1.5 credits of P.E. toward their graduation requirements.

All students are obligated to successfully complete the School service requirements and retreat requirements during their enrollment at St. Thomas. Please see the Campus Ministry section for details. Final credit for classes is not given until all financial obligations have been met for the year. Transcripts for transfer and/or college are not released until all financial obligations have been met.



## Academic Awards

Four major school awards are presented to graduating seniors at the Academic Awards Assembly in the spring each year:

### Rev. Allnoch Scholar Athlete Award

The student awarded the Allnoch Scholar Athlete Award is a senior with a top GPA who has earned at least two varsity letters during his senior year. He must have participated in each sport for at least two years at St. Thomas and he must have maintained academic excellence by taking and excelling in rigorous courses throughout his entire time at St. Thomas

### Rev. Albert R. Gaelens Goodness, Discipline, And Knowledge Award

Given in honor of Albert R. Gaelens, C.S.B. who was the 21st Principal of St. Thomas, this award is presented to the senior who most exemplifies the School motto, "Teach me goodness, discipline, and knowledge."

The members of the senior class nominate their classmates for this award and the faculty votes on those students receiving the most nominations.

### Principal's Service And Leadership Award

This award is presented to a senior who has shown outstanding leadership and who has been generous in service to the School and the wider community.

### Rev. Ron Schwenzer Campus Ministry Award

This award is presented to a senior who has most exemplified the Man of St. Thomas motto of Faith, Service and Leadership.

### In addition to the senior awards, the following awards are granted:

Department Awards are given to deserving students for each course in the academic departments. One student is chosen as the exemplary student per course by all of the teachers who teach the course.

Academic Letters are awarded to students who have achieved the St. Thomas Club Honor Roll for the previous three semesters. To achieve the St. Thomas Club Honor Rolls, students must have a 4.0 GPA for a semester. Seniors who have achieved the St. Thomas Club Honor Roll for all seven of the previous semesters receive Permanent Membership in the St. Thomas Club.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. PSAT scores from the junior year of high school qualify students for participation in the scholarship program. During their senior year, qualifying students may become Commended Scholars, Semi-finalists, and Finalists in the program. Students may also qualify for the National Hispanic, African American Scholar, and Indigenous Scholar recognition program as well. The criteria for these awards is established by the College Board each year.

The St. Thomas Alumni Association Scholarship is awarded to one deserving student in each of the rising sophomore, junior, and senior classes. Students submit a response to an essay prompt. Submissions are read and winners receive a scholarship towards a portion of the student's tuition for the upcoming school year.

The Goetzmann Writing Prize is awarded in honor of William H. Goetzmann, who graduated from St. Thomas in 1948, received his doctorate in history from Yale and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1967. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors may submit an original writing sample from their time at St. Thomas and the essays are judged by a panel of teachers from across the departments. One winner is chosen.

## Special Junior Awards

The University of Rochester and Rensselaer University sponsor award programs for junior students which recognize outstanding achievement in academic areas. These awards carry with them merit scholarship opportunities for the nominees who choose to attend these schools. Students are nominated by the teachers in the academic departments that coordinate with each award.



# STUDENT SERVICES

## Services for Students with Disabilities

We understand that there may be circumstances when a parent may request that the School provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student’s medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. As the range of requests has grown over the years, the School believes it appropriate to outline the School’s policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

### General Policy

In general, it is our School’s policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student’s minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in a significant disruption to the teacher’s ability to instruct other students, to classroom or school order and discipline, will not pose a threat of harm to the safety of other students or employees, will not require a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission, and will not impose responsibilities on School employees for which they are not trained. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our School and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

### Request and Documentation

For any type of accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must contact the School Nurse of the need. The School Nurse will then advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will state whether the student has an impairment, how the impairment limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

### Release for Communications with Qualified Professional Provider

Sometimes, the documentation received from the qualified professional may raise questions, leave out necessary information, or be unclear as to the recommendations. For that reason, the parent(s) must sign a Release of Information form, permitting the School to communicate with the professional treatment provider, when necessary to clarify documentation or seek necessary additional information. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the physician’s cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process.

### Assessment of Request

Once the School has received a request for accommodation and the required medical documentation, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parent to clarify information and to discuss whether the School will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent’s cost) any special equipment needed, training for the School’s staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the School may advise the parent that the School will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to be tested or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the School or Nurse believe are beyond the scope of the School’s responsibility, the School may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

### Limitations on Requests

Please understand that the School is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. In addition, the School reserves the right to deny a request for accommodation or to modify any consent to previously granted accommodation requests.



## **Responsibilities for Implementing Accommodations**

Depending on the nature of the request, the School may agree to provide the accommodation directly; may require the student to provide the accommodation (such as taking prescribed medications with observation by the Nurse), or may require that the parent provide all aspects of the accommodation. In addition, to the extent that a student may need some type of adjustment or accommodation during off-campus activities, the School may condition the student's participation in such activities upon the parent agreeing to participate in the activity for purposes of monitoring and addressing the student's needs.

## **Release and Waiver**

Depending on the nature of the request and the type of the accommodations, the School may require the parent to execute a release and waiver in favor of the School as a condition to providing the accommodations.

## **Food Allergen Policy**

Families with children who have moderate or severe allergies, must report those to the School Nurse or Director of Health Services in accordance with our Services for Students with Disabilities Policy. In addition, families must indicate all pertinent medical needs on all required school forms.

## **Wellness Counselor**

The Dean of Students' Office includes a full-time Wellness Counselor whose primary responsibility is addressing emergent concerns surrounding student well-being and mental health. Past wellness topics have included stress and anxiety, bullying, healthy coping skills and self-care, the importance of quality sleep, healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, grief, substance misuse, digital citizenship, mental disorders, suicide prevention, and pornography. Our Wellness Counselor provides psychoeducation on prevention and intervention, consultation services to families, and short-term counseling to students who are either self-referred or referred by parents, peers, faculty, or staff. Our Wellness Counselor also proactively checks in with students to build a relationship and inquire about their mental health and well-being.

A Wellness Counselor is on site to provide prevention, education, intervention, counseling, and consultation services to address high-risk behaviors, such as but not limited to alcohol and binge drinking, drug and nicotine use, bullying, cyberbullying, and pornography use. The Wellness Counselor also helps students develop social and emotional skills related to abstract reasoning, self and social awareness, impulse control, emotion regulation, anxiety related issues and any other situation that may support a need for counseling or assistance.

The Wellness Counselor is a qualified credentialed counselor licensed by the state of Texas. Some services may be provided by a master's level graduate student, but always under the supervision of a licensed and approved supervisor.

The enrollment of the student is consent to allow them to receive services from the Wellness Counselor. The School does not provide students or parents/guardians with therapeutic intervention but instead refers individuals to outside medical providers.

While it is important that a student's conversations with a school counselor be kept confidential, confidentiality does have its limitations. According to the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) *Ethical Standards for School Counselors*, counselors must "keep information confidential unless legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed or a breach is required to prevent serious and foreseeable harm to the student or others" (ASCA, 2022).

The most frequent type of breaches includes a student verbalizing the following:

1. Verbal, physical, or sexual abuse
2. Neglect
3. A desire to harm himself
4. A desire to harm someone else



The Wellness Counselor will remind the student of the non-confidential nature of the communication and, in appropriate circumstances, will encourage the student to communicate with the student's parents or other adults regarding the circumstances disclosed. The Wellness Counselor may also directly inform the parent and/or administration of sensitive communications to find ways to help the student and/or family.

Students and parents should be aware that the Wellness Counselor may be required to report communications from students to law enforcement or child abuse authorities when the nature of the communication reveals the immediate or imminent risk of harm to the student or others, or an actual or potential violation of the child abuse laws.

In addition, if a student observes or receives information that another student may be struggling with personal issues or has concerns that a student may harm themselves or others, please report such information to the Wellness Counselor.

The School may require evaluation and/or on going therapy along with a reciprocal release so that the School can openly communicate with the therapist as a condition of continued enrollment if the School deems an evaluation or therapy to be necessary. The School may further require a medical assessment confirming a student's ability to return to School in its discretion, with such assessment being at the sole cost of the student's parent(s) and/or guardian(s).

## **Counseling**

Each incoming freshman is assigned to a counselor who will work with him during his four years at St. Thomas. The counselors are available before, during and after school for those seeking assistance with questions regarding their future plans, their course of studies, college counseling, and creation of an academic plan for extended absences. Counseling at St. Thomas is a vital part of the school community, extending various services to its students, faculty, and parents. Recognizing the principles of Christianity, the counselors strive to promote Christian values in the St. Thomas community. The goal of the counseling department is to assist the student academically and vocationally.

## **Transcripts**

The transcripts for present students are sent free of charge. Transcripts for alumni may be ordered for \$5.00 each. Transcripts will not be released or provided to another school until all financial obligations are satisfied with the Business Office.

## **Student Records and Information**

Requests for student records and transcripts must be directed in writing to the School Office. The School reserves the right to withhold student transcripts and records for non-payment of tuition or fees. The School will also require the parent to sign a consent form before a student's transcript or other records/information will be released.

The School makes reasonable efforts to ensure that both natural parents (or legal guardians) receive substantially the same information (transcripts, records, appointments, etc.). The School must rely upon the correctness and completeness of parental information when the student is enrolled. In situations of divorced or separated parents, if one parent believes that the other parent is restricted from receiving information about their child(ren) from the School, in visiting/picking up/dropping off their child(ren), in participating in parent/student conferences, and so on, such parent must provide a valid court order to the School evidencing such restrictions. Parents are under an ongoing obligation to provide the School with new or subsequent orders, promptly upon issuance.





## **Learning Enrichment Center (LEC)**

The LEC is open to students from 7:30 – 5:00. It is a place where students can do independent research, collaborate in study rooms, check out books, study, and read. Students in study halls who wish to spend the period in the library to do research, read, or use the computers must obtain an ehallpass from the LEC staff before their study hall. Students do not need to have passes to visit the LEC before or after school, during lunch, or during flex periods.

LEC privileges may be denied to students who do not comply with all LEC rules. All LEC materials checked out by students must be returned prior to taking final exams or having files forwarded to any other institution or released to any individual. Students must properly sign out LEC materials prior to leaving the LEC and are responsible for taking care of and returning any LEC materials in the same condition that such materials were checked out.

## **Bookstore**

Student textbooks are ordered online through our Virtual Bookstore hosted by BNC K-12 (Formerly called MBS Direct). Physical textbooks will be mailed to you, while digital products will be loaded onto your son's school-issued laptop. When visiting the Virtual Bookstore, please purchase all required materials, but do not attempt to load the digital products onto the student's laptop. Students will be given guidance and assistance in loading digital products onto their laptops when school begins. If you have questions, please send an email to [bookstore@sths.org](mailto:bookstore@sths.org).

Students should write their names on all of their books, notebooks, binders, etc. in order to quickly identify any belongings that may be found.

## **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria is open before school for breakfast, studying, or gathering. Hot lunches, as well as a variety of other items, are sold. The student is to leave his place clean after eating, discarding waste in the receptacles provided. The eating areas are limited to the cafeteria and courtyard for underclassmen, while Seniors are permitted to use the Grove. Students must remain in these areas for the entire lunch period unless permission is granted to go elsewhere by the Dean of Students' Office. Students may not order food to be delivered on campus. Students may pay with debit card, credit card, or with a Sage Dining account. Cash is not accepted at the checkout line. Information on opening a Sage Dining account for students is available on at [www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org) under the student life section. Funds can be deposited online or by check. Students may hand the cashier a check or cash which will be deposited in their account.

Credit remaining on a student's account is rolled over to the next year, with the exception of senior year and students who withdraw. Those balances are donated to the School at the end of the year unless a specific request is made to the Business Office within thirty (30) days of the student's last date of attendance.

A student may be assigned isolated seating in the cafeteria or required to eat in a different location (office, classroom, etc.) at the discretion of an administrator or faculty member when behavior causes disruption and/or interferes with the orderly operation of the cafeteria.

## **Business Office**

The Business Office hours are 7:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday through Friday for transactions with students and/or parents. All payments in form of check, cash or credit card should be directed to the Business Office and not left with teachers, coaches or other school employees. Many student fees and items can be paid for at the STH online store accessible via the School's website.



## **STUDENT LIFE**

All activities sponsored by St. Thomas are subject to the rules and regulations established by the administration and published in this handbook.

Away from school, students are responsible for behaving in a manner reflecting the values of St. Thomas, especially if students are representing our school in any capacity.

### **Campus Ministry**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Campus Ministry Team serves as the foundation for pastoral support for the St. Thomas community: all students, their families, faculty, and administration. In reverence and commitment to sacramental life, we offer compelling faith-formation programs, edifying retreats, and a commitment to service within the social justice context of the Catholic Church. As we strive to make Jesus Christ known to our students, they in turn discover the assurance of God's Grace, transforming into intentional disciples that are leaven of the Gospel, and ultimately, servant-leaders partaking in the heavenly banquet.

#### **Faith Formation**

A man of St. Thomas is a faith-filled learner who lives in accordance with the standards of the Gospels. Campus Ministry discerns and meets the needs of our students, guiding them and encouraging encounters with our Lord Jesus Christ. Students of all persuasions will be challenged to grow spiritually.

#### **Retreats**

Retreats are an essential part of the St. Thomas experience. Every freshman, sophomore, junior and senior is required to partake in a mandatory overnight retreat provided by STH during the school year. The retreats may be rescheduled, canceled or changed at the School's sole discretion.

#### **Freshman Retreat: Camp Aquinas**

In support of the Basilian tradition to teach Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge, and of our vision to form strong Catholic servants to the Church and the world, this program forges young men into servant-leaders; this is accomplished through a comprehensive leadership curriculum based both in authentic mentorship and the powerful experience of nature.

Camp Aquinas is a multi-day immersive outdoor retreat experience that takes place in August. It serves to initiate, or "onboard," freshmen into the tradition and culture of St. Thomas, who will become known as "The Men of St. Thomas." This program also offers consistent mentorship opportunities among faculty, freshmen, and upperclassmen. Ultimately, our students experience faith as it is lived in a nurturing community.

#### **Sophomore Retreat: Take Up Your Cross**

This retreat is an extended meditation on Matthew 16:24-26:

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?"

Students will wrestle, like Job, with the reality of suffering, finding the answer not only in the grandeur of God's creation, but also by delving into the mystery of Christ's Passion. They will discover that only by dying to oneself can they then rise together with Jesus Christ. In their Houses, students will cement the bonds of brotherhood and unity, realizing that strength is in mutual dependence as they overcome obstacles together.



## Junior Retreat: Life In Christ

This retreat is about exploring the powerful bond between a father and his son. Juniors and their fathers will spend the weekend competing in different games and challenges, pray together, and spend time in the great outdoors away from technology and distractions. This is a mandatory retreat. There will be two options for students and their fathers to sign up for. If one's father cannot attend either retreat, he will be paired with a faculty member or he may invite someone in his life who is a role model/father figure.

## Senior Retreat: The Great Commission

In this culminating retreat for the young men of St. Thomas, the focus is Jesus' final command to His Apostles, to "therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).

- Our students will reflect on their unique experience at St. Thomas, assessing where they have matured, and where they still have room to develop
- They will be challenged by alumni, faculty, and administration to take their faith seriously and embody the Gospel message in their daily lives
- They will be urged to listen intently for God's guiding voice, as they move forward in their journey to discover and embrace His tailored plan for their lives

## Vision For Service

"When we live out a spirituality of drawing nearer to others and seeking their welfare, our hearts are opened wide to the Lord's greatest and most beautiful gifts"  
(Evangelii Gaudium, §72)

## St. Thomas Service Overview

In accordance with our Basilian foundation, St. Thomas seeks to glorify God through education and altruism. Our service program, detailed below, is designed to encourage a lifetime of kindness to others in need, with no expectation of reward.

- Every student is responsible for finding and coordinating their service work. We often share opportunities, but the onus of finding and arranging service belongs with our students as part of our preparatory vision.
- Service is defined as direct, hands-on activity that is unpaid, uncredited, and not a disciplinary consequence, nor requisite for a society or award (i.e., the rank of Eagle Scout). Service is not simply donating money or valuable items; it must involve thought, intention, and physical action. It does not include work to help profitable entities. Students may not submit family socialization or household duties as service.
- Service completion and documentation must happen during the Service Year, which runs from June 1 through May 1.
- All students will have a MobileServe™ account to document their service work.

## Our Required Service Metric

Each enrolled student is asked to perform six different service experiences per year of enrollment. An experience consists of an event or series of connected events meant to achieve a specific result to benefit our community and/or those who are marginalized. It must be organized and overseen by adults with a vested interest. Experiences will vary in duration, and this is intentional.

Three experiences will be in Community, and three will be to help the Poor and Vulnerable directly.

**Category 1: Answering the Call to Community and Solidarity:** as Christians, we are responsible for uplifting and supporting others in our community and society.



**Examples:**

St. Thomas volunteering (i.e., Round Up carnival, Eagle Ambassadors & Shadow Guides, fundraisers (Auction), Athletic events/endeavors, etc.);

- Community beautification efforts;
- Non-partisan election volunteering;
- Church volunteer programs (i.e., VBS, Sunday School help, acolyte, band or choir, nursery, tech help, etc.);
- Organized animal welfare program help;
- Food provision (food banks, pantries, or distribution fairs);
- Inclusion activities for those with learning or physical differences; or
- Local festival volunteering.

**Category 2:** Answering the call to the poor and vulnerable: our moral standing can be easily defined by the charitable actions we provide to those in truly desperate or fragile conditions.

**Examples**

- Serving food to the needy (i.e., Loaves & Fishes, Meals on Wheels, etc.);
- Personally visiting those in hospice care, senior health care facilities, and other communities that serve those who are being rehabilitated or are permanently disadvantaged;
- Emergency disaster aid that requires direct contact with those who are impacted; or
- Providing in-person supplies, resources, or actions to help support those who are living below the U.S. poverty line or are in immediate danger or urgent need.

Our school website features a section for Campus Ministry/Service, where a linked list of appropriate service programs and non-profit entities is provided. This is also available by request.

When uncertain, we turn to the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teachings to help determine eligibility of a service opportunity or organization. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whether a service opportunity or organization qualifies for service credit shall be determined by the School according to its sole discretion.

**Additional Clarifications  
Documentation**

All activities are to be documented in MobileServe™ in order to count toward the service program. Every enrollee will have their own school account and will be given the information to access it at the onset of the year.

**Graduation**

Students must meet our service program requirements to be eligible to walk the stage for graduation.

**Service Opportunities from Our Parents**

We often receive notice of service opportunities from our parent community. We will consider those that are at least four weeks into the future only. We regret that we cannot promise to adopt and promote each opportunity we receive.

**Service Opportunities Outside of our Approved List**

As stated previously, our list of approved service ideas and organizations is posted online and publicized often through our bulletins. If an opportunity is not pre-approved, please submit the brief recap of details by email to [veronica.looper@sths.org](mailto:veronica.looper@sths.org). A response will follow shortly. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whether a service opportunity or organization qualifies for service credit shall be determined by the School according to its sole discretion.



## Dances

Dances are sponsored by our Student Council, with the approval of our Principal. Behavior of every attendee is expected to reflect the values of St. Thomas High. All rules, policies and procedures of the School, including those stated in our current Handbook and those communicated by our designated Chaperones, apply to conduct at this dance. Violations of our rules will be addressed through our usual disciplinary processes. At our discretion, we will contact guardians/parents of involved students, and request immediate retrieval of the problematic student(s) from the dance, at said guardian/parent's expense.

Dances do not require a date, and any STH student is welcome to attend 'stag'. Should they opt to bring a guest, our student will need to accompany their date through the entrance and check-in process.

## Lock-in Policy

Lock-in refers to a period of time that our dance will no longer admit or release students to/from the dance. If an emergency such as an illness or injury arises warranting release, parents will be contacted and be required to pick up their student. While our dances will differ with regard to start/end times, every lock-in starts 30 minutes after the dance begins, and ends 30 minutes before the dance concludes.

**Behavioral Expectations** In addition to our regular policies, including those set forth in this Handbook, all attendees are expected to respect each other and our campus by adhering to the following guidelines. Students are responsible for communicating St. Thomas rules and expectations to their guests.

### Prohibited Items & Actions

- Possession or distribution of illegal substances including but not limited to alcohol, controlled substances, nicotine products, vaping or transmitting devices, paraphernalia, product or packaging related to substances is all prohibited

Exceptions: medically necessary items, including inhalers, insulin, anaphylaxis-inhibiting devices

- Consumption of alcohol or controlled substances prior to attending our dance, either by students, guests, or attending chaperones is prohibited

## Consequences for Students in Violation

- Immediate parental notification;
- Dismissal from the dance;
- Other consequences as determined by our Dean of Students, who will initiate a follow-up process for all violations.

## Transportation Policy

The School does not permit party buses, limousines, or other forms of chartered transportation for any dance except Prom. Any chartered vehicle at prom is subject to search by St. Thomas designated personnel.

## Dress Code

This Dress Code applies to our students and their guests, for whom our students are responsible. Standards of our Dress Code have been refined in collaboration with fellow upper Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

Deviations of the Dress Code, at any point during our dances, may result in consequences that include, but are not limited to modification of attire, to denial of entry, or removal from a dance.

The final decision of what is considered appropriate dress is at the sole discretion of St. Thomas.



## **Formal Dance (Prom)**

All individuals attending prom are expected to be in formal attire, including dress shoes. The formal attire must be in good taste, modest, appropriate, and fit properly (no skin-tight or overly loose clothing). Exposed undergarments, low cut necklines, bare midriffs, cutouts, athletic shoes, denim or hats are not permitted.

**Men:** Suit or tuxedo preferred. Sport coat, dress slacks, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes and socks required.

**Women:** Formal attire including gowns, dresses, skirts and dress pants with blouses. .. Dress and skirt length must be 2 inches above the knee or lower and slits must meet this length as well.

## **Semi-Formal Dance (Homecoming)**

All individuals attending homecoming or other semi-formal dances are expected to be in semi-formal attire.

The semi- formal attire must be in good taste, modest, appropriate and fit properly (no skin-tight or overly loose clothing). Exposed undergarments, low cut necklines, bare midriffs, cutouts, athletic shoes, denim or hats are not permitted.

**Men:** Sport Coat, dress slacks, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes and socks required.

**Women:** Semi-formal attire including dresses, skirts and dress pants with blouses. Dress and skirt length must be 2 inches above the knee or lower and slits must meet this length as well.

## **Casual Dance (Orientation)**

While causal events such as orientation allow for more casual attire, dress must still be in good taste, modest, appropriate and fit properly (no skin-tight or overly loose clothing). Exposed undergarments, low cut necklines, bare midriffs, cutouts, athletic shoes, leggings, sweat pants, athletic or athleisure wear, or hats are not permitted.

**Men:** Dress should consist of blue jeans (non-distressed – no tears or fraying), or Khaki “Docker style” shorts and an appropriate t-shirt or collared shirt (no inappropriate logos or verbiage), athletic shoes permitted

**Women:** Dress should consist of blue jeans (non-distressed – no tears or fraying), and an appropriate t-shirt or shirt (no inappropriate logos or verbiage).

## **Senior Class Privileges**

There are no automatic senior class privileges. Each year, senior student council officers may submit a list of requested privileges to the Dean of Students’ Office. The Dean of Students’ Office vets and approves privileges; determines preconditions for privileges; and determines how and when they will commence. The Dean of Students’ Office reserves the right to suspend or cancel any senior privilege on an individual, group or grade wide basis due to misuse.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The School offers a variety of activities including an athletic program and varied selection of non-athletic clubs and organizations. School is a lot more fun for those who participate - go out for a team or join a club! Listen to the announcements, check our website, or stop in the Office to find out more about the activities program.

We do require parents to provide appropriate insurance for athletes. The School assumes no responsibility for injury to students participating in athletics or other School activities. Parents may be required to sign a waiver and release as a condition of their student participating in athletics or other School activities. Students also must pass a physical exam to the School’s satisfaction prior to participating in athletics.

The School does not promise any particular sport or activity will be offered. Furthermore, enrollment at the School does not guarantee that a student will be permitted to participate. Among other things, students must meet athletic eligibility requirements set forth by the School’s athletic league.



Education is first - this is stressed at all times. All students must meet scholastic requirements as outlined in this Handbook in order to participate in athletics and other activities. Discipline is a prime factor in any athletic or extracurricular success - off the field, on the field, in locker rooms, on trips, and in School. Students are to conduct themselves on the highest possible level, being sure that their actions and words are beyond reproach.

Student organizations are important segments of high school life, providing avenues for cultural and spiritual growth. At St. Thomas, they encompass a great variety of interests and provide many diverse activities for their members. Students who intend to seek an elective position in any organization must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0, be in good standing and registered for the following year.

Students should not be permitted, however, to become engrossed in activities to the detriment of their studies.

## **Student Council**

The Student Council serves as the chosen voice of the student body at St. Thomas. Within the structure of our Constitution, they organize and execute decisions related to all student affairs and activities.

Student Council members will be elected by our students, and ultimately enhance relationships among students, administration, and the community.

## **National Honor Society**

The National Honor Society (NHS) is open by invitation only to St. Thomas juniors and seniors. Students considered for membership must meet the following criteria for membership:

Candidates eligible for selection to this chapter must be members of the junior or senior class.

- To be eligible for selection to membership in this chapter, the candidate must have been enrolled for a period equivalent to 7 full credit hours (equivalent to two semesters) at St. Thomas.
- Candidates eligible for election to the chapter shall have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.95. Upon meeting the grade level, enrollment, and GPA standards, candidates shall then be considered based on their service, leadership, and character.
- Candidates must have no discipline infractions and otherwise be in good standing with the Dean of Students' Office in accordance with the Handbook.
- Students must be current with the required service hours.

All students who qualify academically are invited to complete a formal application that reveals the qualifications that make them outstanding with respect to character, scholarship, leadership and service. The invitation to apply will be made in the early part of the fall semester of a student's junior or senior year. A Faculty Committee then reviews the applications and decides which students will represent St. Thomas in the National Honor Society. Emphasis is placed on the demonstration of these qualities while engaged in St. Thomas related activities. Membership is a privilege.

The members of the NHS serve the School and the community in several ways. Tutoring is offered for any St. Thomas student who seeks additional help. NHS members also provide academic support for children at area elementary schools and homeless shelters. NHS members may also serve as hosts for Academic events.



## Dual Officer Positions

Students may not simultaneously hold officer positions in more than one recognized school organization. Recognized organizations include officially recognized clubs, academic societies, Student Council, and achievement/honor-based organizations.

## Round Up

Round Up is the unmatched student body driven fundraising event that generates substantial dollars exclusively for St. Thomas tuition assistance through the sale of raffle tickets. This invaluable initiative dates back for nearly a century, supporting the St. Thomas Basilian tradition and mission of assuring a diverse student enrollment.

Students are responsible for selling a minimum of one quota of raffle tickets. Students are encouraged to sell more than the required quota. Many opportunities to meet the minimum requirement are provided for any student. If, however, a student does not sell his quota, he will be expected to participate in this event by helping to clean the School grounds on the Monday after Round Up and shall not participate in any of the Round Up holidays. These are requirements for all students, including those receiving tuition assistance.

## ATHLETICS

### Objectives

Interscholastic athletics are important to a program of education. Participation contributes to health, happiness, physical skill, emotional maturity, school morale and the ability to experience victory and defeat in an acceptable manner. Anyone who is able and willing to meet the standards of the program is given the opportunity to participate. Games have as chief purposes: sportsmanship, development of playing skills, friendly rivalry, and improved community relations.

Athletics present the individual with the opportunity to make strong friends through responsible teamwork – exercising judgment, thinking quickly, and taking and executing orders to the best of his ability. The athlete learns that success depends on hard work, devotion to the task and enthusiasm, as well as the innate ability of the person.

Athletic events at home or away are under the jurisdiction of TAPPS, NFHS and UIL rules. Students and parents are reminded that, as spectators, they represent St. Thomas. The purpose of attendance at athletic events is to support the team with positive spirit. Parents or students who do not represent the School positively may be removed from and prohibited from future events and be subject to further disciplinary action at the School's discretion.

### Sportsmanship

The St. Thomas winning attitude must be motivated by positive attitudes. Preparations for contests should be centered on developing confidence, loyalty, dedication and strength in unity. Cheers and chants that harass are counterproductive to the ideals that St. Thomas sets forth in its motto: *“Teach Me Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge”* and will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

## SAFETY POLICIES

### Harassment and Bullying Policy

St. Thomas strives to maintain a community which is free of all forms of intimidation and harassment. The work and learning environment fostered by St. Thomas must be one in which all individuals are free to develop relationships, and to work and learn without fear of harassment. Special care must be taken not to embarrass, ridicule or make fun of any person in a way that could be interpreted as harassment or disrespect. Students should be aware that their off campus behavior is also covered under this policy, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior. Harassment is broadly defined to include unreasonable conduct or behavior that is personally





offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with the educational environment of students and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, comments, teasing, and other offensive conduct relating to race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, or disability. Harassment also includes sexual harassment.

**Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:**

- Demanding sexual favors
- Requests for pictures of a sexual nature
- Taking, sending, or posting images of a sexual nature without consent
- Spreading lies or information about another individual's sexual activity
- Coercing sexual activity by threat of punishment or offer of reward
- Obscene or sexually suggestive graffiti
- Displaying or sending pornographic pictures or objects
- Offensive touching, pinching, grabbing, kissing or hugging
- Restraining someone's movement in a sexual way
- Sexual or lewd jokes, remarks, leering, whistling, brushing against the body, or other suggestive or insulting gestures or comments about another's body

**Examples of other forms of harassment based on race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, or disability include, but are not limited to:**

- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct relating to race, ethnicity, or color (using racial slurs, racial or ethnic jokes, comments, name calling based on race or ethnicity, etc.)
- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct teasing or joking about another person's disability, failure to speak English clearly, religious background, clothing, or beliefs, or similar behaviors.

Bullying includes a variety of behaviors, but all involve a person or group trying to take advantage of the power they have to hurt or reject someone else. These behaviors can be carried out, physically (hitting, kicking, pushing), verbally (calling names, taunting, teasing, threatening, ridiculing, spreading rumors, etc.), electronically, sometimes called "cyber-bullying" (posting defamatory remarks or photos, sending threatening emails, creating fake profiles, taking over an account and posting as someone else), or through relational aggression (harming or threatening to harm relationships or acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion) or emotional aggression (teasing, threatening, intimidating others).

Bullying or harassment can occur through any type of communications method, including face-to-face communications, phone, text, email, postings on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat GroupMe, etc.), camera phones, or other forms of technology. The communications can be direct or indirect, such as through friends or others. Any type of offensive conduct, whether on or off campus, on a school bus, online or at a School-related event, can create an uncomfortable school environment.

It is the responsibility of all members of the community to ensure that their words, actions, and interactions with others always reflect the intent to promote respect and trust. Attempts to justify behavior as a "prank" or "joke" do not change its harassing or bullying nature if the object of the joke or prank is not a willing participant. Whatever the basis for the harassment or bullying, it is prohibited.

All concerns relating to harassment or bullying should be reported immediately to The Dean of Students Office. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff, or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of bullying or harassment, will report the incident to the appropriate individual identified above. Delays in reporting may compromise the School's ability to appropriately investigate.

When the School administration becomes aware of harassment or bullying, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the School for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture. Conduct need not meet the legal definition of harassment or bullying to violate the School's expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or bullying. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

This policy is not to be construed in such a way as to suppress respectful thought, study or discussion concerning controversial issues. The purpose of the policy is to prohibit harassment, as defined above, in order that each member of the St. Thomas community has an equal opportunity to work, learn and develop to his or her fullest potential.

## Hazing

Although we encourage students to participate in School-related athletics, clubs, associations, organizations and other groups, the School prohibits all forms of hazing. Hazing refers to any activity expected of a student to join or to continue membership or participation in any group where the activity produces or could be expected to produce mental, emotional, or physical discomfort, injury, fright, degradation, humiliation, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule to the student, regardless of the student's willingness or apparent willingness to participate. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, acts of personal servitude (i.e., forced labor or service), sleep deprivation, restrictions on personal hygiene, yelling, swearing, insulting or demeaning verbal abuse, being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire, requiring certain haircuts or styles, consumption of vile or other non-food substances, consumption of alcohol, smearing of skin with vile substances, brandings, writing or marking on one's skin or clothes, physical beatings, paddling or other physical abuse, performing sexual simulation or sexual acts, stunts or dares that could result in physical injury or harm to a person's mental, emotional or social well-being, any act in violation of the law or School policy, and any other activity that could fall within the definition of hazing. If you think a particular activity could possibly be hazing, then it probably is. If you are not sure, then you need to contact the Dean of Students Office and ask.

A student violates this policy whenever the student engages, assists, or attempts to engage or assist in the planning or committing of any hazing activity, whether on or off School property. Each student is also responsible for immediately reporting any hazing activity or plans for any hazing activity to the Dean of Students Office. The failure to make such a report is also a violation of this policy.

When the School administration becomes aware of any actual or planned hazing activity, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the School for serious violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of hazing activity.

## Reporting Racism or Bias

The School does not tolerate racism or bias based on race, color, national origin or ethnicity whether it occurs on or off campus/at the School. **Examples of racist comments and conduct include, but are not limited to:**

- notes, cartoons, graffiti containing racially offensive language or pictures;
- name calling, jokes or rumors involving race, color, national origin, or ethnicity;
- threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another or a group of individuals because of the other's race, color, national origin, or ethnicity;
- racial slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's race, color, national origin, or ethnicity;
- written or graphic material, including on social media or circulated electronically, containing racial comments or stereotypes that degrade individuals or members of protected classes;



- a physical act of aggression or violence upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race, color, national origin, or ethnicity; or
- other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by race, color, national origin, or ethnicity.

This policy applies to students, parents, employees, vendors, and visitors. Anyone who is the victim of this type of conduct or who becomes aware of it must report it to the School’s HR Manager or Director of Community and Inclusion. You will not be penalized in any way for making a good faith report of improper conduct. If you believe that you have been retaliated against for making a report under this policy in good faith, please immediately contact the School’s HR Manager or Director of Community and Inclusion. Please do not assume that the School is aware of the improper conduct.

## Security Cameras

The School utilizes surveillance video cameras in its non-private areas to assist with student and employee safety and security. Aside from bathrooms and locker rooms, the School retains the right to conduct video surveillance of any portion of the School’s property, which includes all persons and property located anywhere on School property, including, without limitation, parking lots. Therefore, please be on notice that your (students and parents) activities may be recorded and also may be monitored. These video recordings are the property of the School and the School generally does not make these recordings available to parents or students. However, the School may in its sole discretion provide the recordings to law enforcement or other governmental agencies.

Students and parents are prohibited from tampering with, disabling, or otherwise interfering with surveillance equipment or video recordings. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal.

## Visitors

This is a closed campus. Outside visitors are not allowed to visit campus, including but not limited to classrooms, cafes, libraries, gymnasiums, performance spaces or hallways, without prior permission from the administration. Aside from School- sanctioned events, parents or guardians are strongly discouraged and may be prohibited from visiting their student during School hours. However, those parents or guardians who need to visit campus during School hours and have permission from a teacher or the administration, are asked to follow these guidelines:

1. Make an Appointment: If you are coming to see an administrator or a faculty member, please call or email to make an appointment in advance.
2. Check-in in the main office: When you arrive on campus, please report directly to the main office for authorization. If you need to proceed from there to any other part of the campus you will be issued a visitor badge.
3. I.D. Check: Please do not be offended if you are asked to show identification. This is a safety measure intended to protect your children.

**Please Note:** For the safety and security of our students, anyone seen on campus during School hours without a visitor badge will be reminded to obtain one or asked to leave campus.

## Weapons and Threats

The School takes all threats seriously, even when students or parents make comments in jest, on the internet, by text, or away from school toward or about another student, employee, or the School. Students and parents are prohibited from bringing any type of weapon or ammunition (whether operable or not and whether licensed or not) or things that resemble weapons, such as martial arts training materials (training balisong, nunchucks, etc.) and look-alike or toy weapons to School (including, without limitation, parking lots, athletic fields, and outbuildings) or School-sponsored events. This prohibition includes, without limitation, knives (all types including, without limitation, pocketknives, and even those that are part of a key chain), guns (all types), tasers, pepper spray, firecrackers, matches, lighters, smoke bombs, stink bombs, or

any type of explosive device. Any such item may be confiscated and, if appropriate, reported to and turned over to law enforcement. Any pictorial depictions of weapons, or verbal or written comments that the administration determines in its discretion to be threatening in nature, or any behavior that is threatening, will result in disciplinary consequences. Violators of this Weapons and Threats Policy will be subject to disciplinary consequences from the School, up to and including, expulsion, as well as subject to penalties imposed by governmental authorities.

All members of our community are required to immediately report any comment, posting, text, or other form of communication or information that they receive or learn about that reflects that someone has made a threat toward or about another student, an employee, or the School. If there is any communication or behavior that concerns you, report it to one of the Deans or to any administrator.

The School reserves the right to address weapons and threats, and to impose discipline, in its discretion, up to and including dismissal if the School deems it appropriate. Threats of violence or acts of violence by a student, employee, parent, or other individual may be reported to law enforcement and any other authorities the School deems appropriate. The School will cooperate with investigations by authorities, and the School may also conduct its own investigation. With respect to such threats or acts by students, the School may report such threats or acts of violence to future schools, camps, athletic programs, and other organizations in which the student participates. The student's transcript or report card may also note the threat or act. In determining whether to report such threats or acts of violence, the School may consider, among other factors, the gravity and nature of the threat or act of violence, the disciplinary history of the individual, academic or work performance, behavioral history, social profile, other information available to the School (i.e., access to weapons, mental health information, family situation, etc.), and/or the outcome of any investigations.

## **Child Abuse and Cooperation with Governmental Authorities**

School teachers and other personnel are mandatory reporters under the Texas child abuse reporting laws. Please understand that we must take our obligations seriously and if we assess that a situation requires it, we will make a report to child abuse authorities if we reasonably suspect abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Depending on the circumstances, we may not be able to communicate with parents about the report unless authorized by child abuse authorities to do so. We ask for your understanding as we do our best to protect the children under our care. If you have any questions regarding the School's mandatory reporting obligations, please consult with the School President.

The School also may contact and/or cooperate with law enforcement personnel or other governmental agencies if the School, in its sole discretion, believes it is warranted in a particular situation. Students and parents should further be aware that the School will cooperate with governmental authorities and provide requested information, which may include but is not limited to, recordings, such as of virtual classes, and surveillance video, and will allow students to be interviewed if requested by government authorities or law enforcement. The School may assess disciplinary consequences for student conduct, even if a criminal investigation or other legal action is ongoing.

## **Student/Adult Interaction and Communication**

Our students and adults (teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, and visitors) are expected to interact with each other in a professional and respectful manner based on mutual respect and trust with an understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and students. Although our adults can and should be friendly with the students, becoming too friendly with each other sometimes results in confusion and anxiety.

If a student or the student's parents become aware of any adult's communications or actions toward one or more students that seems unusual, overly friendly, or otherwise inappropriate, such information should immediately be reported to the guidance counselor or administrator of the division.

Further, students and their parents should promptly notify the guidance counselor or administrator of the division if they believe an employee has engaged in any of the following prohibited behaviors or similar activities (regardless of the age of the student):

- Initiating or continuing communications with students for a non-school matter, including oral or written communications; telephone calls; electronic communications (emails, texts); social media communications, etc.
- Texting a student without including the student’s parent, a School Administrator, or others in the text;
- Touching students or their clothing in non-professional ways or inappropriate places, or touching a student with aggression or in frustration;
- Making comments that are too personal (about a student’s clothing, hair, personal habits, etc.);
- Giving gifts to a student or exchanging cards and letters;
- Inviting a student into their home;
- Taking students off School property other than for approved field trips and School activities;
- Flirting or asking a student on a date;
- Excessive attention shown toward a particular student or students or calling or referring to students by pet names or inappropriate nicknames;
- Visiting students to “hang out” in their hotel rooms when on field trips, performing arts, or sporting events;
- Visiting a student in their home or another location;
- Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for meals, movies, shopping, traveling and recreational activities) outside of class or School-sponsored events;
- Asking or allowing students to sit on a teacher’s lap;
- Telling secrets or telling the student not to tell something that’s a secret;
- Swearing, making inappropriate sexual, racial/or ethnic comments;
- Inviting students to visit the employee’s social networking profile or become a “friend” or “follower” on a social network;
- Telling off-color or other inappropriate jokes or stories, or showing pornography to students;
- Providing students with alcohol, tobacco, drugs or other mind-altering substances; or
- Vaping, smoking, or drinking with students.

Please note that the above list of actions and behaviors is not exhaustive—if a family is in doubt as to whether the conduct is appropriate, the family should contact the student’s guidance counselor or administrator of the student’s division.

## Sexual Misconduct

We are committed to creating a learning environment characterized by safety, trust, and respect for all. Sexual misconduct whether among students or adults and students is contrary to the standards and ideals of our community and will not be tolerated. Sexual misconduct includes any of the following types of activities:

- Any sexual activity between students and adults (See School's Student/Adult Interaction and Communication Policy);
- Any sexual activity between age-appropriate students for which clear and voluntary consent has not been given in advance or in which consent has been exceeded;
- Any sexual activity with someone who is incapable of giving valid consent because, for example, that person is under the age of consent, sleeping, or otherwise incapacitated or impaired;
- Any act of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, or stalking;
- Any digital media stalking and/or the nonconsensual recording of sexual behavior and the nonconsensual sharing of any recording; or
- Non-consensual sexual advances and propositions, or other undesirable verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. (See the School's Harassment/Bullying policy for additional information on sexual harassment).

Consent is defined as an affirmative, unambiguous, informed, and voluntary agreement to engage in specific sexual activity. Consent can be revoked at any time.

Reports of sexual misconduct or sexual assault are taken seriously; the safety and well-being of our students is our first priority. Parents and students who become aware of any form of sexual misconduct, whether on or off campus, should immediately report the information to the appropriate Division Head or the School President. In accordance with state law, the School reports suspected instances of sexual misconduct to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and may also report such instances to local law enforcement.

Upon a report of student-to-student sexual misconduct, including harassment, the School will provide interim support and reasonable protective measures to support the complainant and/or the accused party and the safety of the community. Until all procedures have been completed, the complainant and the accused must avoid all unnecessary contact. If the School determines at any stage that a student poses a threat of harm or disruption to the School community, the School may take immediate action, including removing the student from School, restricting the student's movement on campus, and so on.

As stated elsewhere, the School expects that students will treat all persons with dignity both at School and beyond. The School reserves the right to act if it learns that a student's actions violate the School's rules and expectations, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior.

## Volunteers

The School appreciates the support and valuable service of our volunteers. To protect the safety and welfare of our students insofar as is reasonably possible, those who volunteer on campus or at school related events where students are present are screened through the School's criminal background process. It is our goal to implement this background check policy in a fair, consistent and non-discriminatory manner, consistent with applicable law. However, the School may require a background check of any volunteer at any time, regardless of how frequently the individual volunteers or how long it has been since the individual's last background check. All volunteers must pass the background check to the School's satisfaction. Any volunteer who has a change in their criminal background, including but not limited to an arrest, conviction or indictment, is required to report such change prior to subsequently volunteering.

## **Child Safety from Sexual Offenders and Predators**

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), sexual perpetrators are commonly people the parents/guardians or children know, and these people may be in a position of trust or responsibility to a child and family.

Because of our concern for student safety, all employees, and those parents who volunteer for School activities with access to our students or campus, are screened through the School's criminal background process. Although the School performs such screenings, the School cannot attest to the background of the various parents whom their child may associate with away from School.

To keep their children safer, parents should talk openly to their children about safety issues. Parents should know their children's friends and be clear with their children about the places and homes that their children visit. Children should be taught that they have the right to say no to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or confusing touching or actions by others and to get out of those situations as quickly as possible.

Parents should regularly visit the public registry to check out individuals for prior criminal records and sex offenses. Information concerning registered sex offenders and predators may be obtained by visiting the Texas Department of Public Safety: <https://publicsite.dps.texas.gov/SexOffenderRegistry/Search>). To view a map of registered sex offenders living within a five mile radius of any given address, parents should visit <http://www.familywatchdog.us>.

Parents who are registered sex offenders must notify the School.

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

### **Immunizations**

Students at St. Thomas, as one of the schools of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) must be in compliance with all required immunizations as set forth by the Texas Department of Health Immunization Division. All immunizations must be completed by the first day of attendance. Students without complete records on file will not be admitted to class. St. Thomas does not allow parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief.

Students requesting a medical exemption from the immunization requirements must annually submit a signed, dated letter from the student's Texas-licensed, treating physician (M.D. or D.O) specifically stating the basis for the exemption and that the required vaccines would be medically contraindicated or pose a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child or a member of the child's household. Requests for medical exemptions will be considered and granted on a case-by-case basis. Students who have not received any vaccines will not be considered for medical exemption.

If an outbreak or suspected outbreak of any vaccine preventable disease occurs, any student who for whatever reason is not immunized may be excluded from school and all school-related activities.

### **Physical Examinations**

All new students and returning athletes are required to have a physical, dated after April 15 of the prior school year. (Spring before the upcoming school year). The St. Thomas blank physical form should be used and may be found on the St. Thomas website or the student's Magnus Health account).



## **School Clinic**

The school clinic is available to students daily. If a student is not feeling well, they should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the clinic in the Dean's Office. Students will be released for medical reasons only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency card.

Parents are responsible for informing the Dean's Office of any changes in their child's medications, health status, behavior, family dynamics or other factors that may affect their child's well-being during the school day. In addition, parents must immediately contact the Dean's Office or Division Counselor about behavior, comments, or other concerns that potentially evidence that their child could harm themselves or any other individual.

## **Administration of Epinephrine Auto-Injectors, Medication for Respiratory Distress and Opioid Antagonists**

School personnel are trained to assist in the administration of epi and respiratory meds. The school maintains a supply of opioid antagonist (narcan) available to administer if needed.

## **Student Illness and Communicable Diseases**

The School has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees, parents, students, and visitors. In the case of global or local threats of a communicable disease, the School will take all reasonable measures that may be necessary to protect the safety and health of members of the School community. These may include implementing infection control guidelines designed to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. The School will apply guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and its affiliate, NIOSH, state and local health departments, and World Health Organization (WHO), and other agencies and resources as appropriate. Each communicable disease is unique.

The School's response depends on public health guidance for the specific communicable disease, the nature and stage of the disease, whether mitigation methods are or can be used, and public health guidance on the risk and exposure. Response may include, without limitation, a determination that no risk exists or that no action is required, immunization programs may be put into place, mandatory health screening may be implemented, mitigation steps may be needed such as a student refraining from some activities, utilizing bandages, masks or other barriers, enhanced housekeeping, cancellation of field trips, a medical exam and release, and being sent home from school. Depending on the event, the School may require parents to disclose upcoming travel plans and to self-quarantine their child upon return. School closure may be necessary or the School may need to modify its curriculum, schedules, length of the school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. During certain communicable disease events, threat levels may change rapidly and the School may need to modify various measures as additional information becomes available.

Examples of communicable diseases include seasonal influenza; tuberculosis; measles; chicken pox; mumps, scarlet fever, hepatitis A, C, and D; meningitis; antibiotic-resistant staph; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS); H1N1 Flu; Swine Flu; Avian Flu; Ebola; and novel coronavirus - COVID-19. Lice, ringworm, pinworms, impetigo, pink eye, strep infection, hand, foot and mouth disease, mononucleosis, and other similar childhood illnesses are covered by this policy. We recognize that some diseases may not be infectious under certain circumstances.

We rely on our parents as the first step in preventing infection in the School environment. We count on them to use good judgment in protecting our school community. A sick child should not be in school but should remain at home in an environment where proper care may be given. The School Nurse is available to students daily. If a student is not feeling well, the student should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the nurse's office. If a student asks to go home, the student will be released only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency card. A student who presents at school with symptoms of an illness and/or is unable to participate in the day's activities will be removed from the classroom and the parents, or an emergency contact if the parents cannot be reached, will be contacted. Students must be picked up within the hour of the School's request that the child be sent





home due to illness. The student should be signed out by the clinic. Teachers will be informed of the student's dismissal for illness. To prevent the spread of infection through direct contamination (coughing, sneezing, talking, sharing articles, etc.) students must be asymptomatic without the aid of medications before returning to school. In other words, students must have no fever, vomiting, etc. for 24 hours prior to their return to school.

If an outbreak or suspected outbreak of any vaccine preventable disease occurs, any student who for whatever reason is not immunized may be excluded from school and all school-related activities.

Parents/students who know or have a reasonable basis for believing that a student has a communicable disease that may pose a threat to other students, parents, school employees, visitors, or the public should immediately contact their health provider. Parents/students have a "reasonable basis" for believing that a student has a communicable disease when they show or feel signs or illness, such as coughing, sneezing, fever, joint aches, have an overall ill feeling, or when they know that they have been exposed to someone with a known communicable disease or suspected communicable disease. For the health and safety of the School community, parents should report to their Division Head if their child has a confirmed communicable disease that poses a risk to others in the School community. The School will follow state law in determining when the Department of Health is notified due to a student being sent home because of a communicable disease. In case of student absence due to the reportable communicable disease, a release card from the Department of Health or a letter from the family physician indicating that the Department of Health regulations have been fulfilled may be required when the student returns to school (indicating that the student is no longer infectious).

The School will generally not identify an infected student to School employees or other students or their parents, although public health guidance will guide the School's communications. It may be necessary to alert others in the community who were in certain areas or at certain times that exposure could have occurred. The School will disclose sensitive medical information of students no further than is necessary to ensure the health and safety of our employees, students, parents, and visitors in a manner consistent with applicable law. The School will comply with all federal and state laws in regard to confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Parent and students are reminded that anyone who takes deliberate action which endangers the health or safety of the School community, including coming to the School campus with a dangerous viral infection, will face disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

## **COVID-19 Disclosure**

The novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") and its variants continue to be reported as highly contagious and spread easily from person to person. COVID-19 may result in serious illness, debilitating injury, or death. The School has put in place measures in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19. However, notwithstanding any such efforts, it is simply not possible to guarantee that COVID-19 is not present nor to prevent you or your child from becoming exposed to, contracting, or spreading COVID-19. By entering School premises, attending school in-person, and attending or participating in School activities in-person, you, your child, and your household are exposed to the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. By participating in certain activities associated with greater rates of disease transmission, you, your child, and your household are exposed to a high risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. Activities that may pose a high risk for COVID-19 include (but are not limited to): group transportation, singing, choir, performing arts, exercise, athletics, any activity where people are closer than 6 feet apart, any large gathering of people indoors, etc. Participation in in-person School and School activities evidences parents' and students' acknowledgement of the risk to themselves and other individuals they live or associate with of exposure to, contracting, or spreading COVID-19, whether from the acts, omissions, or negligence of themselves or others, including but not limited to School employees, agents, representatives, volunteers; other students, program participants, and their families; and/or other individuals who may be present in School facilities or in attendance at any School activity and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, or death.



## Medication

All medications that the student takes must be kept in the Dean of Students' Office. Students are not allowed to carry any medication, even over-the-counter medications without doctor authorization and a request for in school medication form turned into the Dean of Students' Office and also uploaded to the student's Magnus Health account.

## Prescription Medication

A Request for In-school Administration of Medication form must be downloaded from the parents' Magnus Health account, signed by both the parent and physician, and turned in at the time the medication is brought to the Dean of Students' Office. The medicine must be in its original container, and must be labeled with the student's name, the name of the medication, dose, time of administration, doctor's name, and possible side effects. Parents are to advise the School, in writing, of any changes in dispensing orders, and provide copies of such changed orders. Clinic or school personnel are not permitted to administer prescription medication unless the physician requests on the form that there is a need for such administration of medication during school hours.

## Select Over-the-Counter Medications

For school personnel or Licensed Athletic Trainer to administer select over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications (see permission form for list), a permission for Over-the-counter Medication form must be completed in the student's Magnus Health account.

# GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Bad Weather Policy

In the event of school closure due to inclement weather, the School-wide communications system "Blackboard Connect Code Red" will be utilized to keep parents informed of closure and reopening. Final decisions will be made by the Principal. We do NOT follow the HISD standards or the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. Decisions on the closing of school in the event of a forecasted inclement weather event will be made in a window 24-36 hours ahead of the event.

If there is an unanticipated major weather event, a decision by the Principal to close the School will be made by 5:30 AM on the day of the event.

## Residency

It is the School's position that in order for students to have the foundation necessary to excel in school and other endeavors, students must have appropriate living accommodations, support, and supervision. As a result, the School requires that all students, regardless of age, continuously live with a parent or court-appointed legal guardian at least 25 years of age so long as the student is enrolled at the School. Failure to do so will result in the student's dismissal from the School. Living with friends, distant relatives, nannies, by themselves, etc. is not acceptable. There will be no refund of tuition where such enforced withdrawal occurs. A parent or legal guardian must immediately notify the School should a student's living arrangements change during the school year. The School reserves the right to request at any time and from time to time, satisfactory proof (in the School's sole discretion) of a Student's living arrangements, including, without limitation, verification of with whom the student lives and where the student is living.

## Facility Usage Policy

Students of St. Thomas are allowed access to and use of school property and facilities only while under the direct supervision of a current employee. Students, and any other individuals, using any St. Thomas facility not in accordance with the policy above will be approached by campus security, informed about the policy, asked to leave the premises, and given a formal warning to not violate the policy again in the future. Subsequent violations of the above policy by current students will result in disciplinary action from the Dean of Students' Office. Subsequent violations of the above policy by all other individuals will result in action from the St. Thomas security officer including a trespassing violation, ticketing, and restrictions on future campus access. The School may also contact law enforcement.



## Field Trips

Day and overnight field trips are part of the educational process. It must be stressed, however, that only those students who, in the administration's sole discretion, have demonstrated good conduct during and acceptable academic standing in their classes will be permitted to attend.

Proper behavior during the trip continues to be of utmost importance. Parents of any student unable to follow the given guidelines will be notified. In severe cases, the parent will be requested to come and/or provide transportation home for the student.

A condition of a student's or parent's participation in any field trip is the execution of the School's standard Participation Release. For any students whose parents have not executed the release, the student will have the option of attending an alternative class for the period of the field trip or remaining at home.

## Field Trip Behavior

In addition to trip-specific policies set forth by the School or the sponsors and chaperones of any trip, all of the School's regular policies and procedures, including those set forth in this handbook, apply while a student is on school related travel of any kind. Discipline will generally be handled through the School's regular disciplinary process. The School may at any time require parent(s), at their own expense, to arrange for return travel for a student due to injury, illness or behavior.

### Student Schedule

Students should be aware of their schedules at all times. A bell schedule is included at the end of this handbook and also on the School website.

## First Period

Students are to be in their assigned seats at the start of the first period. If not, they should report to the Dean of Students' Office. Students are to be silent during announcements.

## EBN Announcements

Any information for morning announcements for EBN must be submitted by 5:00 pm the night before.

## Passes

During class periods any student moving through the hallways or across campus must have a signed yellow pass or a hall pass from his teacher. Seniors with an Eagle Pass will not wander the halls. Eagle Pass students must remain on campus at all times. Students with Eagle Pass during A period or block day E period must check in at the Dean of Students' Office before the first period final bell.

Students must have a yellow pass from the Dean of Students' Office to go to their car during the school day. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Bus Transportation

Students who are riding on buses provided by the School are required to follow some basic safety rules. The driver or other adult (i.e., teacher, coach, bus monitor, etc.) may assign seating or direct a student in any reasonable manner to maintain safety. Parents are not allowed to enter the bus or discipline other children on the bus. Parent should refer their issues or concerns to the bus driver or the School administration.

The following behaviors are expected of all students:

1. Be on time at the designated loading zone or bus stop.
2. Wait until the bus is completely stopped before moving forward to enter.



3. Refrain from crossing in front of the bus until the driver signals it is safe.
4. Go immediately to your assigned seat and be seated.
5. Wear your seatbelt on the School buses (if one is available). Bus drivers will report those who refuse to buckle up. Repeated failure to buckle up could result in a child not being permitted to use School transportation.
6. Remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion.
7. Keep heads, hands, arms, and legs, as well as objects inside the bus at all times and out of the aisles. Nothing may be put outside the bus windows.
8. Talk quietly.
9. No littering in the bus or throwing anything from the bus.
10. No eating or drinking beverages on the bus.
11. Do not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
12. Remain seated until the bus is stopped.
13. Do not engage in any activity on the bus that would constitute a violation of School rules.
14. Appropriately store equipment (i.e., athletic equipment, instruments, bags, etc.) and leave it stored for the duration of the ride.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at School unless they have proper authorization from the student’s parent/guardian and the Principal.

A student who becomes a behavior problem on the bus shall be and may be denied the privilege of riding the bus and may be disciplined up to and including expulsion. Students denied bus privileges who fail to attend School will have unexcused absences.

## **Student Drivers**

Students are expected to follow local ordinances in the operation of their motor vehicles and obey on campus speed limits and driving rules. Students who are driving their own vehicle must complete registration form, which can be obtained online when purchasing a parking permit in the Eagle Store. Upon completion of the required form, each student will be given a parking decal designating a parking space and/or area to park. Students are to park their cars in their designated parking area only. No student is to park his car in a manner that blocks another car or prevents a School bus or other vehicle from entering or exiting the parking garage. Students may not text or talk on their cell phones while driving on campus. Students may not return to their cars for any reason other than to leave the School grounds for dismissal at the end of the School day. Students may not drive other students on behalf of the School to or from any School-related event or activity. Students violating this policy or engaging in unsafe driving/parking practices will lose the privilege of driving to School and depending on the circumstances, may face disciplinary action.

## **Student Parking and On Campus Driving**

All students who bring a car on campus must be licensed and must be covered by insurance as required by state law. The school is not responsible for the vehicle, its contents or damages occurring while on school property.

If a student needs to obtain something out of their car during the school day, they must obtain permission and a pass from the Dean of Students’ Office only.

Students may never loiter in their cars or parking areas, including the parking garage.

Parking and driving on campus by students are privileges. To obtain and keep these privileges, students must adhere to the following regulations:



## Driving on Campus

- Students are expected to drive safely and slowly on campus
- Students must give right of way to pedestrians, conform to posted traffic and speed signs, as well as slowing down for speed bumps

## Parking Permits

- Students who park on campus are required to have a current school year parking permit and parking decal must be adhered to the driver's side windshield right above the car's registration sticker at all times. Permit must be purchased online. No in-person purchasing is available. Paperwork must be turned in to the Dean's Office by the end of the first week of school. Cost of parking permit is \$100 payable online in the St. Thomas Store. No in-person purchasing is available. One sticker is required for each vehicle that will be driven on campus. Families may purchase multiple stickers if necessary. Each sticker purchased will be \$100.
- Students who obtain a license and begin to drive to school during the school year MUST obtain a permit immediately before parking on campus.

## Obtaining a Parking Permit and Decal

•  
Parking permits may be purchased online and the required vehicle registration form is available at sths.org under Student Life

•  
After completing your purchase, complete the vehicle registration form and take proof of purchase, completed form and required documentation (see form for requirements) to the Dean's Office

•  
Parking decal will be issued at that time if everything is complete

•  
Parking decal must be immediately and properly displayed on the driver's side windshield right above the car's registration sticker without obstruction, and must be visible to a casual observer

## Parking Decal

- The parking decal must be displayed at all times, no exceptions
- The parking decal must be adhered to the driver's side windshield right above the car's registration sticker without obstruction, and must be visible to a casual observer
- Parking decals may not be shared, as each decal is matched to a particular vehicle
- Only current school year parking decals are permitted

## Parking Regulations and Student Parking Areas

- Students are required to park only in the parking garage and on designated floors on school days
- Students may never park on surface lots on school days. This includes before and after school.
- Students may not park in handicap spots or on the ramps between floors in the parking garage for safety reasons.
- If a student is in a temporary car, they must let the Dean of Students' office know immediately of the duration of the temporary car's use, make and model. Failure to do so may result in a parking violation
- If a student permanently changes their car, he must immediately notify the Dean's Office and show proof of insurance and the license plate number



## Designated parking floors assignments

- All students will park on 2nd through 6th floors
- Students may never park on the 1st floor
- Students may never park on surface lots this includes before and after school

## Violations and Consequences

- All fines must be paid to the Business Office and student must show proof of payment to the Dean of Students' Office by the deadline issued. Fines may be paid online at sths.org or in person at the Business Office.
- Failure to pay a fine on time and show proof to the Dean of Student's Office may result in disciplinary action and possible suspension of driving and/or parking privileges
- Fines for parking in a handicap space (even in the garage) will be doubled and will result in disciplinary action

### Parking violations:

- 1st parking violation – \$25 fine
- 2nd parking violation –\$25 fine and disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students' Office
- 3rd Parking Violation – \$50 fine and disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students' Office
- 4th parking violation – \$100 fine and loss of driving and parking privileges and disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students' Office

### Driving violations:

- 1st driving violation – fine and disciplinary action determined by seriousness of violation as decided by the Dean of Students' Office
- 2nd driving violation – fine, disciplinary action and temporary suspension of on campus driving and parking privileges as decided by the Dean of Students' Office
- 3rd driving violation – fine, disciplinary action as decided by the Dean of Students' Office as well as loss of campus driving and parking privileges for remainder of the school year

## Ride Sharing

The School will not allow students under the age of 18 to use any Uber, Lyft, or similar transportation services to obtain transportation to or from School or any School-related activity, unless accompanied by an Uber or Lyft account holder who is over the age of 18.

Both Uber and Lyft prohibit persons under the age of 18 from utilizing their services without an adult present. Please be advised that the School will treat violations of this policy as it would treat other violations of School rules and policies. In addition, should the School become aware of a violation, it will contact the third-party car service and report it.

## Assemblies

Speakers and performers expect courtesy from St. Thomas students. Loud laughter, whistling, loud noises or stomping of feet, although acceptable at pep rallies, are certainly out of order at most other assemblies. Use of any electronic devices during an assembly is not allowed. In all assemblies, students are to maintain appropriate behavior.

## Fire Drills

From time to time the School will conduct fire drills and other emergency response training with students. A map can be found in each room showing the quickest and safest route for leaving the building. Please familiarize yourself with these maps. Students will be appointed to turn off lights and to close the windows and doors during fire drills or an evacuation. In certain situations, students will be instructed to quietly shelter in place.



Silence must be maintained during the entire fire drill. Students must have ID's visible at all times. When the alarm sounds, all must leave quickly and silently in a single-file line, taking nothing with them. The last person out of the room checks that all students have gone and shuts the door. Doors are to be shut, but remain unlocked. Posters by each room exit indicate the route to follow. Maintain silence to hear possible instructions and maintain single-file down the sides of the halls and stairways. Students should move quickly but safely to the stadium, line up in single file on their designated yard line, and remain silent on the field for attendance and possible further instructions. Students are not allowed to use cell phones, headphones, air pods or ear buds at any time.

It is important that in the event of an emergency, parents seek information from the School's website or emergency communication system rather than calling the School or their student.

## **Virtual Learning Policy**

Parents and students acknowledge and agree that the School may decide, in its discretion, to convert its classes, programs and activities to be virtual. If the School converts to virtual learning and programming, the policies in this Handbook and the School's Honor Code will apply whether students are on campus or engaging in distance learning.

## **Changing Classes at Lunch Time**

On non-block schedules, students are not to re-enter the building after their lunch period begins until the next class change.

## **Study Hall**

If a student has a Study Hall in his schedule, he is to be in the room assigned. Study Halls are quiet areas for study. Students who need to go to the LEC, another teacher's room, the counselor, etc. must obtain a pass before school (from the place they need to go instead of study hall) and show this pass to their study hall teacher at the beginning of the study hall period, before going to the place indicated on the pass. Failure of a student to adhere to this policy and not be in their Study Hall or designated destination will be considered truant.

## **Lost and Found**

A "Lost and Found" is maintained in the Dean of Students' Office. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Students are to report lost or stolen articles to the Dean of Students' Office immediately.

## **School Closure or Modifications Due to a Force Majeure Event**

Should events beyond the control of the School, including, but not limited to, any fire, act of God, hurricane, tornado, flood, extreme inclement weather, explosion, war or armed conflict, governmental action, act of terrorism, risk of infectious illness, epidemic, pandemic, shortage or disruption of necessary utilities (water, electricity, etc.), or any other event beyond the School's control, occur, the School has the discretion to close the School and/or modify its operations, curriculum, schedules (including, without limitation, the provision of instruction on Saturdays and/or Sundays), length of school day, length of school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods, including, without limitation, converting to distance learning or a hybrid model. Parents may be required to sign a waiver as a condition of on campus instruction depending on the status of any force majeure event. The family's contractual financial obligations for tuition and fees remain in full force and effect and the School shall not be liable for any such failure or delay in its performance. Should the School close, the School's duties and obligations shall be suspended immediately without notice until such time as the School, in its sole and reasonable discretion, may safely reopen. If the School cannot reopen due to a force majeure event, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of tuition paid.

## **Photos, Images, and Recording**

Parent agrees to allow Student's name, photograph, voice, image, and information to be used by the School, and those acting with the School's permission, for use in the School's publications, promotional materials, website, and social media accounts, without compensation and without prior notice. Parent agrees to allow Student to be interviewed by the media on campus or at School-related events. Parent also consents to the recording and distribution or live streaming of Student's voice, image and video in instruction or presentations as may be deemed appropriate in the School's discretion. Parent releases and holds the School harmless from any liability stemming from the use of the Student's name, photograph, voice, video, image, or information.

If you do not want your student's voices and images recorded during distance learning, we are relying on parents to take steps with their computer or the spacing of the child to the computer to block their child's image from being recorded. If you do not want your student's voice to be recorded, we would similarly ask that you instruct your child not to verbally participate and advise the teacher of such instruction.

Further parents and students are prohibited from recording employees or other students while on campus or during School activities without their express consent.

## **Prohibition on Recording and Sharing Information**

The School prohibits screenshots, photos, audio/video recordings and distribution of any virtual or in-person educational experiences. This is in order to protect privacy, prevent cyberbullying and reduce distribution of content from educational experiences. In virtual settings, parents/guardians and other household members who normally are not privy to day-to-day classroom activities, agree to respect and keep confidential any personal or private information inadvertently discovered about other students due to their proximity to virtual education. Parents and students must be mindful of anything in the background during virtual programs and activities and the School is not responsible for any content shared during those sessions.

## **Insurance**

The school insurance does not cover personal injury. All injuries must be covered under the parents' insurance policy. All students attending St. Thomas are required to have private insurance. This includes but not limited to injuries sustained during athletic events, practice, P.E. class, or moving around campus. Students may not participate in extracurricular activities or travel on ANY excursions until private insurance is obtained.

## **Lockers and Backpacks**

All lockers are the property of St. Thomas. Lockers, backpacks, bags and other personal items are subject to search with or without cause, by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students. Students must use the locks provided to them by the School.

Students should keep their combinations confidential. Locker clean-up should be completed by the last day of final exams. Anything left in the lockers becomes the property of St. Thomas. Students are issued locks for school and athletic lockers. Students are expected to keep their lockers locked at all times and are responsible for any items in their lockers. If an item is found in a locker, it is considered to be in the possession of the student to whom that locker is assigned. Students should secure valuables or have them on their person at all times. Students are expected to keep personal property locked in a locker or with them during after school activities.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles.





## **Inspection Policy**

Parents and students authorize the School to inspect and conduct a search of any place or item on School campus or at a School-related event including, but not limited to, a student's locker, purse, book bag, backpack, vehicle, computer, or personal electronic devices, at any time and without prior notice. Students may also be required to empty pockets and remove outer layers of clothing for inspection. Inspections and searches may be conducted on a routine or random basis or as deemed necessary.

Students must provide any passwords or other access required to inspect such places or items upon request by a School administrator or if on a field trip or other away from campus activity, the trip or activity leader. Inspection of electronic devices includes laptops, phones, tablets, cameras, and any other electronics, including the contents of same (texts, emails, photos, images, address books, applications, etc. whether such message or information was sent over the School's system or any personal account such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Yahoo, AOL, Gmail, iCloud, ZoHo Mail, ProtonMail, etc.). Students and their parents consent to the School logging into the device and its contents and applications, as well as accessing all communications, including, without limitation, stored communications. Further, the parents authorize the School to seize and permanently retain property disclosed by an inspection or search which is considered potentially harmful, dangerous, illegal, or inappropriate, or the possession of which is a violation of the School's rules, community standards, and/or local, state, or federal law. If a student or parent interferes with, fails to cooperate with or otherwise impedes an inspect by the School, the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including immediate dismissal.

## **ID Cards and Lanyards**

Picture ID cards will be made during the first week of school. For safety and security reasons, students are required at all times on school days to wear their school ID on a lanyard around their neck and visible outside all clothing. From arrival on campus until exiting campus, Student's ID must be on and visible unless a student is participating in PE or an after school sport. The school ID is also used to fob into school entrances. Students must provide ID cards in the cafeteria to purchase meals/food. Students may not use another student's ID to purchase food. If a student ID stops working, students should go to the main office. Replacements for lost cards can be obtained, for a replacement fee, through the Main Office. If a student arrives at school without his ID, the student is required to go immediately to the Main Office to obtain a temporary ID for the day. Students will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office for failure to be in possession of their Picture ID. A temporary ID is not a replacement for the Picture ID.

## **Messages**

In order to maintain an appropriate classroom environment, classroom interruptions should be limited to emergencies. Please do not ask the office to relay messages to your child nor text or instant message your student directly on their cellphone or electronic device. Students are not permitted to call home for homework, test papers, folders, etc. If a true emergency occurs then the Office should be notified.

## **Posters and Announcements**

All posters must be approved at the Office before they are displayed in School. If a student wishes to put up a poster, the student should bring it to the Office first. General announcements are made in the morning. Club or class announcements must be signed by an advisor. Any announcement originating from a student must be cleared by administration.

## **Student Records and Information**

Requests for student records and transcripts must be directed in writing to the School Office. The School reserves the right to withhold student transcripts and records for non-payment of tuition or fees.

The School will also require the parent to sign a consent form before a student's transcript or other records/information will be released.



The School makes reasonable efforts to ensure that both natural parents (or legal guardians) receive substantially the same information (transcripts, records, appointments, etc.). The School must rely upon the correctness and completeness of parental information when the student is enrolled. In situations of divorced or separated parents, if one parent believes that the other parent is restricted from receiving information about their child(ren) from the School, in visiting/picking up/dropping off their child(ren), in participating in parent/student conferences, and so on, such parent must provide a valid court order to the School evidencing such restrictions. Parents are under an ongoing obligation to provide the School with new or subsequent orders, promptly upon issuance.

**Family Matters**

The School requires that all parents (married, unmarried, divorced or separated) cooperate with one another in the best interests of their child’s education at the School. Failure of parents to cooperate with one another may lead to dismissal of their child(ren) from the School or non-renewal of enrollment for future academic years. There will be no refund of tuition where such dismissal occurs, and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of the student’s enrollment contract.

The school may at any time require parents to seek a court order pertaining to any school matter as a condition of continued enrollment. If your family has a court order in place including but not limited to a divorce decree that includes custodial arrangements, a custody order, or a restraining order, you must provide the School with a complete and official file-stamped copy of the court order. We require parents and guardians to abide by any court order applicable to your child(ren). If a situation arises in which the custody or possession of a child is in question, a school representative may call 911 to request that an officer arrive at the School to resolve the dispute.

If a School employee or trustee is required to testify, provide information for, or otherwise participate in a legal dispute or proceeding to which the School is not a party, relating to a custody matter or otherwise, the School shall be entitled to recover from, at the School’s discretion, either or both parents, the School’s attorneys’ fees and costs incurred with such legal proceeding. This includes but is not limited to the cost of legal counsel as well as costs incurred by the School such as those associated with collecting documents and hiring substitute teachers or staff.

**Parent/Family Cooperation**

A positive and constructive relationship between the School and Family Member (defined as Parent, Student, or other person associated with Student) is essential to the School’s educational purpose and responsibilities to its students. If any Family Member (i) engages in behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus, that is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence in or disagreement with the School’s policies, methods of instruction, or discipline, (ii) otherwise interferes or voices strong disagreement with the School’s safety or health procedures, responsibilities, or accomplishment of its educational purpose or program, or (iii) files a lawsuit or threatens litigation against the School for a perceived wrong by the School (including its officers, trustees, directors, Board members, employees, agents, and affiliates), the School reserves the right to place restrictions on the Family’s Member’s involvement or activity at School, on School property, and/or at School-related events or to dismiss the Family Member from the community. The School may also place restrictions on a Family Member’s involvement or activity at School, on School property, or at School-related events for other reasons that the School deems appropriate. The School also reserves the right to withdraw an offer of enrollment or re-enrollment or to void an executed enrollment contract because of a Family Member’s violation of the expectations set forth in this Paragraph. The term “threatens litigation” includes any claim, proceeding, dispute, action, including without limitation filing for arbitration, or other matter for which any demand or statement has been made (orally or in writing) or any notice has been given (orally or in writing), or if any other event has occurred or any other circumstances exist, that would lead a prudent person to conclude that such a claim, proceeding, dispute, action or other matter is likely to be asserted, commenced, taken or otherwise pursued in the future. Any determination under this Paragraph shall be in the School’s sole and reasonable discretion. There will be no refund of tuition where such dismissal occurs, and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of this Contract.

Additionally, the School requires that all parents (married, unmarried, divorced, or separated) cooperate with one another in the best interests of Student's education at the School. Failure of parents to cooperate with one another may lead to dismissal of Student or the School's decision not to offer or to withdraw an offer of enrollment already made in future academic years. There will be no refund of tuition where such dismissal occurs, and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of this Contract.

### **Use of School Name/Non-Sponsored Activities**

In order to, among other reasons, ensure that any implied association with the School is accurate and to protect the goodwill and value of the School's name, logos, trademarks, service marks, and other similar School property, parents and students are not authorized to use or cause to be used by others the School's name, any likeness or reference to the School's name, and/or the School's crest, logos or mascot in any way ("School Property") without express prior written permission of the School President or Director of Communications. This restriction on the use of School Property, includes without limitation, online activities, use of School Property on merchandise, and attaching School Property (whether in print, online, or other medium) to a project, event, outing, club, sports team, group, or other activity ("Activity") or when describing such Activity that the student or parent may organize or lead or in which the student or parent may participate that is not School sponsored.

Parents and students should also understand that no Activity is sponsored or endorsed by the School unless the parents and students receive written notice from the School President or Director of Communications stating that the Activity has been recognized by the School, even if the Activity is utilizing School Property, and even if the Activity is organized or led by another parent or other individual, including current and former employees. If a parent or student has any questions about whether an Activity is School sponsored, please contact the Director of Communications School President.

### **Fund Raising**

No class, individual, or organization is to begin any money raising activity without permission from the School. No class, individual or organization may request money from any other class, individual, or organization within or outside the School without permission from the School administration office. All extracurricular organizations should strive to be self-sufficient, raising money through approved concessions and approved service-type projects.

### **Use of School Branding**

No articles of clothing or merchandise using the name of the School, our logo, monogram or mascot are to be made, sold or distributed without prior authorization and approval of design by the Vice President for Advancement.

### **Selling Goods on Campus or at School Events**

Students may not sell any homemade or purchased goods on campus or at School events, to benefit themselves or any organization. Non-School students must receive permission from the Dean of Students' Office for the sale of any school sponsored goods on the School campus or at School-sponsored events.

### **Campus Supervision**

The main building is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. After 3:15 p.m., the School does not supply supervision or security unless the student is participating in a regularly scheduled school activity. Students who are not in a scheduled after school activity and who must wait after 3:15 p.m. on campus must report to either the LEC for quiet study or the cafeteria and student center. The LEC is open until 5:00 p.m., cafeteria until 4:00 p.m. and the student center is open until 6:00 p.m.

# TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

In an effort to support the vision for a “man of St. Thomas to be a faith-filled, life-long learner who thinks critically, communicates effectively, and prepares thoroughly to excel in college and in life,” St. Thomas provides a variety of resources to support student learning, including electronic resources. It is imperative that all students, staff, and guests of St. Thomas use those resources ethically and responsibly to further the educational goals and objectives for which they are intended.

## Personal Electronic Devices

Students in possession of cell phones, smart watches, air pods, earplugs, and/or headphones must place them in their lockers before the start of each school day. In addition, students should not have their school-issued laptops open as they walk the hallways.

STH Personal Electronic Policy prohibits device usage during the school academic day from 7:50 – 3:10. Students can retrieve their cell phones and other devices from their lockers at the end of the school day. The school is not responsible for lost/stolen or damaged devices.

Parents who need to communicate with their son during the school day may contact the front office at 713-864-6348.

Any violation of the above cell phone/electronics policy will lead to the confiscation of the electronic device by the Dean of Students Office. Any cell phone or item confiscated by the school is subject to search. Students may be required to unlock their cell phone. In addition, the following consequences will apply.

- First offense: confiscation of device by the Dean of Students Office. The student may pick up the device after dismissal in the Dean’s Office. The student will receive a warning.
- Second offense: confiscation and a parent must retrieve the device from the Dean’s Office after dismissal. The student will receive detention.
- Third offense: confiscation and a parent must retrieve the device from the Dean’s Office after dismissal. The student will receive a Saturday detention. Any further offenses may result in a campus ban on bringing personal electronic devices, or the student will be required to leave devices in the Dean of Students Office, and further consequences as determined by the Dean of Students office.

St. Thomas has the legal right to confiscate and search electronic devices at any time. In addition, the School can be expected to maintain possession of the device as an investigation proceeds. Failure by students or parents to recognize this authority or to wipe or remove information from the device under investigation may result in the immediate suspension or expulsion of the student.

### To meet these goals and objectives St. Thomas will:

- provide necessary devices to students;
- provide a stable and secure network, along with necessary technology support;
- ensure technology is integrated into the curriculum;
- provide education on appropriate digital citizenship in 21st-century education; and provide warranty coverage for normal wear, including a loaner laptop while such repairs are resolved.

All persons using the School’s computers, the School’s computer systems, or personal computers on School property or over the School’s systems are required to abide by the following rules. This policy also applies to the use of any personal electronic devices (computers, laptops, cameras, iPhones, iPads, tablets, smart watches or other wearable technology, smart/cellular phones, video cameras, etc.) on School property or at a School-related event or used at or away from School for schoolwork on a regular or intermittent basis. Failure to abide by these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action determined by the School administration. All computers and devices should be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Violations of the following guidelines may result in the revocation of access privileges and possible disciplinary responses, including expulsion for serious offenses.



## **Purpose**

The purpose of providing access to the Internet and the School's computer systems is to support research and provide unique educational opportunities. The use of such resources should be limited to those activities that support the School's educational objectives.

## **Privilege**

The use of the School's systems is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate or illegal use of the School's systems or of the Internet will result in loss of the privilege and disciplinary action.

## **Internet Access**

The School community--students, faculty, administrators and staff have the privilege of full access to the Internet. The School encourages students and teachers to use the Internet to expand their knowledge. The Internet allows users to send and receive e-mail, to log onto remote computers, and to browse databases of information. It also lets users send and receive files and programs contained on other computers. Files may be downloaded only to personal disks. Files are not to be downloaded to the School's local or network hard drives.

## **The School Does Not Provide Any Type of Filtering System**

Although providing a filtering system generally can eliminate access to offensive and pornographic materials, it also has the negative effect of filtering out genuine educational materials. In addition, no filtering system is foolproof. Therefore, we expect users to act responsibly in their searches and to immediately disengage from any materials that are inappropriate and to report the situation to the faculty member or administrator in charge of the activity. Although the School cannot effectively restrict the content of information obtained by students via the Internet, obtaining material that is explicitly labeled, as not intended for minors will be considered a violation of School rules. Furthermore, making public or passing on any material that is pornographic, violent in nature, or otherwise harassing is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately by the appropriate administrator.

## **Internet Safety**

Students should never give out their own personal information or that of their friends or family (address, telephone number, name of School, address of School, date of birth, Social Security Number, credit card number, etc.) over the Internet. Students also should not meet with someone that they have contacted on-line without prior parental approval. Safety is the responsibility of the parent and student. The School is not liable in any way for irresponsible acts on the part of the student.

## **Pirated Software**

The term "pirated software" refers to the use and transfer of stolen software. Commercial software is copyrighted, and each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software. There is no justification for the use of illegally obtained software. The School will not, in any way, be held responsible for a student's own software brought to School for personal use.

## **Network Access/Passwords**

Accessing or attempting to gain access to passwords, accounts, and files of others is prohibited. Attempting to impair the network, to bypass restrictions set by the network administrator, or to create links to the School's web page is prohibited. Obtaining another's password or rights to another's directory or e-mail on the network is a violation of School rules as well as a form of theft. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is not appropriate. Using someone else's password or posting a message using or purporting to be using (i.e. spoofing) another's log-in name is a form of dishonesty, just as is plagiarism or lying, and will be treated as a violation. Guard your password. You will be responsible for any activity done on the School's system under your password.



## **School's Right to Inspect**

The School reserves the right to inspect user directories, profiles, clouds and browsing histories for inappropriate files and to remove them if found and to take other appropriate action if deemed necessary, including notification of parents. The School also reserves the right to inspect any personal electronic devices brought onto campus, to a School-related event, or used at or away from School for schoolwork on a regular or intermittent basis. In such case, the School reserves the right to inspect the device, including all contents. Students must provide any and all passwords to inspect the device and its contents upon request by a School administrator. Students and their parents' consent to the School logging into the device and its contents and applications, as well as accessing all communications, including, without limitation, stored communications. Do not assume that any messages or materials on your computer/electronic device or the School's systems are private.

## **Electronic Communication**

Students are expected to use their school provided email for all school related work and communication. Students are expected to check their email daily. Electronic communications, such as e-mail and any kind of instant or text messaging, may not be used to harass or threaten others. The School reserves the right to randomly check electronic communication. Electronic communication must not include personal attacks, inappropriate language, or commentary that is inconsistent with the mission and values of the School, and should follow the normal rules of appropriate public language. They should not contain any language or content, which the author would not be willing to share from the podium at a School meeting. Students should be made aware that deleted e-mails, messages and browsing histories can be retrieved.

Any person who believes that they have been harassed or threatened by any email or other electronic communication should immediately report the concern in accordance with the School's No Harassment and No Bullying policy.

## **Viruses and Other Risks**

Although the School takes steps to keep our system virus-free, even with the best techniques computer viruses can be transmitted to and from any computer. Further, students use the School's computers and systems at their own risk. Such risks may include loss of data resulting from delays, "mis-deliveries", or service interruptions, whether caused by the School's negligence or by a student's errors or omissions. The School bears no responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its computer services. Students use such information at their own risk. Users will be responsible for any repercussions, which may include civil actions or criminal charges, resulting from their activities. The School is not responsible for any damages or expenses students incur while using its computers or systems or for the transmission of any virus or for damage suffered from a virus.

## **Computer Care**

Members of the School community will not abuse, tamper with, or willfully damage any computer or electronic equipment, use computers, laptops or tablets for other than appropriate work, or bring food or drink into any computer area. Any intentional acts of vandalism will result in discipline and students will be held responsible for replacement or repairs.

## **Reporting Requirements/Discipline**

Any student who accesses inappropriate material on the Internet, sends or receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via e-mail, text, or on the Internet, must immediately report the concern to the teacher who is supervising the activity or to the Dean of Students Office (appropriate administrator for the student's division) so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately. Students who violate any aspect of this Computer and Systems Usage Policy will be subject to appropriate discipline and loss of computer or Internet privileges.



## Reporting Lost Devices

Students must immediately report the loss or theft of any School devices, or electronic devices that may contain School related information. Lost or stolen devices should be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

**Damage to or Failure to Return Devices:** Parents are responsible, and will be billed, for any damage to School devices or in the event that their student fails to return the device at the end of the School year or when requested by the School.

## Online Learning Management Systems and COPPA Information

We are committed to high quality teaching and learning. We realize that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication and providing rich and varied contents and experiences for our students. The importance of teachers and students engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in digital environments is a part of 21st century learning and provides students the opportunity to develop as literate and technologically competent individuals. Educational standards are now requiring the use of online education tools and our School uses several computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based education technology services operated not by the School, but by third parties. These applications include, but may not be limited to, Google Drive, Discovery Education, Schoology, Explain Everything, See Saw, Scratch, MineCraft, Kodable, Zoom, Canvas, Code Monkey, and other similar educational programs. A complete list of the programs with the privacy policy for each can be found on our School website.

In order for our students to use these programs and services, certain personal identifying information—generally the student’s name and school email address—must be provided to the website operator. Please note that any personal information provided by the School is for educational purposes only and is used by the School solely to communicate with the service provider. Students will receive a School email address to participate in certain of these computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based services. Under federal law entitled the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), certain website providers must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. For more information on COPPA, please visit <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/businesscenter/guidance/complying-coppa-frequently-asked-questions>.

Such information may include your child’s first name, last name, email address, username, profile picture and other information your child has added to their profile; contacts and calendar information; settings, such as audio and video settings and screen sharing settings; device information such as IP address, Wi-Fi information, and device features; product usage, such as mouse movements and keystrokes, whether your child sends message and with whom they message, actions (using mute/unmute, video on or off, etc.) and other user actions; and school-related information, such as school name, class, and teacher name. Your signature will also reflect and constitute your consent for your child to participate in video conferencing, podcasts, and live chats, which means that their identity will be revealed, their voice will be heard, and their image displayed to others and both may be recorded. The recording may also include images, messages, Q&A, and other content shared by your child and other participants. The recordings of your child’s image, voice, identity, and content may be used for any purpose deemed appropriate by the School, including for educational, disciplinary, and marketing purposes. If you do not want your student to participate in these programs, please notify the Dean of Students Office.

Students are reminded that they should not place any confidential or sensitive information into cloud storage.

## Sexting

“Sexting is the term used to describe a sharing of photos of persons (themselves or other individuals regardless of age) engaging in sexually-related behavior, or touching private body parts over or under clothes, or of persons partially or wholly nude, typically with private body areas uncovered through any form of electronic distribution. Students are prohibited from engaging in sexting, whether over the School’s systems or using their own electronic devices regardless of where the student was when the sexting occurred. Any student receiving or with knowledge of such a photo must



immediately report the situation to an Administrator. Even seemingly joking or flirtatious sexting behavior is wrong and will not only lead to disciplinary action but could lead to a report to law enforcement. The School will comply with all state and local laws regarding sexting.

## **Social Media and Social Networking Policies and Procedures**

Social media encompasses a broad array of online activity including social networks/media such as Twitter, Flickr, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, GroupMe, and Snapchat, blogs, and other similar online or Internet communications. Because this form of communication is vast and growing, we feel it is important to communicate to you the School's position regarding a student's use of social media or networking.

### **Use at School or a School-Related Event**

We do not permit students to access social media and/or social networking sites while on School property or at a School-related event, unless such use is on a School social media platform or School-sanctioned site and the use is for School-related work. We have taken steps to block many of the social media/networking sites on our network, but technology will undoubtedly work faster than our IT Department. Therefore, even if you are able to access such sites on School property or at a School-related event, you should understand that your activities are in violation of School policy and may result in disciplinary action.

### **Use Away from School Property**

It is not our goal to regulate a student's personal online activities when not on School property or at a School-related event. Please understand, however, that certain activities might impact a student's relationships with other students or School employees, impact the School rights, or disrupt the School's mission or activities, and we do reserve the right to regulate those activities. All students should ensure that they are familiar with School's conduct policies to avoid any online communications that might violate those policies.

### **Guidelines**

You should ensure that your online activities do not violate a School policy regarding bullying or harassment, or other similar policies pertaining to how students interact with each other. If you post or say something online that makes another student feel uncomfortable, your activity may result in an investigation and possible discipline.

Students should also be aware that teachers and administrators may periodically check such sites and may determine that off campus behavior violates the School conduct code. For example, a student making disparaging or negative comments about the School, administration, or faculty members in a manner that is disruptive to the School's educational mission or activities would be considered a violation of the School's policy code.

Students should not "follow" or be "friends" with any faculty member or other adult member of our community (other than the student's parent) on any of these social networking sites. Any violation of this prohibition must be reported to the administration immediately.

In addition, postings on social networking or other Internet sites of students engaging in inappropriate behavior (such as drinking, smoking, vaping, sexual actions, etc.) is prohibited.

Students are not permitted to use the School's name, logos, trademarks, service marks, or other similar School property in online activities without the permission of the School. Students are not permitted to post photographs of the School, its locations, activities, students, parents, or employee-related activities online without the permission of the School.

Students are not permitted to create websites or social networking profiles to rate teachers, discuss aspects of the School, or otherwise disclose information online that the School would find offensive or inappropriate if posted in the School's newspaper. Finally, students are not permitted to disclose any confidential information of the School, employees, students, parents, or activities online.





## **Social/Political Issues**

Students and parents who identify themselves as School students or parents on their personal social media account(s) or when posting on a School-affiliated account must not engage in political or social actions or commentary reflecting personal views. Political messages that may be associated with the School are not authorized. Students and parents must be moderate and professional when sharing social media posts, tagging the School's social media accounts, or when making any references to our School or programs.

## **Creation of Social Media Accounts**

Any School-affiliated groups, clubs, organizations, etc. are not permitted to create a social media account without written consent from the School President.

## **Your Identity Online**

You are responsible for any of your online activity, including but not limited to activity conducted with a School email address, which can be traced back to the School's domain, which uses School resources or assets, and/or which is contained on your personal devices or accounts.

What you publish on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the School and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the School.

## **School's Right to Inspect**

The School reserves the right to inspect all electronic data and usage occurring over the School's network or on School property without prior notice. We also reserve the right to assess information in the public domain on the Internet or on private social media sites brought to the School's attention, and to discipline students for any violation of these guidelines.

## **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)**

Publicly available applications driven by GenAI, such as chatbots (ChatGPT, Google's Bard, and Meta's LLaMA), search engines (Microsoft Bing), or image generators (DALL-E, Midjourney) ("GenAI Programs"), are impressive and widely popular. This policy applies to the use of any third-party or publicly available GenAI Programs that mimic human intelligence to generate answers, work product, or perform certain tasks. Certain of our courses and curriculum may explore AI programs so students are aware of and understand these important tools. However, while these content-generating tools are important for students to be aware of and understand, there are a number of concerns associated with this new technology:

- GenAI Programs do not always produce accurate or complete information and results can include fictional people, places, facts, or events;
- The information entered into GenAI Programs is not confidential, is used by the GenAI Programs to continue to evolve, and are a potential target for hacking or other cyberattacks; and
- The results produced by these GenAI Programs do not cite to sources, so there is a serious risk of plagiarism

Most importantly, the purpose of school is to allow students to grow, to be challenged intellectually, and to think critically about the material they are learning. As such, students are not allowed to use GenAI Programs, such as chatbots or image generators, either in school or at home in connection with any schoolwork, including, but not limited to: homework, projects, examinations, tests, quizzes, or as a substitute for reading assigned materials, unless expressly permitted by a teacher. Students found to have used GenAI Programs without express permission from their teacher will be subject to disciplinary action.



# DRESS CODE

## General Appearance and Attitude

A student's general appearance reflects his attitude toward his school and himself. An abusive or negative attitude hurts the entire school. A student who habitually displays a negative, uncooperative, or disrespectful attitude will be asked to leave St. Thomas. As long as a student is enrolled at St. Thomas, he represents and reflects the tradition of St. Thomas.

Students out of dress code for any reason must report to the Dean of Students' Office prior to the first period. If a student does not do so, disciplinary action may be taken. It is solely at the discretion of the Dean of Students' Office to excuse dress code violations.

Students may at no time wear "unwholesome" images or branding that supports lifestyle choices that are inappropriate for teens or the School's Catholic values. It is also inappropriate for students to display images, names, wording or messages that are political in nature or could otherwise be considered divisive.

The School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any student's appearance and grooming as a reflection of School standards.

## Shirts

All shirts must be neat, clean, have a fold over collar and be tucked into the pants, with no inappropriate designs, patterns or zippers. Any branded STH shirts are allowed only if issued by school organizations or sold by the athletic booster club. Hawaiian shirts are allowed on approved dress down days only, but must still be appropriate.

## Pants

Students must wear tan khaki dress or "Docker" type pants that are neat and clean. Students may not wear "denim trousers" style pants, tan denim "western" jeans or cargo pants of any kind. A belt is to be worn at all times. Drawstring or side-pocket type pants are not permitted. There may be no fraying, rips or holes on the pants. There may be no elastic at the cuff of the pants.

## Shorts

On days that students are allowed to "dress down" and wear shorts, all shorts must be tan khaki "Dockers Style" walking/golf shorts. All shorts must extend below mid-thigh.

## Shoes

Shoes must be dress shoes such as leather shoes, loafers, Sperry style, Hey Dudes, or boots. Shoes must be leather, suede, or canvass; have a sole; and be fully enclosed (entire foot is covered). The predominant color must be black, dark blue, grey, brown, or tan. No house shoes/slippers, athletic shoes or shoes/boots with heavy terrain soles are allowed. Any shoes that are too casual, such as slides, crocs, or footwear with fur type material on the inside, or not worn properly (i.e. shoelaces must be present and tied according to the style of the shoe, or students walking on the backs of the shoes) are not acceptable. Pairs of shoes must be matching. The final decision for appropriate or inappropriate footwear is solely determined by the Dean of Students' Office.

Socks must be worn at all times. "No show" socks are not allowed.

### Exemptions to Shoe Policy

- If a student has an injury and needs to wear athletic shoes for a short term, a parent must notify the Dean of Students Office for approval
- If a student has a medical reason for wearing athletic shoes for long term, a parent must provide a doctor's note and notify the Dean of Students Office.



## Outerwear

All non STH outerwear is to be with minimal logos and branding as determined by the Dean of Students Office. Students may also wear official STH outerwear.

## Hats

No hats, caps or head coverings may be worn on the school campus during the school day, Hoodies may not be pulled up and worn over the head at any time during the school day, including in the classrooms. Caps may be worn at athletic events on campus.

## Hair and Facial Hair

At all times, a student's hair must be neat, clean, well-groomed and remain its natural color. On the back of the head, hair should not extend past the TOP of dress collars. Hair on the side of the head should not extend below the bottom of the ear lobes. Hair in the front of the head should not extend BELOW the bottom of the eyebrows. Hair should not obscure a student's face. Curly hairstyles that grow in outward directions from the scalp cannot exceed two inches in length on the sides and back, and three inches on the top. Hairstyles that result in lengths outside the above parameters are not allowed. Braids, dreadlocks, curls, twists, and waves are acceptable as long as the above length limits are not exceeded. Hairstyles that exceed length limits in the front or sides may be restrained by gel or a loose binding on the nape of the neck as long as the length in the back is above the shirt collar. The Deans Office reserves the right to determine hairstyle appropriateness. For example, Mohawks and patterns, designs, or lines shaved into the hair are not allowed. Decorative jewelry or beads, hair clips, barrettes, or headbands may not be worn in the hair.

Sideburns are to be moderate and may not extend below the bottom of the ear lobe. Facial hair of any kind, including a beard or mustache, is not allowed. The Deans Office may require immediate shaving or allow for after-school shaving at home.

## Miscellaneous Dress Code Provisions

The following are prohibited at school or school related events:

- Body Piercings
- Jewelry other than an inexpensive watch or single chain necklace
- Make up
- Nail Polish is prohibited.
- Exposed tattoos

## Mass/Special Assembly Dress

Mass/Special Assembly Dress consists of tan khaki "Docker" style pants, a solid white dress shirt, a tie that has red as its dominant color (any STH team/activity tie is allowed) and a navy blue blazer or STH red blazer with crest. Navy blue blazers or the STH red blazer with crest are the only outerwear permitted on Mass/Special Assembly Dress days. Hoodies and other coats/jackets are not to be worn in school on Mass/Special Assembly Dress days.

## Activity Day/Dress-Down Days

For days designated by the administration as spirit or dress down days, the dress code is as follows: dress should consist of Khaki "Docker style" shorts (mid -thigh or longer) khaki pants, or blue jeans (non-distressed – no tears or fraying), belt, socks, and athletic shoes. Students may wear their team or club identifying shirt, jersey (jerseys must have t-shirts underneath), official STH t-shirt, or Hawaiian shirt.

# DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR

## Purpose and Goal

Our goal is to maintain a secure, challenging, and nurturing school environment in which students develop a strong sense of integrity and respect for others. To promote this goal, students are expected to be honest, use appropriate language and have appropriate interactions with others.

Another equally important goal is to help students mature and learn a sense of self-responsibility. For this reason, students are held to a high standard of integrity and are expected to appropriately seek help and report problems when circumstances arise. We encourage students to seek help and report problems on their own without parental involvement as much as possible.

The standards of student conduct are designed to provide students with guidance to help them meet the goals and expectations of our community. Parents are expected to reinforce these goals at home and are expected to support the efforts of the School. While reasonable disagreements may be discussed in private, it is important that parents support the School with respect to expectations and consequences for student behavior. The list of rules and policies should be read carefully. Violations will result in serious consequences, up to and including suspension or dismissal from School. Students may also be held responsible for any damage or harm that they cause to individuals, property, and/or the School community at large.

## Unacceptable Behaviors

Maturity is an on-going process of life. Students are expected to accept responsibility, to grow in character, to respond to advice and suggestions and to learn not to see themselves as exceptions to regulations that protect mutual freedoms. The following are examples of unacceptable behaviors:

1. Harassment of any kind including but not limited to, violent, defamatory, harassing, demeaning, sexual, threats, and including direct or indirect violent or terrorist threats against persons or property, or knowledge thereof. This includes harassment done but not limited to in person, social media, and electronic transmission, spoken or written, through third parties, on or off campus at any time. See Harassment Policy.
2. Sexual harassment or sexual misconduct
3. Possession of sexually explicit material of any kind.
4. Deliberately setting off a fire alarm
5. Unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct, by a St. Thomas student, whether it be on campus or away from campus
6. Possession or use of any tobacco/nicotine or tobacco/nicotine products, including but not limited to e-Cigs, vaping devices, and paraphernalia is not permitted on campus at any time or off campus event.
7. Unauthorized or misuse of electronic devices or internet/social media as per the handbook
8. Destruction, vandalism, or breaking and entering of school, neighborhood, or another person's property. Restitution may be required
9. Leaving campus without permission or failure to check with the Dean of Students' Office after the first period of the day begins.
10. Recording devices are not allowed unless authorized by a teacher.
11. Cheating in any form is a serious matter, and will be punished by academic sanctions and disciplinary consequences. The determination that cheating has taken place is left solely to the discretion of the teacher and the Dean of Students' Office. No academic honors will be awarded to those who cheat.
12. Study aides, AI, or any outside material including but not limited to internet sourced materials are not to be used without explicit permission from the teacher.
13. Food and drinks are not allowed in the buildings with the exception of a cafeteria without the explicit permission from the Dean of Students' Office.



14. Open defiance of school authority or disrespect to/of any faculty, staff, and chaperone or administration member in word (spoken, written or electronic) or action.
15. Stealing, including possession of stolen articles and aiding or abetting any theft.
16. Truancy from school or skipping one or more classes.
17. Disruption of the learning environment by participating or engaging in any activity that interferes with normal instructional activity. Determination of what is a disruptive activity is at the sole discretion of the teacher.
18. Assault or fighting, or possession of items judged by the administration to be weapons or reasonable facsimile thereof on or off campus.
19. Any inappropriate language, spoken, written, or electronic form, which is offensive to the values of St. Thomas or any language that demeans the dignity of any student or staff member. This would include the tone, as well as the content of any statement and would be language any reasonable person would consider offensive. This also includes students who are offended by the use of inappropriate language from a faculty or staff member.

Any action or behavior, on or off campus, during or outside of school hours, that is inconsistent with the mission and values of St. Thomas is unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to the above behaviors. Final decisions of unacceptable behavior and resulting consequences are determined by the Dean of Students' Office.

Note: Law enforcement may be involved for any criminal activity on or off campus. The determination of the severity of the consequences will be at the sole determination of the Dean of Students' Office.

## **On and Off-Campus Behavior**

The School does not seek to unnecessarily involve itself in a student's off-campus behavior. However, the School reserves the right to act with respect to off-campus behavior when it deems necessary, including, without limitation, when that off-campus behavior impacts the student's ability to continue at School, impacts other students' or employees' ability to be comfortable at School, compromises the welfare of other students, or damages the reputation of the School.

The policies and standards apply at all times a student is enrolled in the School, including when a student is on campus or in the immediate vicinity of campus; any time a student is participating in or attending a School-sponsored event on or off campus; any time a student is officially representing the School; any time a student is traveling on behalf of the School; and in the evenings, on weekends, and during school breaks, including summer break.

In addition, the School regards any behavior prejudicial to the best interests of the School, its students, and its employees whether at School or elsewhere, as sufficient grounds for a disciplinary response.

Consistent application of disciplinary policies is sought, although each situation is judged on its merits, and efforts will be made to ensure that decisions are not arbitrary.

The School's rules, policies, and standards provide general guidelines for the expected behavior. The rules, policies, and standards outlined below and elsewhere in this Handbook should not be read as an all-inclusive description of the School's standards, which are based on honesty, respect, trust, and safety. Any behavior that constitutes a breach of these School values may result in disciplinary action. Students are expected to comply with School standards and rules at all times, and they are also encouraged to discuss with their fellow students, teachers, or administration any issues or infractions of School standards and rules toward the purpose of caring for one another in a spirit of kindness and of what is best for each person in the School community.

## **General Conduct**

Students and parents should be considerate and show respect toward other students, faculty, staff, all guests, and visitors. Students should respect School property and the personal property of other people. Students and parents, both as participants or spectators, are required to show good will, sportsmanship, and courtesy at all School-sponsored events (on and off campus). Any person showing unsportsmanlike conduct may be asked to leave the event and may not be allowed to attend future events.

## **Student Conduct**

Student conduct should be of such high caliber as not to disrupt or distract from the instructional or other procedures of the School. The use of ethnic slurs, name calling, and profanity are not permitted. The “Golden Rule” will be the foundation of all personal relationships.

In addition, the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the School. We expect students, at all times, both on and off campus (including evenings, weekends, and school breaks) to avoid all types of behaviors that may be harmful to the student’s or another person’s body, self-esteem, or health. All students are expected to help create a school culture of respect for oneself and others. As examples, Internet activity, criminal activity, sexual activity, vaping, use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other chemicals, or engaging in self-harming, may result in a student receiving disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from School.

If a student observes or receives information that another student may be struggling with personal issues or has concerns that a student may harm themselves or others, please promptly report such information to the School’s administration.

## **Students Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the student, the School, and parents to create a social climate within the St. Thomas community that is conducive to the exercise of self-respect and respect for others and their property. St. Thomas desires an atmosphere of courtesy, honesty and pride in one’s own work and achievement within one’s ability.

When corrective measures are required, they will be flexible enough to allow for individual differences among students and situations. However, the welfare of the community (the common good) is paramount and continuing. When exhaustive efforts by the School to help an individual do not produce an acceptable response, the School may ask the family to withdraw the student.

Whether any corrective measures, including, without limitation, any detention or other disciplinary action, shall be taken in any circumstance, and the degree of those corrective measures, shall be decided at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

When a student feels treated unfairly are, his recourse will be decided through consultation with his parents, the Principal, and the Dean of Students.

## **Cooperation with School Staff**

Students are expected to be honest, cooperative, and respectful with School staff at all times.

## **Criminal Activities**

A student engaging in conduct that is defined under law as a civil infraction, a misdemeanor, or a felony (whether charged by law enforcement or not) is grounds for expulsion. Violations of law that occur off-campus during the school day will be subject to review under School rules. Violations of law that occur after the school day may also be subject to review under School rules. In the case of offenses that occur at the end of the school year, the School may require punishments to be served during the summer or the following fall. Transcripts and other reports pertaining to the student’s academic standing will be withheld until the completion of the assigned punishment. All decisions involving suspension or expulsion are subject to the final approval of the School President and the Division Head.



## **Destructive Acts**

Students should govern their actions by the values of respect for self, person, and property. Thus, any destructive actions, including setting fires, causing damage to property, stealing property, harming others, serious threats to harm others, or similar conduct is prohibited.

## **Displays of Affection & Other Forms of Inappropriate Student Interaction**

Students are prohibited from inappropriate displays of affection on campus or any School-related events, such as kissing, hugging, or other such behavior. In addition, any type of sexual conduct anywhere on campus, on school buses, or at a School-related event is prohibited. Any unwanted or offensive sexual conduct occurring on school property or a school event must be immediately reported in accordance with the Harassment and Bullying Policy.

## **Fighting or Horseplay**

Fighting, pushing, hitting, tripping, physical horseplay, or roughhousing of any kind are prohibited and may lead to disciplinary consequences for all of the individuals.

## **Food, Drink, Gum**

Food and beverages will be consumed only in designated areas and at designated times. There will be no chewing of gum in the School.

## **Honesty and Dishonesty**

Dishonesty in any form, including stealing, lying, cheating, falsifying notes, and/or academic dishonesty, is inconsistent with School standards. Dishonesty is considered a fundamental breach of our community's expectations. A student's dishonesty in connection with an investigation of misconduct will compound the disciplinary response, regardless of the severity of the original violation.

## **Investigations**

Students are expected to cooperate in investigations including participating in interviews and answering questions. Students are expected to be honest, but honesty is not necessarily a mitigating factor and students' own statements may be used against them. Failure to cooperate with an investigation may be cause for disciplinary action.

If a student refuses to participate or cooperate at any stage of an investigation, or is unable to do so for whatever reason, including without limitation, pending criminal charges, the School reserves the right to act, including proceeding without a statement from the student, to require the student to withdraw from school, or dismissal. A withdrawal from the School during the pendency of the investigation does not preclude the School from completing its investigation and reflecting in its records the outcome of such investigation and the fact that the student withdrew prior to the completion of the investigation, which may be shared with other schools, colleges, and universities, as well as the NCAA if applicable.

## **Intellectual Property**

By enrolling the student in the School, the parent and student acknowledge that during student's attendance at the School all student Intellectual Property (defined below) related to or used in connection with the student's participation in any joint or group School activity (classroom, homework, athletic, artistic, scientific, etc.) is the exclusive property of the School. Intellectual Property includes all inventions, creations, videos, audios, writings, prototypes, discoveries, developments, formulas, techniques, and improvements and all works of original authorship or images that are fixed in any tangible medium of expression, whether or not copyrightable, patentable or otherwise protectable, which are conceived, designed, created or developed by any of the School's students in conjunction with other students and/or School personnel. To be clear, if a student works on a project alone (such as a painting or music), such project is not Intellectual Property covered by this policy.



Any parent or student who believes that they are eligible for a waiver to this policy should contact the School President to discuss the specific circumstances.

## **Language**

Students and parents are prohibited from using profane, obscene, bigoted, or other type of offensive language or gestures on campus or at School-sponsored events.

## **Laptop and Electronic Device Security**

Students have been assigned lockers capable of holding their computers and electronic devices as well as books. Computers and other electronic devices should not be left anywhere on campus unattended; the provided lockers should be used. The School does not assume or accept any responsibility for loss or damage to laptops or electronic devices not properly secured in the provided lockers.

## **Leaving School Campus**

It is a serious infraction to leave campus without authorization. Students who do so can jeopardize the senior privilege, may be required to submit to a drug or alcohol test.

## **Lockers and Cubbies**

Lockers and cubbies are the property of the School. Students are to keep their locker or cubby clean. Lockers are not to be shared. Personal items should be taken home each evening. If locks are available, the area must be locked (with the School's lock). Administration reserves the right, in its discretion, to open and/or search lockers, cubbies, and their contents. Lockers, cubbies, and their contents may be inspected periodically without prior notice or consent. An unauthorized lock will be removed with no notice to the student. Each student must provide the locker combination to the homeroom teacher. If a change is made, the teacher must be notified. Lockers will be assigned by the teacher during the first week of school. Locks put on before then will be removed.

All lockers are to be emptied by the last day of school. Any items or books left after that time will be given away or discarded as appropriate.

It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker combination secure and locker locked. The School assumes no financial responsibility for items taken from lockers or cubbies.

## **Pornography**

The possession, viewing, or distribution of pornography on campus, in either electronic or hard copy form, is a violation of School rules. The School reserves the right to determine what material is pornographic.

## **Prohibited Electronics and Other Items [see Personal Electronics Policy]**

Students are prohibited from possessing or having in their possession (locker, vehicle, backpack, purse, etc.), vaping or tobacco products, drugs/alcohol, matches, cell phones, iPhones, iPods, smart watches, pagers, laser pointers, tasers, electronic games, portable radios, tape players, and CD players. Any such item may be confiscated and, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement. Parents will be required to come to the School Office to pick up confiscated items not turned over to law enforcement. In addition, the School reserves the right to inspect any electronic device, including all contents. Students must provide any and all passwords to inspect the device and its contents upon request by a school administrator. Students and their parents' consent to the School logging into the device and its contents and applications, as well as accessing all communications, including, without limitation, stored communications. Students will also be subject to disciplinary procedures for violation of this policy.





## Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of classrooms, restrooms, supplies and furniture. Students who disfigure property, or otherwise damage school property or equipment, will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. For the protection of furniture and carpet, gum chewing is prohibited at all times. Library books are furnished by the School and loaned to the students for the purpose of study or enjoyment. Students will be required to pay for any lost or damaged materials checked out to them.

## Smoking/Vaping/Tobacco Products

School policy expressly forbids students from smoking, vaping, juuling, or using tobacco products, as well as possessing such products (as well as oils or liquids associated with same), at any time in or on School property, buses or other School vehicles, adjacent properties, and School-sponsored activities, including, without limitation, field trips. All cigarettes (including electronic), vaping devices, smokeless tobacco, lighters, matches, etc. or other devices similar to cigarettes, lighters, matches, etc. brought on campus by students will be confiscated. Discipline will be imposed based on the circumstances existing at the time and may include suspension, probation, or expulsion. Depending on the circumstances existing at the time, a violation of this policy may also be a violation of the School's Drugs and Alcohol Policy and reportable to law enforcement.

## Telephone Use

In order to maintain an appropriate classroom environment, classroom interruptions should be limited to emergencies. Please do not ask the Office to relay messages to your child. This should be done prior to School. Students are not permitted to call home for homework, test papers, folders, or arrange playdates, etc. If a true emergency occurs, the Office should be notified.

The School telephone lines are very busy and are needed to conduct School business. Therefore, we request that **OUTGOING CALLS BY PARENTS AND STUDENTS BE LIMITED TO EMERGENCIES.**

## Truancy

A student is truant if absent from School without the permission of a parent or guardian (regardless of age) or leaves the School grounds once the student has reported for classes without proper School personnel authorization. In cases of truancy, the parent or guardian will be notified immediately and the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Disciplinary matters, or incidents in violation of School rules and regulations, will be handled initially at the most immediate level possible. Violations will subject the student to disciplinary consequences. The level of disciplinary response for any violation of School rules will depend on a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Whether any person was harmed;
- Whether there was property damage or other loss of property;
- The level of any class or School disruption caused by the student's behavior;
- The number, if any, of prior infractions of School rules and regulations;
- Whether the student has been previously disciplined;
- Whether there were illegal or prohibited substances (for example, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, etc.);
- Whether the student had been earlier warned about the same or similar conduct;
- Whether there was a weapon or other dangerous item involved;
- Whether the conduct is of the kind also prohibited by criminal law; and/or
- Whether the student was honest and cooperative in connection with the investigation of the behavior.



Consequences may include any one, or a combination of, possible consequences in this Handbook, including but not limited to:

1. Meeting with Deans
2. Detention(s)
3. Saturday or other service detentions
4. Disciplinary probation contracts
5. Loss of extra-curricular privileges
6. Suspension
7. Expulsion
8. Notification of law enforcement when required by law

## **Restorative Discipline and Meeting**

Where possible and practical, the school may choose to address unacceptable behaviors using a Restorative Discipline model in meetings with students. The purpose of this approach is to determine if the words or actions of a person or group of persons caused harm to another, to themselves, or to St. Thomas. In addition, an attempt will be made to determine the level of harm done, and to identify actions that can repair the harm. The use of this model does not preclude the assignment of consequences as appropriate.

## **Detention**

The penalty for ordinary rule infraction is detention before school. Daily detentions are scheduled at 7:10 a.m. Service detentions for major infractions or for excessive number of regular detentions will usually be served on Saturdays or after school. Students will be notified of assigned detentions through their STH email account. All detentions are to be served on the day assigned by the Dean of Students' Office. The only exceptions, which must be approved ahead of time by the Dean of Students' Office are:

- doctor's appointments which must be verified by the doctor's office;
- participation in a game sponsored by the Athletic Department (not intramurals); or
- special tutoring sessions confirmed by the teacher.

An additional detention may be assigned for failure to report for any assigned detention. Exceptions are not to be presumed by the student. The student must have permission from the Dean of Students' office before missing a detention.

## **Probationary Contract**

Students placed on probation must sign a contract with both parent and student signatures and adhere to the terms set by St. Thomas in the contract. Failure to adhere to the terms of the contract may result in further disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students' such as, but not limited to, multiple Saturday or other service detentions, suspension, or expulsion.

## **Loss of Extracurricular Privileges**

Participation in extra-curricular activities is a privilege granted to students in good standing. This applies to both academics and discipline. Loss of extra-curricular privileges can be a consequence of inappropriate conduct contrary to the mission, vision, and values of St. Thomas .

## **Suspension**

St. Thomas issues suspensions only when the student's presence on campus creates serious issues for the student, other students, or the faculty and staff of St. Thomas.



## **Expulsion**

The Dean of Students' Office, in consultation with the Principal, will apply this consequence only when an incident, or series of incidents, dictate the removal of the student for the benefit of the St. Thomas community and the young man involved, and where other options have been exhausted or are not possible.

## **Outside Evaluation and Treatment**

St. Thomas reserves the right to require outside psych-social assessments in certain circumstances. In some cases, students may not continue at St. Thomas until school personnel have received and evaluated those assessments. In cases such as these, St. Thomas will provide a list of approved mental health professionals to perform the assessment, and require the sharing of evaluation results with designated St. Thomas personnel. If the School allows the student to resume classes on campus, continuing therapy and support may also be required, with both St. Thomas personnel and outside mental health professionals.

## **Appeal Process**

In the case of expulsion, a student's parent or guardian may appeal to the Principal only if they have new evidence to present, or at the discretion of the Principal.

## **Reporting of Infractions to Colleges and Universities**

Students and parents are responsible for understanding the obligation to report and update information in a student's college application pursuant to the college's or university's reporting guidelines, and for athletes, obligations imposed by the NCAA. Many colleges and universities require that students advise whether they have been subjected to discipline (probation, suspension, or expulsion) or have been arrested or convicted. Many colleges and universities also require that a student or school immediately report the following incidents which may have occurred after application and/or acceptance: (1) disciplinary matters for which a consequence has been given; (2) arrests, convictions, or other legal changes; and (3) circumstances under which a student was withdrawn from School to avoid the possibility of a disciplinary infraction. The student and/or parent are responsible for complying with the college/university requirements and if applicable any NCAA obligations and must also provide the School with a copy of the letter or other information disclosed. It is important for the student and parent to realize that the School and/or the student's college counselor will also inform the college or university, and NCAA as applicable of such an incident in a truthful and transparent fashion.

## **CONTROLLED AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES POLICY**

### **General**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling or purchasing any alcoholic beverages or other mind-altering substances (including synthetic salts or other substances), or possessing drug paraphernalia on or near School property or at School-related activities. "Mind-altering" substances include any type of substance ingested, snorted, smoked or inserted into one's body that may impact the individual in some way. Such substances include, without limitation, alcohol, legal or illegal substances (including medical marijuana pursuant to a prescription or physician certification), over the counter salts, spices, nicotine, vapors, incense, or other similar items. Off-premises possession, use, sale or purchase of alcohol and other mind-altering substances is also prohibited.



## Testing

As a condition of enrollment in the School, students and parent(s)/guardian(s) have consented to drug, alcohol, and nicotine testing of the student. Students are not permitted to opt out of the School's drug testing program. Students may be required to submit to urinalysis or hair analysis drug screens, blood alcohol tests, breathalyzer tests and/or medical examinations under the following circumstances: (a) when a student is suspected of attending School or School-related activities with intoxicants or mind-altering substances in their system or in their possession; (b) when a student suffers an injury or is involved in an accident while at School; (c) on a periodic or random basis, including but not limited to, in connection with the student's participation in extracurricular activities; or (d) when a student is placed under disciplinary status and such screenings or examinations are terms of continued enrollment. The presence of alcohol or the presence of any other intoxicants or mind-altering substances in the body is a violation of this policy. Refusal of a student (by the student or the student's parent) to undergo testing or to cooperate fully with any of these tests (including signing consent forms or providing testing results promptly to the School) is also a violation of our policy and will result in expulsion. Additionally, contraband dogs may periodically perform unannounced searches of the School campus.

This policy does not prohibit the proper use of medication under the direction of a physician, although the use of medical marijuana is prohibited in all circumstances. However, the misuse or abuse of such drugs is prohibited. Students who are taking prescription or nonprescription drugs must notify an administrator in the School Office of this fact when they report to School.

## Self-Reporting

The School wants to help students who may have difficulties with substance abuse. Therefore, Students who choose to self-report their use of mind-altering substances to guidance or the administration prior to being selected for testing under this policy will not be subject to discipline for the self-report or use as long as the student complies with the terms of the School's guidelines, which will be set forth in a contract with the student and family. The contract will be specific to the individual and may include the following requirements: completing educational programs on substance abuse; completing a rehabilitation program; testing for substance abuse within the School's discretion, and other similar processes.

## Consequences

In addition to determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the School reserves the right to impose the following additional or different requirements as appropriate for the circumstances: determination of possible legal action; required professional counseling or evaluation by a medical professional approved by the administration, including but not limited to requiring a reciprocal release so the School can communicate with the medical professional; therapeutic, medical or rehabilitative intervention by a medical professional or program approved by the administration; removal from all elected or appointed positions of leadership in the School; required random and/or regularly scheduled drug and/or alcohol testing at a School-approved local clinic or doctor's office for a time period and at intervals to be determined by the School's administration. Refusal of a student (directly or through a parent/guardian) to undergo testing or to cooperate fully with any of these terms will result in automatic expulsion.



