



St. Thomas More Catholic School

Parent-Student Handbook
2016-2017

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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More Catholic School is committed to continuing a legacy of excellence in religious and academic education in a nurturing environment that fosters self-discipline.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Thomas More School is a Catholic parochial school with grades kindergarten through eight, staffed by a dedicated lay faculty. The community of St. Thomas More continuously strengthens its commitment to teaching the Catholic faith and tradition through worship, doctrine, ideology and morality. The primary function of the school, in partnership with the family, is to facilitate the development of each student spiritually, academically, socially, culturally, emotionally, and physically by encouraging the student to see himself or herself as an individual with unique abilities.

The faculty and staff strive, through teaching methods and personal example, to instill in students those values that will make them responsible, informed Christians and world citizens with a respect for all creation.

The instruction the school provides sets a foundation for the future education of students, not an end in itself. The curriculum is designed to promote an educational climate in which the students are challenged to develop their capabilities. Within this framework, the faculty encourages academic excellence and fosters an atmosphere of self-discipline and self-respect.

The school community — faculty, staff, students, and their families — demonstrates a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. Through this example, the school strives to instill in students the awareness that they should develop their talents and energies to the service of God, the Church, and all humanity.

PARENTAL SUPPORT AND COOPERATION STATEMENT

Part of the educational philosophy of St. Thomas More Catholic School is the belief that the school assists the parents in carrying out their primary responsibility of providing religious and secular education of their children. Therefore, STM expects the parents to be involved as much as possible in the education of their children. This means not only supporting the school and participating in its activities, but also providing instruction and examples for their children, both at home and in public. While STM realizes and recognizes that there may be legitimate disputes concerning educational matters, these disputes should be discussed with administrators and not posted on social media. STM is ultimately responsible for the orderly operation of the school in the best interest of all of its students. Therefore, the school reserves the right to terminate its relationship with a student if the parents of the student fail to provide the support, assistance, and example necessary to accomplish the school's role of assisting the parent in providing the religious and secular education to which the child is entitled.

Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent or guardian may result in the student's removal from the school.

STM SCHOOL LOGO: The use of St. Thomas More Catholic School's logo requires administrative approval.

ACCREDITATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

St. Thomas More Catholic School is a member of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) and is approved and accredited by the State of Louisiana. The school adheres to all policies contained in the Administrative Manual of the Diocese of Baton Rouge that is available for review at the school office. *The Principal is the final recourse and reserves the right to revise this handbook with the approval of the Pastor and School board. Parents will be given prompt notice of any changes to this handbook.*

The school abides by all regulations pertaining to the health and safety of our children. There are regular inspections for asbestos, health practices, and fire safety. The Asbestos plan and other safety reports are available in the school's main office.

St. Thomas More is an accredited, co-educational elementary school for grades kindergarten through grade eight. St. Thomas More, as well as the schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at its schools. STM does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A fundamental premise in religious education is that parents are the primary educators of their children. As a school, St. Thomas More supports and assists parents in this endeavor. Faith is a gift from God. It is our responsibility to learn as much as possible about that faith in order to grow closer to God. The core of education at Saint Thomas More Catholic School is our Catholic faith. It is the reason the school exists.

At St. Thomas More, catholicity permeates the curriculum. We are seriously committed to incorporating religion into the daily lives of our students. The children not only learn the tenets and doctrines of their church, but also how to live those tenets and make them come alive with the love of Christ. We strive to nurture children in the teachings of the Catholic Church through scripture, music, prayer, age-appropriate activities, meaningful liturgy, and service.

Scripture is a foundation of our program and is integrated throughout the religion program. Bibles are readily available in classrooms and in sixth grade, each student receives a personal bible.

Liturgical music helps to foster the children's participation in parish worship and devotional practices.

Prayer is an integral part of each day at St. Thomas More: morning prayer, prayer before each class, prayer before meals, the Angelus at noon (Jr. High students), afternoon prayer, prayer for special intentions, etc. Religious displays are visible throughout the school, and in each classroom there is a special prayer center.

Classes participate in grade level retreats, and prayer partners spend time together in prayer, service, and activities. Eighth grade students participate in the Come Lord Jesus program as part of their religion curriculum. Throughout the year our students participate in many service projects. They have many opportunities to share their blessings and to reach out to others in various ways.

Our students help prepare and actively participate in school liturgies during the year: Back to School, Mission Day, Thanksgiving, Advent/Christmas, Catholic Schools Week, and Easter. Parents are always

welcome to worship with us at these liturgies, but because of our large numbers, may not sit with the students. Special seating is available. Each week students attend a daily Mass. Parents are invited to attend and sit with their children. They should meet their child before the class is seated. Students do not attend daily Mass when a school Mass is scheduled or when there is a Holy Day that week.

Students may have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a class each year. We encourage the students to receive this sacrament more frequently with their families.

FIRST RECONCILIATION/FIRST EUCHARIST: Students in second grade are prepared for the reception of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Students receive both the sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in their own parish. A child is neither forced to receive the sacraments, nor prohibited from doing so once he/she has begun to show an understanding and appreciation of the basic values involved. Parents, in consultation with a member of the parish staff, decide when this realization occurs for an individual child. When a child is able to understand the basic concepts of our faith regarding sin and the difference between ordinary bread and the Eucharist, he/she is welcome to receive these sacraments.

Parents have a right and an obligation to participate in the formal preparation of their child. To help parents accept and accomplish this responsibility, parent seminars are offered for each of these sacraments and attendance is required.

Students are offered some experiences of the sacraments through the school, but they learn their habits of frequent reception from their families. Parents are asked to support their children by encouragement and example. We invite parents to continue their own study of our faith so that all of us together - parents, children, and teachers - may support one another to grow to full stature in Christ Jesus.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

CURRICULUM: St. Thomas More Catholic School continues a legacy of excellence in academic and religious education. This begins with an outstanding faculty and a rigorous curriculum. Our core curriculum focus in all of our grades K-8 is on the Catholic religion, reading, math, English, science, and social studies. We constantly challenge our students with hands-on learning activities, technology integration and lab explorations. As the elementary school is the foundation of a child's educational career, we take seriously teaching the necessary concepts and skills that give students an academic advantage that lasts a lifetime. Our program is designed to educate the whole child — mentally, physically, and spiritually — and to help each child become the best that he/she can be.

ENRICHMENT CLASSES: Saint Thomas More Catholic School offers a variety of enrichment classes throughout the curriculum. These include computer, foreign language, physical education, music, and art. The evaluation of student progress may include but is not limited to: participation, test and/or skills assessment, conduct, and completion of required activities. The nature of physical education requires students to wear tennis shoes. A child not able to participate in these classes for an extended period of time must have a written doctor's excuse.

HOME ASSIGNMENTS: Homework is a necessary part of a child's education. The amount of homework a student has depends upon his or her progress in school. Homework includes written and study work as well as Accelerated Reader reading (GRADES 3-6). Students are expected to complete all homework assignments. In most classes, homework constitutes a portion of the student's grade. Students are responsible for writing daily homework assignments in their assignment pad and for having completed homework in class on the due dates.

TEXTBOOKS: Children should be trained to handle all school books carefully. Textbooks should be kept free of pencil or ink marks. If a book is lost or damaged, the student must pay for its replacement or repair. All books must be covered. Book covers torn or lost during the year must be replaced immediately. The student's name and year used should be written on the cover. Home texts will be given for some subjects on some grade levels. These are to be handled just as carefully as books at school. All books must either be returned or paid for at the end of the year.

ACCELERATED READER: The Accelerated Reader program at St. Thomas More Catholic School is a part of the language arts curriculum in grades three through six. Progress in the Accelerated Reader program is averaged into the language arts grade each nine weeks. The purpose of the program is to encourage a love of reading, improve skills, and provide a tool for life-long learning.

FIELD TRIPS: Field trips may be offered during the school year to help meet educational objectives. With the exception of the end of the year eighth grade trip, all field trips must correlate to the classroom curriculum. This is a student day; therefore, any student who opts not to attend or who has not obtained the proper permission must report to school.

The school will provide a permission form which the parent/guardian must sign in order for the student to be allowed on the trip. Only this form will be accepted, i.e. a note or verbal permission from a parent/guardian will not suffice. Permission forms will not be accepted past the due date.

Children are bound by the usual policies of the school. Sometimes special fees, dress, lunch arrangements, etc. may be required. Students are transported by school bus or private vehicles. If private vehicles are used, the owner must provide proof that the automobile has a minimum of \$100,000/300,000 insurance coverage.

If a child is in jeopardy of losing the privilege of attending a field trip, a teacher will be in communication with the child's parent at least two weeks prior to the trip.

Parents who attend field trips as a chaperone must be in full compliance with our child protection policies. We ask that parents do not bring other children to the field trip if serving as a chaperone. As a chaperone, we need ones full attention to be on the STM students and staff of the field trip venue.

LIBRARY: The library is open from 7:30 a.m. until 2:38 p.m. and may be used by students during this time with permission from the classroom teacher. Regulations for using the library are given out at the beginning of each school year. Information regarding the selection process for library materials is available from the librarian. Any questions or comments in regards to library materials are to be referred to the librarian to elicit information and challenge procedures. All library book returns and fines should be taken care of immediately so the Edline account is not blocked and before the end of each nine weeks to insure that your child's report card does not get held. For 6, 7, 8 graders, all fees must to be cleared prior to the start of nine weeks tests or exams.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING: The program of standardized achievement testing at both elementary and secondary levels has been in effect in the diocese for a number of years. At St. Thomas More, we test 3rd - 8th grade students. The school is not required to provide time for make-up testing. Local high schools administer placement tests to eighth grade students in December. Diocesan policy prohibits publication of school by school comparative test scores.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS COMMITTEE: St. Thomas More Catholic School has established an Individual Needs Committee (INC) to assess and develop appropriate methods for helping students with special needs. The core committee consists of the principal, assistant principal, reading specialists, and guidance counselors. The purpose of INC is to provide assistance to students diagnosed with learning differences or other health impairments and to help identify students who may need to go through the educational evaluation process. The INC process may be initiated by the school or the parent. If parents feel a child needs adjustments, INC's process is begun by contacting the student's teacher or Guidance department. For a student to receive academic accommodations, a full-psychological-educational evaluation is required. A medical diagnosis offers a limited number of environmental accommodations.

To be considered for minor adjustments, a complete and current evaluation and formal diagnosis from a qualified professional must be on file, and the student must be experiencing significant difficulties at school. All adjustments are determined by INC.

Educational, health, guidance, and resource records are shared among our professional staff for the purpose of aiding the individual student. The confidential status of records is understood and is shared only for educational purposes.

Saint Thomas More Catholic School attempts to meet the needs of students within the school by making minor adjustments and incorporating minor interventions in regular classroom activities. Major adjustments, including those that require additional costs, are considered beyond the school's ability and cannot be incorporated. All students are required to meet promotional criteria for movement into the next grade for the following school year.

After April 1, the Individual Needs Committee will accept evaluations until the end of the year; however, the evaluations will not be processed until the following year.

The Catholic schools in the state of Louisiana, under the leadership of the Catholic School Superintendents, addressed Section 504 concerning students classified as Dyslexic and ADD/ADHD. Statewide guidelines have been developed and disseminated to all Catholic schools in the state, and in-service training has been provided for the faculties in all schools in order to implement the guidelines. Under Section 504 of Federal Law, students who exhibit a substantial limitation in one or more life activities qualify for consideration by the INC.

SPEECH: Special education services offered through East Baton Rouge Parish will be scheduled through the administration after approval has been attained.

All private services provided on campus must be scheduled before or after school through the individual needs committee. This includes speech or occupational therapy (handwriting and other fine motor skills).

ATTENDANCE

Prompt and regular attendance at school is essential for the child to have academic success. By state law, students must be present a minimum of 160 days to be eligible to receive credit for the courses taken. Excessive absence may result in a child's repeating the current grade. That means that not more than twenty total days can be missed without documented extenuating circumstances. In this case, documented means doctor's excuses pertaining to the reason for the absence. For STM this also means twenty classes in any one subject. We will also take unexcused tardies and unexcused early dismissals into account. If a student is not in attendance for at least 160 days, summer school/work may be required. A student needs to present in each and every class for a minimum of 160 days.

If a student is absent due to prearranged plans, the student may ask for assignments upon returning to school. Students are expected to be present for mid-term and final exams. (If a student has plans to be absent during the time exams are administered, the parents must contact the school in writing with specific reason stated. The acceptable reasons for missing an exam are a death in the family or an illness with a certified doctor's excuse. The administration and teachers will determine when the exam(s) will be taken.) Exams will not be administered prior to the testing period.

It is the responsibility of the student to see that work missed due to any absence is completed.

ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS: To assure that a child has reached school safely, we ask that parents follow the procedures outlined below for absences and tardiness.

When your child will be absent or tardy, please call the school (225-275-2820). Please listen to the entire set of options before leaving your message on the voice mail. When calling, parents should leave the following information: the child's name, grade, teacher, date, and reason for absenteeism or tardiness. If a child is sick, please call the school the day of the absence. Calls should be placed before 7:30a.m. If a student is not accounted for, STM will call the parent/guardian to determine the reason for the absence.

An excused absence is any absence where an official appointment excuse form is presented upon return. A death in a child's family will also be considered excused. The school needs notification prior to the absence if possible.

All homework requests for students in grades 2-8 must be made before 7:30a.m. on the second day of absence. Kindergarten and first grade teachers do not give daily assignments for absentees. For these grades, parents may request homework after the child has been absent for several days. Assignments may be picked up at the library from 2:50 – 3:05p.m.

If a child is absent from school, due to illness, he/she is not eligible to participate in any after-school activities on the day of the absence. A student may not come to school to take a test or to complete another assignment while they are absent from school, unless this has been authorized by the administration and coordinated through the guidance office.

PROCEDURE FOR TARDY STUDENTS: A student arriving at school after the second bell must report to the Attendance Room (5/6 building, next to the nursery) for a tardy slip to enter class. For safety reasons, kindergarten students must be **accompanied by a parent or guardian**. The student then reports to the homeroom teacher. Excessive tardiness (four unexcused tardies) will result in a morning detention from 7:00-7:40a.m. for 2nd-8th grade students a child is tardy on a Mass day, they will wait in the office until Mass is over. After four additional unexcused tardies, parent and student must attend a mandatory meeting to resolve this situation. This process will be repeated the second semester. Any student that misses the Excessive Tardies Detention will serve a half-day in-school suspension. *The only acceptable excuse for being tardy is a signed doctor or dentist's excuse which should be given to the homeroom teacher.* Other excuses for tardies will be deemed unexcused except in cases of extreme weather or automobile accidents. If a child is tardy on a Mass day, they will wait in the office until Mass is over.

RECORD-KEEPING FOR ABSENT AND TARDY STUDENTS: Tardies, absences, and early dismissals are recorded in the following manner:

If a student checks in after 7:40a.m., the student is marked *tardy*.

If a student checks out during the school day, the student is marked for an *early dismissal*.

Students who are checked out of school are not able to participate in school activities that occur after school on that day.

EARLY DISMISSALS: School hours are 7:40a.m. until 2:40p.m. and students should plan to be present during those times. All doctor or dentist's appointments should be scheduled around the school day unless it is an emergency. **Early dismissals cause classroom disruption as students are called from class. Parents are never to go to the classroom to pick up a child.** Teachers have been informed never to allow a student to leave the classroom with an adult. All early dismissals are done through the office and students are called to the office to be dismissed. The only exception to this is a kindergartner. Parents of kindergarten students are to go to the office, get a check-out pass and the office will call into the classroom to let the teacher know who is coming to pick up the child. Teachers will not release children without that pass. These measures are taken for the safety and security of the children. If a child is leaving for an appointment, parents are to send a note to the homeroom teacher stating when the student will be leaving. **Please do not check your child out after 2:30p.m. as we are entering our dismissal time of day.**

MAKE-UP WORK: It is the policy of the school that students are responsible for making up all work missed when they are not in school. Students are to initiate the contact with their teachers to determine what assignments, tests, etc. are due. The general policy states that students are given the amount of time that they were absent to complete all missed work. For example, a student absent for three days has three days to make up the work. Arrangements will be made with students who have had extended excused absences. Classwork nor homework is provided ahead of time to students who are out of school. Students who are out due to vacation are considered unexcused and should take home any necessary books and materials. A student present the day of an assigned test that has not missed any new material prior to the absence, will be required to take the scheduled test if they had the necessary materials to study. If not, the test will be taken the following day. If a student is absent due to illness, they may not come to school to take a test in any location (guidance, library, etc.) on that day.

SCHEDULING AND PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS

Schedules and placement in homerooms and grouped classes are determined by faculty and administration. Decisions are based on needs, observations, feasibility, and professional judgment. The administration is unable to honor parent requests for teachers.

GROUP PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS: In keeping with the basic philosophy of the school, St. Thomas More Catholic School uses a system of homogeneous grouping which emphasizes basic skills and individual pacing. The core curriculum is taught across groupings. The organization of groups is as follows:

Math and Language Arts Groups

Grades 1-4

Accelerated

On Grade Level

Approaching Grade Level

Grades 5-8

Accelerated

On Grade Level

Children are placed or relocated in groups according to how they perform on several types of tasks. Teachers review students' capabilities in verbal and written performance, daily work, homework, unit tests, ability to listen, specific grade criteria, following directions, completing tasks, work habits, responsibility, standardized test scores, exam grades, etc. No one area is the sole determining factor for group placement. Teachers determine placement in groups. If a child makes a C or lower in a grouped class, the teacher will determine the student's placement. If a child makes two C's or lower in a grouped subject, they will be moved.

REPORTING ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Student progress is reported in various ways. Formal contact includes parent/teacher conferences, academic status letters, and report cards. Any requests for grades other than at the scheduled times must be approved by the administration or through the INC committee. We will also discuss student progress in conferences.

EDLINE: (www.edline.net) Grades are entered by teachers on a regular basis for parents to view. Student progress is monitored through Ed-line.

REPORT CARDS: The official school calendar indicates the date report cards will be distributed every nine weeks. Each grading period, parents or guardians must sign the report card sleeve and return it the next day. The report card is kept at home.

Final grades are determined by averaging the **quality points** for each nine weeks grade. Grades 7-8 include the quality points earned on exams in this average. Each nine weeks grades equals 20% of the final average and each exam equals 10% of the final average.

All student report cards and records remain the property of the school until all financial obligations are satisfied for each grading period and the end of the year. All fees must be paid for students to take nine weeks tests and exams.

Quality Point Scale:

A – 100-93	Excellent (four quality points)
B – 92-85	Above Average (three quality points)
C – 84-75	Average (two quality points)
D – 74-67	Below Average (one quality point)
F – 66 and below	Unsatisfactory (zero quality points)

Enrichment classes in Kindergarten - 3rd grade and Penmanship receives the following grades:

S = Satisfactory NI = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory

Kindergarten Report Card Grading Scale:

G = Good S+ = Above Average S = Satisfactory S- = Slightly Below Average
NI = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory

INTERPRETATION OF GRADING

Listed below is the criteria teachers use in their grading. Special attention has been paid to reading and math in grades 1 through 3 because of the importance of developing a strong educational foundation.

It is important for parents of primary students to look equally at all the criteria rather than single out test grades. Teachers must address all these criteria when they deal with group placement, promotion, failure and retention. For example, a teacher in the primary grades must rely heavily on oral participation and daily work to arrive at an overall nine weeks grade. As children progress through the grades and begin to develop more complex skills, the emphasis shifts toward written work, chapter tests, unit tests, homework, as well as classwork.

PROMOTION/RETENTION: Criteria for promotion is defined below. All students are required to meet the prescribed criteria as indicated for their grade level for promotion to the next grade level.

Kindergarten: St. Thomas More Catholic School places strong emphasis on a child's developmental abilities and stresses school readiness in placing children in kindergarten. At the beginning of a child's education, decisions concerning placement are critical. Once a child is accepted into the kindergarten program, the school assumes the responsibility for the child's placement.

The school respects the abilities of its professionals and knows they will make the best possible placement decisions for its kindergarten students. Each child is special and will be offered the placement best suited to his or her needs. Because St. Thomas More Catholic School strives to have every child reach potential, it is thoroughly committed to providing the proper placement for each one.

Every kindergarten student will be pretested for PEP (Primary Education Program) and observed carefully during the school year. Decisions on first grade placement will be made during the second semester of kindergarten. The options for the student who completes kindergarten are: retention in kindergarten or placement in the first grade. Placement decisions will be made by the professional staff of St. Thomas More Catholic School.

Grade 1: Students will be required to earn six quality points in reading with three quality points being earned in the 2nd semester. Failure to achieve this would result in retention. Students will be required to earn four quality points in math and English with two quality points being achieved in the 2nd semester. Failure to do this in both math and English would result in retention. Failure to achieve this in one subject (other than reading) would require summer work as approved by the administration. Students must earn a final average of "S" in religion social studies and science. Failure to do so will require summer work as approved by the administration.

Grades 2 and 3: Students will be required to earn six quality points in reading with three quality points being earned in the 2nd semester. Failure to achieve this would result in retention. Students will be required to earn four quality points in math, English, science, social studies, and religion with two quality points being achieved in the 2nd semester. Failure to do this in any combination of math, English, science, social studies, and religion would result in retention. Failure to achieve this in one subject (other than reading) would require summer work as approved by the administration. Students will also be required to earn four quality points in Spelling achieved at any time during the school year. Failure to achieve this would require summer work as approved by the administration.

Grades 4, 5 & 6: To pass a major subject (math, English, literature/reading, social studies, science, religion) or a minor subject (spelling, enrichment classes, etc.), a student must earn a minimum of four quality points during the year in the manner prescribed in the following guidelines:

School policy dictates that all students are required to earn a minimum of two of the required quality points during the second semester.

Sixth grade students will take nine weeks tests averaged into the quarterly grades.

If this is not obtained, summer school is required for core subjects and a summer packet will be required for minor subjects and enrichment classes.

Grades 7 and 8: To pass a major subject (religion, math, English, literature, social studies, science), a student must earn a minimum of five quality points during the year in the manner prescribed in the following guidelines:

Nine weeks grades comprise 20% of the final grade. Mid-term and Final exams are each worth 10% of the final grade.

All students are required to earn a minimum of two and a half of the required quality points during the second semester in subjects where exams are administered.

To pass a minor subject (spelling, enrichment, etc.) a student must earn a total of four quality points during the year. Students are required to earn a minimum of two of the required quality points during the second semester. Failure to do so requires summer work that will be given by the school.

In Grades 4 - 8: Failure in a single major subject and/or a minor subject requires the student to attend and pass an approved summer program to be promoted to the next grade. Failure in two or more major subjects requires the student to repeat the grade.

Repeating a Grade at STM: A child who has repeated a grade at the primary level (K through 3) will not be allowed to repeat a **second time** at this level at St. Thomas More Catholic School. Likewise, a child who has repeated at the fourth through eighth grade level will not be allowed to repeat a **second time** at this level at St. Thomas More. Eighth grade students who fail for the year will have to repeat eighth grade at another school. Eighth grade students who fail for the year are unable to participate in the promotional ceremony (graduation).

Summer school may be held at St. Thomas More Catholic School for students in grades three through seven. It is mandatory to be promoted to the next grade. Summer school is tentatively set for the first week after the close of school. Summer work assigned by the administration will be assigned for students in grades one and two when a failure in one subject is earned.

HONORS

NINE WEEKS RECOGNITION: First Honors and Second Honors are earned by students who work to maintain high averages each nine week period.

Academic Honors: Grade point average for honors recognition is determined by grades in the six core subjects. Additionally, students must meet the criteria outlined below for each level of academic honors.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST:

Grades 4-8 - all A's and/or S's in **every** subject including conduct and enrichment.

FIRST HONORS:

4th Grade: Grade point average must be 3.5 or over and must have all A's and B's in all core subjects (religion, English, spelling, math, reading, science, and social studies). Students must have all A's, B's and S's in all other grades given on the report card, including conduct.

5th-8th Grades: Grade point average must be 3.5 or over and must have all A's and B's in all core subjects (religion, English, math, reading, science, and social studies). Students must have all A's and B's in all other grades given on the report card, including conduct.

SECOND HONORS:

4th Grade: Grade point average must be 3.0 and above in core subjects (religion, English, spelling, math, reading, science, and social studies) with all A's and B's or S's in core and enrichment subjects, as well as conduct grades.

5th-8th Grades: Grade point average must be 3.0 or above in core subjects, (religion, English, math, reading/literature, science, and social studies) with all A's and B's in core and enrichment subjects as well as conduct grades.

END OF THE YEAR HONORS:

Conduct Award: Students in grades 1-8 who earn all A's in all conduct grades given on the report card.

Honor Student - Student in grades 4-8 who have earned First Honors (3.5 or higher) for each nine week period with no grade lower than a B or S in *any* grade given on the report card, including exams and conduct.

Principal's List - Students who earned Principal's List (all A's or S's on the report card) for all four nine weeks period with A's or B's on all mid-term and final exams.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT: High school credit may be earned for Algebra I and English I. Eighth grade students enrolled in Algebra I and/or Honors English AND Honors Literature may receive these credits if they earn a final average of an A or B in the classes. High school credit is not earned in any other subject unless they chose to take a proficiency test at the high school level.

NURTURING ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS SELF-DISCIPLINE:

GUIDANCE: The Guidance program at St. Thomas More Catholic School has two full-time counselors. Their goal is to help students to be more successful academically, socially, and emotionally. The counselors schedule all parent teacher conferences, work with students to resolve conflicts, help students struggling with organization or classroom behaviors, participate in INC services, and help parents to find resources for evaluation or tutoring.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES FOR THE DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE: STM is 100% compliant with all State and Diocesan child protection regulations.

We have been directed by our diocesan office to ensure that all volunteers have the necessary paperwork to prove they have been through all of the steps for child protection. The Safe Environment Program is mandated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The program requires that we complete the following:

1. Completion of the "Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge Application for Employees & Volunteers"
2. Background checks for all employees and for adult volunteers working in an ongoing, unsupervised role with children
3. Child Protection training for all employees and for adult volunteers working in an ongoing, unsupervised role with children*
4. Signed acknowledgement for the Code of Ethics and the Diocese of Baton Rouge Internet and E-Mail Policy

*The child protection tutorial video can be found at safeandsacred-diobr.org. Please make sure a copy of the certificate of attendance is given to the ladies in the front office.

The Office of Child and Youth Protection is responsible for monitoring diocesan-wide Safe Environment compliance. The diocese and we at STM know that this paperwork, tutorial video, and background check is time consuming for us all. We are grateful that our volunteers are willing to go through this process to be with our children and teachers. If you volunteer through a Home and School committee or just hope to make a field trip during the year, please come by our office to get the necessary packet.

If you have done all of this for the St. Thomas More Church Parish, please know that we do not automatically have a copy of your paperwork. You must come to the school office and fill out a Request for Transfer of Documents Form.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA): In order to protect the privacy of our students and families, STM follows the regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. We are unable to provide information to, discuss or meet with anyone other than a student's guardians about the student's academic, social/behavioral, or financial status without written consent provided by the legal guardian.

Names and addresses of middle school students may be provided to area Catholic high schools and public high schools for purposes of recruitment.

STM will release graduating 8th grade records to the diocesan high schools identified on high school applications.

In emergencies, schools may share student personal information with law enforcement, public health officials, and medical officials. Information gathered by law enforcement is not considered part of the student's educational record.

Legal Information for Student Records:

To ensure we meet requirements in cases of separation or divorce, we ask parents to provide legal documentation of applicable court actions. We are not asking for settlement details; rather, we want to ensure that students' records are complete so we know who has the right to student information, who may pick up your child from school/extended care, who may check out your child from school, and who to call in case of an emergency. It is assumed by the school that those parents will abide in good faith by such agreement. The school assumes no responsibility for compliance with such agreement. To preserve the educational environment of St. Thomas More Catholic School, custody issues must be settled amicably and not involve the school.

The school respects the confidentiality of its families; therefore, we can only share your child's information about any discipline case.

VISITORS: In an effort to maintain a safe environment, **all visitors (parents included)** are to sign in and get a visitor badge from the office. Upon leaving, please report to the office and sign out.

NAME BADGES: All St. Thomas More Catholic School employees will be identified by a name badge.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

CODE OF CONDUCT: Every student must conduct himself/herself on campus, off campus, and traveling to and from school in a manner consistent with his/her status as a member of the Catholic school community. Students have a responsibility to dress and appear on school campuses and online social media according to standards of modesty, safety, and health as prescribed by the local school board/commission/council (Diocesan Administrative Manual 4.9.1)

DISCIPLINE: The word discipline means "to instruct" and it involves the systematic development and training of the child's physical, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual capacities through guided instruction and controlled self-activity. Moral discipline is the habit of always acting in conformity with right reason, and its aim is self-control in all aspects of life. Experience has shown us that without self-denial, authoritative guidance, and discipline, no child can develop sound character, responsibility, and citizenship.

HARRASSMENT/HAZING/BULLYING: To reflect Gospel values and to ensure a safe and orderly learning climate, the schools of the diocese do not condone harassment/bullying/hazing of any kind. All school community members of the Diocese of Baton Rouge are to be treated with dignity and respect. In that spirit, the prohibition against acts of harassment, hazing, and bullying applies to all Catholic school students, both on and off campus and online social media. It is recognized that harassment, hazing, or bullying can involve verbal, physical, written, or electronic communication.

- A. Harassment** is annoying or unpleasant behavior toward someone including, but not limited to, threats, offensive remarks, or physical attacks. Verbal harassment shall include derogatory remarks, jokes, or slurs and can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another. Physical harassment includes unwarranted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impending or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal school work or movement. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- B. Hazing** is a form of harassment that involves intentional, knowing or reckless acts that induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights, physical pain, or mental discomfort. It is directed against a student for purposes of being initiated into, affiliated with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, athletic team, or other group. Culpability includes hazing practices mandated or voluntarily entered into by any party.
- C. Bullying** behavior is the repeated harassment and targeting of another with the intent to cause emotional, physical, or psychological harm. (Diocesan Administrative Manual 4.9.2.7)
 - a. Bullying behaviors include, but are not limited to, written, verbal, or electronic communications and physical actions directed toward an individual or destruction of personal property.
 - b. One time incidents may be deliberately mean or cruel, but they may not be considered bullying. These will be subject to school disciplinary action as part of the school's discipline policy.
 - c. When a student reports that he/she has been the target of harassment/hazing/bullying, the faculty member will respond quickly, intervene, and investigate the allegation. Discipline referral forms and parent contacts will be used to track reported incidents.
 - d. Bullying is considered a serious offense and may result in consequences up to and including expulsion.

VIOLENCE AND THREATS: Families must be aware that school administrators respond to any and all incidents of a threatening nature. Even though statements are made in anger, in a joking manner, and usually prove to be frivolous, we must take aggressive action to protect all individuals involved. Safety to our schools is of utmost importance and our first priority.

Parents are urged to caution their children about making statements of a threatening nature. Such statements cannot and will not be taken lightly. Any student making a threatening statement will be removed from school. That student shall not return until a professional evaluation determines the student is no longer a threat to anyone including him/herself. Any violence or threats of violence will be taken seriously and will be handled with aggressive action.

WEAPONS: Weapons of any kind (guns, knives, sharp objects, facsimile, etc) are not allowed on the STM campus. STM complies with Acts 17, 38 and 107 of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature of 1994.

R. S. 14:95.2 as amended by the Louisiana Legislature through the Third Extraordinary Session of 1994 creates the crime of carrying a dangerous weapon by a student or non-student on school property, on a school bus, at school sponsored functions, or in other designated zones. The law provides that a dangerous instrumentality includes but is not limited to a firearm or other object, any gas, liquid, or other substance or 20 other instrumentality, which in the manner used, is calculated or like to produce death or great bodily harm. A dangerous weapon includes a gun, knife, club or similar device. The law prohibits possession of such an instrumentality within 1,000 feet of the school's property, on a school bus, and at any school sponsored function in a specific designated area including but not limited to athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activities. Whoever is convicted of the crime of carrying a dangerous instrumentality, whether a student or a non-student, is subject to a maximum penalty of imprisonment at hard labor for not more than five years. The law exempts from its provisions a federal, state or local law enforcement officer or school official or employee acting during the direction of such a school official or employee. It also exempts participants in any legitimate firearm safety course similar course or activity. The law mandates that a principal or school official notify the parents of any student who is detained or arrested for carrying a dangerous instrumentality, that the principal or school official immediately report any detention of a student or other person for this reason and the seizure of any dangerous instrumentality to the appropriate law enforcement authority. Any principal or school official who fails to properly report the detention of any person or seizure of any dangerous instrumentality to the appropriate law enforcement agency may be issued a misdemeanor summons and, upon conviction, fined not more than five hundred dollars or sentenced to not more than forty hours of community service, or both.

SMOKE FREE CAMPUS: STM is a smoke-free campus as required by law. R. S. 17:240 prohibits all persons from smoking, chewing, or otherwise consuming any tobacco product in any elementary or secondary school building. Building is defined as any building located on the property of any elementary or secondary campus. Furthermore, no person may carry a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other form of smoking object or device on the grounds of any public or private elementary or secondary school property, except in an officially designated smoking area. The law mandates that each governing authority of a non-public school adopt necessary rules and regulations to ensure compliance with this law.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY: The mission of St. Thomas More Catholic School's technology department is to provide a full range of technology tools, services and experiences to further opportunities for religious and academic education. Each student should possess skills in using a wide variety of technology; they also should develop habits that ensure their use of technology is efficient, respectful, legal, and safe.

We believe a student will develop good technology skills and habits if he/she is allowed as much freedom as possible to manage their technology life. On the other hand, technology tools need to be as failsafe and consistent as possible to ensure their productive use in the classroom.

The technology policy contains standards that foster our mission. The policy is revised yearly to reflect any technology and issues identified in the previous year. Each year, all students, faculty, and staff members must read and agree to abide by these standards:

All storage, network communication equipment, and software provided by STM remains the property of STM. The administration seeks, where possible, to honor the privacy of the individual. It reserves the right, however, to access any file, email, network transmission or other information stored on or communicated through its property and will do so if a compelling reason arises. St. Thomas More retains the right to monitor network activity in any manner it sees fit.

Communications – Faculty and students using STM email or internet access are representatives of the school and are expected to act in a manner consistent with the school’s goals and values. Students must not participate in chat rooms, games, any form of social media or email during class time unless this activity is directly related to the class and authorized by the teacher.

A common directory is provided to assist with temporary storage needs for work done as teams. These files are not protected and can be read, modified or deleted by anyone. These files are not backed up and may be purged without notice. Files that are critical to the success of the individual should be stored on a personal flash drive.

Prohibited Behaviors – St. Thomas More students **MAY NOT** engage in any of the following:

- No student is permitted to post information related to the school, including the school’s name, our staff, and our students, use images of the school, the school logo or seal, school staff, or students in any form on the Internet or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the administration. This includes all social media sites or electronic communication, unless directed by a faculty/staff member. The posting of any such information on any website, chat-room, e-mail, or other messaging system without permission, or the posting or transmission of images or information in any format related to the school, staff, or students that are defamatory, scurrilous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or impugning the character of another person is prohibited.

Students will be held accountable for their actions. Technology privileges will be lost if the Acceptable Use Policy is violated and disciplinary consequences may be imposed.

The administration reserves the right to impose disciplinary consequences with respect to any act or actions not specifically listed herein but which actions are determined by the administration to be illegal, immoral, unethical, criminal, a violation of any local, state or deferral law or regulation, and/or a violation of the goals, principles, or educational objectives or policies of St. Thomas More Catholic School or Diocese of Baton Rouge.

- Conducting or participating in any actions which are illegal (according to city, state, or federal law)
- Violating any of this institution’s policy
- Threatening or harassing others
- Advocating racial, ethnic, religious, or gender based slurs
- Purposely frustrating others from achieving their educational goals
- Infringing software copyright or licensing agreements
- Purposely viewing, displaying, storing, or transmitting any obscene or discriminatory material or material of terrorists, gangs, hate groups, etc.

- Conducting commercial or private/personal business enterprises
- Promoting private businesses, product advertisement, or political lobbying
- Sending unauthorized bulk or random messages (junk mail, ads, etc.)
- Soliciting for organizations that are unrelated to the institution's mission or purpose
- Destroying the integrity of computer-based information
- Maliciously installing or invoking a computer virus or other disruptive mechanism
- Altering system files or configuration to disrupt computer or network functions
- Seeking or gaining unauthorized access to network resources or resources on the internet or attempting to breach security mechanisms
- Downloading MP3s or movies, which is against the law
- Downloading games, images, etc.
- Posting from a school computer while on campus
- Electronic communication during the school that is not directed by a faculty/staff member.
- Sharing school-related files when the project or activity or assignment is to be done independently

Consequences of Violation – A student whose behavior record indicates careless use or abuse of computers or other technical resources, even if repairs are covered by our damage agreement, will be referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action.

STM has the right to restrict or terminate network and internet access at any time to protect the integrity of the network or prevent misuse.

Consequences of violations include but are not limited to detention, suspension, or revocation of internet access, network privileges, and computer access. Other standard disciplinary measures may be applicable to students.

Photo/Image & Publicity Consent: This is to inform you and to request permission for your child's photo/image and personally identifiable information to be published on the Diocese and/or school's web site. As you are aware, there are potential dangers associated with the posting of personally identifiable information on a web site since global access to the Internet does not allow us to control who may access such information. These dangers have always existed; however, we as schools do want to celebrate your child and his/her work. The law requires that we ask for your permission to use information about your child.

Pursuant to law, we will not release any personally identifiable information of your child without your permission. Personally identifiable information includes student names, photos or images, residential addresses, e-mail address, phone numbers, and locations and times of class trips.

GIFTS/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN: To achieve the goals stated above, St. Thomas More faculty and administration have implemented a Classroom Management Plan called God's Invitation for Teaching Students (**GIFTS**) which teaches life skills and behavioral expectations to all students. Information comes home during the school year regarding our classroom management plan.

Students participating in co-curricular activities are held bound by the discipline plan of the school and the club moderator.

We reserve the right to waive any disciplinary regulation for just cause. First and foremost, the school administration has the right and responsibility to make any decision regarding the status of a student based on his/her behavioral choices in any situation.

If a child is having difficulty following the rules of St. Thomas More, privileges may be revoked such as, but not limited to, participation in field trips and special events on campus including graduation. If necessary, parents may be asked to attend an off campus event or sit with their child at an event held at STM.

1. General school rules are posted and classroom management plans/specific guidelines are explained to students at the beginning of the school year.
2. Each teacher utilizes his/her plan and documents student behavior.
3. Parent contact is made either by phone call, in written form or conference if a student's behavior does not meet expectations.
4. When a student reaches a point in a classroom management plan or if an action warrants immediate attention due to a major occurrence, the student may be referred to the administration.
5. If an administrator receives a referral from the classroom teacher outlining a student's behavior, one of the following consequences may be issued by either the administrator or the teacher:
 - Student conference with administrator and/or guidance personnel
 - Phone call to parent
 - Parent contact form
 - Student denied recess
 - Detention
 - Student removed from school for the remainder of the day
 - Suspension
 - Conduct or academic grade affected
 - Other consequences deemed appropriate
6. In all grades, classroom management plans are explained to our parents at Back to School Night. Please refer to handouts provided.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES: St. Thomas More Catholic School expects for all of our students to handle themselves in a reasonable, responsible, and respectable manner at all times in all areas of the school.

1. Follow directions first time given.
2. Stay in assigned areas at all times.
3. Act and speak in a courteous manner toward students and adults.
4. Bullying behavior is the repeated harassment and targeting of another with the intent to cause emotional, physical, or psychological harm. Bullying of any sort (physical, mental, cyber, etc.) will not be tolerated and should be reported to an adult.
5. Treat school property, personal property, and other students' belongings with the proper respect.
6. Honesty is expected at all times.
7. Items to remain at home include, but are not limited to: electronic devices, gum, hard balls (soft, nerf-like balls are acceptable), tobacco, alcohol, matches, objectionable reading material, weapons of any kind, objects that can cause harm. Any objects confiscated by school personnel must be picked up by a parent.
8. Gum is not allowed on campus at any time. Disciplinary consequences will be issued (conduct letter, disciplinary code letter).
9. As we travel on campus, we are usually walking by classrooms or offices. Students must walk in proper line behavior.

10. Students are not allowed to have cell phones or other electronics that connect to the internet in their possession.

Rules and consequences for such devices include:

Students should:

1. Drop off electronics/cell phones in the office upon arrival at school.
2. Pick item up from the office when students are dismissed.
3. **These items are not to be used at any time on campus. That includes during dismissal after students have picked them up from the office or in the event the device was never turned in to the office,** unless permission is granted from a teacher or supervising adult. If a student is using a cell phone or other device, this behavior will result in an automatic consequence: a detention letter in grades 5-8 for the first offense, suspension for the second offense; conduct letter in all other grades. The item will be confiscated and a parent must pick it up.

BUS RIDERS: Students must follow all of the East Baton Rouge Parish bus rules and regulations. If an infraction occurs, the bus driver will contact the parent and the school. The school administration will follow up with the child and parent if necessary and issue consequences if appropriate.

The following items are not allowed on the bus: alcohol, drugs, animals, glass objects (except eye glasses), weapons of any kind (including knives), and objects too large to be held in one's lap or placed under one's seat.

KINDERGARTEN: In kindergarten, a green, yellow, red light management system is used. All students start in green at the start of every day. If an infraction occurs throughout the day, the student's symbol will be moved to the corresponding color. These types of infractions may result in loss of recess, and the conduct grade will be lowered. If a serious infraction occurs, the student may receive an office referral and/or conduct letter. This will all be documented on the conduct calendar each day.

GRADES 1-4: In grades 1-4, infractions in behavior are noted on a chart that goes home daily. With each notation the student's conduct grade is lowered. These types of infractions may result in the loss of recess as well. If a serious infraction occurs, the student may receive an office referral and/or conduct letter.

GRADES 5-6: For recording student behaviors, demerits will be used primarily for transition times which will be recorded in the homeroom conduct grade. Demerits for classroom behavior may be issued by the classroom teacher and will affect the grade in that individual class. Uniform infractions are recorded on a weekly form that the student is responsible for having in his/her possession in the assignment pad. For more serious or chronic behaviors, Detention Letters will be issued resulting in detention, suspension, and/or Saturday Suspension. A detention letter will also result in points deducted from the conduct grade. A Major Disciplinary Code Letter, for more serious infractions, will also result in points deducted from the conduct grade as well as two assigned detentions with the possibility of additional consequences.

GRADES 7-8: When a student makes an inappropriate choice, the teacher will note a loss of a conduct point. Uniform infractions are recorded on a weekly form that the student is responsible for having in his/her possession in the assignment pad. For chronic behaviors or a decline in behavior, parents may be notified with the Parent Notification Letter. For more serious or chronic behaviors, a Detention Letter will result in points deducted from the conduct grade. A Major Disciplinary Code Letter, for more serious infractions, will also result in points deducted from the conduct grade as well as two assigned detentions with the possibility of additional consequences.

SUSPENSION: A student may be suspended by the administration for violations of school regulations or an accumulation of disciplinary infractions. Notice will be given in writing to the parents of the student in question. The student is responsible for makeup work missed during suspension.

SATURDAY SUSPENSION: A student may be suspended on a Saturday by the administration for violations of school regulations or an accumulation of infractions. Notice will be given in writing to the parents of the student in question.

EXPULSION: Three suspensions make a student liable for expulsion. For a very serious reason, a student may be expelled after a single violation.

OFF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR POLICY: Students must conduct themselves both on and off campus and online in a manner consistent with the beliefs of our Catholic faith and with the mission, philosophy, and policies of St. Thomas More Catholic School as set forth in the Parent-Student Handbook.

Violations of civil or criminal law or other conduct that causes discredit to St. Thomas More Catholic School or that demonstrates a disregard for the beliefs of our Roman Catholic Church and the policies of St. Thomas More Catholic School are considered serious infractions and make a student subject to corrective action, including suspension or expulsion.

Activities prohibited by this regulation include, but are not limited to, the following: attending, sponsoring, or participating in activities where alcoholic beverages or narcotics are sold, purchased, possessed, or consumed by minors; committing or attempting to commit acts of vandalism that affect a person's life, health, or property; harassment of any kind on or off campus.

In all cases, counseling between parent, student, and members of the administration will be required to determine a course of action. Decisions concerning consequences for this type of misconduct will be made by the administration in consultation with the Pastor.

The school reserves the right to discipline students for conduct, whether inside or outside school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school.

DIOCESAN SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY: Aware of the ever-present danger of the illegal use of chemicals/alcohol by students, the school strives to provide preventative education and a drug-free climate on campus, and at all school related functions. The use of all chemicals, including alcohol, tobacco, and tobacco products is prohibited. **This Diocesan Substance Abuse Policy must be included in each school's handbook of policies and must be adhered to.**

Tobacco and Smokeless Tobacco: If a student is found to have in his or her possession any tobacco product on school grounds or at any school related function, appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to suspension. Any tobacco product found in the student's possession shall be confiscated.

Alcoholic Beverages: If a student is found to be in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol on school grounds or at any school related function, the alcohol will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be called. Appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to suspension or expulsion.

Prescription or Over-the Counter Drugs: If a student is found to be in possession of or to have provided or sold a prescription or over the counter drug to another person on school grounds or at any school related function, the item will be confiscated and appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to suspension or expulsion.

Illegal Drugs: An illegal drug is any drug, the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

If a student is found to be in possession of or under the influence of an illegal drug on school grounds or at any school related function, the parent/guardian and civil authorities will be notified immediately and appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action will include, but is not limited to suspension or expulsion.

If a student is found to have provided or sold an illegal drug to another person on school grounds or at any school related function, the parent/guardian and civil authorities will be notified immediately and the student will be expelled.

If a drug/alcohol treatment program and/or drug testing is mandated, it is to be financed by the parent/guardian.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY: A school official may search pupils or their lockers or belongings, including, but not limited to, handbag, pencil bag, briefcase, book bag, under the following circumstance: If the administrator has reasonable belief that contraband, illegal substances/objects or stolen property is being concealed or that a violation of a school rule related to the maintenance of discipline in the school has been committed, the search of a person will be conducted with minimum embarrassment to the student/students, preferably in the privacy of an administrator's office.

TUTORING OF STUDENTS: According to the Code of Ethics for the Catholic School Teacher, Principle 1 #10 states, "We are called to refuse remuneration for tutoring students assigned to our classes and reject any other use of our students for personal financial gain." The following policy has been developed in order to support the Code of Ethics and to help us advance our mission of academic excellence while maintaining good communication with STM parents.

St. Thomas More Catholic School teachers may tutor any STM student. Teachers may not charge a fee to a student assigned to their instructional class. Tutoring for compensation is not allowed between 7:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. when teachers must be available for duty, conference, and/or other teaching responsibilities.

If a teacher chooses to tutor a small group of students, the teacher's hourly rate will be divided by the number of children participating so that the fees generated are approximately the same as the hourly fee.

Tutoring fees are subject to the approval of the STM administration. Fees should be based on educational attainment and experience. Income tax issues are the responsibility of the teacher. Also, all tutoring, compensated or not, must be approved by the student's parent(s).

COMMUNICATION

PARENT/TEACHER CONTACT: All school matters must be handled through the office. Parents are not to approach a teacher during the school day to discuss a student or call a teacher at home. Parents should not expect to have unannounced conferences with teachers during the school day.

Faculty and staff members have a web presence which includes an e-mail address. This means of communication can be used for a variety of reasons. Appropriate use of e-mail contact includes: conference requests, notification of extensive absence and minor questions.

Please contact your child's teacher first if there is a question or concern. If you are not satisfied with that outcome, feel free to contact your grade level guidance counselor or administrator.

If you have sent an email and received no response within a 24 hour window, please contact the school office as sometimes emails are sent to a spam or junk folder.

CONFERENCES: Formal parent/teacher conference days are scheduled during the school year. Parents and teachers are encouraged to meet whenever any serious problem arises. To assure sufficient time, appointments should be made. To schedule an appointment with a child's teacher, please send a note or e-mail to the guidance counselor requesting a conference. Conferences will be set up by the guidance counselors. Faculty and staff members are not to be called at home. Appointments with the administrators and faculty may be made by way of telephone or e-mail. Conferences may not be recorded without permission of those in attendance.

NOTES, PAPERS, NEWSLETTERS: All papers, report card sleeves, disciplinary forms, etc., are to be read, signed, and returned the **next day**. Every student must return materials that need a signature.

Letters, notices, and other important information are periodically sent home with the children. Please check with the student on a regular basis as some children forget to voluntarily relay the data.

Eagles Wings is a monthly newsletter which is mailed each summer and emailed to families during the school year. It contains pertinent information for parents and an updated calendar for the month. This is also available on our web site.

FORGOTTEN LUNCHES, EYEGLASSES, EQUIPMENT: Students can use the school office phone if they have forgotten their lunch or eyeglasses. Cell phones are not allowed to be used on campus for these reasons, so the student must come to the school office to receive permission to use the office phone. Students will not be allowed to call for forgotten books, signed papers, or other forgotten items, except for lunches and glasses. Any item brought to the school will be put in the teacher's box or given to the student at announcement time.

If a child has forgotten a lunch, the parent may mark the lunch bag with the child's full name, grade and symbol and bring the lunch to the school office.

Students are not allowed into classrooms and/or buildings after dismissal to retrieve forgotten items.

LOST ARTICLES: All books, school bags, lunch boxes, and clothing should be marked with the child's name, not initials. Lost and found articles can be found in a wooden chest located in the extended care room inside of the cafeteria. Articles may be claimed after school or during recess periods by students.

The school cannot assume responsibility for athletic equipment or bicycles brought to school. To make identification easier, these articles should also have some kind of personal mark on them.

SOLICITATION: There will be no telephone, written, verbal or other type of solicitations for money, gifts, or gift certificates for teachers or other school employees. The St. Thomas More Catholic School Directory is not to be used for political or commercial use. No sales or solicitations of any kind may take place on the school campus.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND INVITATIONS: Invitations may **not** be distributed at school, under any circumstances. Only Kindergarten through 3rd grade students are allowed to bring a special treat for the class to celebrate birthdays with prior notification to the teacher. Class lists, phone numbers, and addresses may be found in the school directory. Gifts, balloon bouquets, presents, and flowers are not to be delivered or brought to school for students.

BOOK SACKS: Kindergarten students use the blue STM tote bag purchased from the school. Students in 1st grade use a back pack, no wheels or buckles. Students in 2nd- 8th grades may use wheels on their backpacks.

DRESS CODE

Uniform items are to be in good condition and worn appropriately at all times. All articles should be labeled with the full name of student. **Uniforms must be purchased from School Time, Inka's S'CoolWear or Young Fashions.**

- STM reserves the right to determine what is or is not appropriate dress and/or hairstyle.
- Uniforms should fit properly and be in good condition.
- Students are not to have writing on their body or uniform at any time.

Failure to follow the uniform or alternate dress policy will result in a parent contact from a teacher. Failure to correct the infraction will result in further consequences including loss of conduct points and exclusion from school until the infraction is corrected.

Uniform length: The length of all girls' & boys' shorts and girls' skirts, skorts and jumpers must be touching the knee. Pant length should touch the shoe.

School Mass Uniform: **Girls** must wear their jumpers, skirts, skorts, or long pants. **Boys** must wear long pants with the uniform shirt tucked in.

Due to warmer temperatures in Louisiana, the boys can wear shorts to Mass in August, September, and May.

GIRLS AND BOYS:

Leather Shoes: Solid navy blue, solid brown or solid black; no boots. (on P.E. days, tennis shoes should be worn.)

Tennis shoes: Must be traditional low quarter (low cut) style with shoe laces. The **shoe color must be navy blue, black, grey, white or any combination of those colors.** The laces must be in the same color scheme (navy blue, black, grey, or white), solid, and traditionally tied. Characters, plaid, checkerboard patterns, lights, Velcro, zipper, skateboard style, slip-ons, and wheels are not allowed.

Socks: Style: mid-calf crew socks; solid white, only one pair worn at a time; no logos. Socks must be worn as mid-calf crews, not turned down or cuffed. Ankle socks are not allowed.

Jackets/Sweaters: STM letter jackets, navy windbreaker or fleece 1/2 zipped or full zip pullover with logo. Dark navy blue cardigan monogrammed with Logo, crew or V neck.

On certain days, the administration will say that heavier overcoats are acceptable due to weather conditions. This may occur on a Mass day, for example, when sweatpants cannot be worn. Overcoats do not have to be from a uniform vendor.

Sweatshirts: This sweatshirt has the school bell tower logo monogrammed on the left chest and is purchased from the school only and worn over uniform shirt.

Spirit Shirt: Purchased from the school

GIRLS ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL UNIFORM:

Blouse: Grades K-4: White broadcloth with Peter Pan collar and school initials; turtlenecks are not permitted. Solid white short sleeve T-shirt may be worn under blouse, tucked in.

Grades 5-8: White oxford blouse with buttoned-down collar and school initials; turtlenecks are not permitted. Solid white short sleeve T-shirt may be worn under the blouse, tucked in.

Grades K-8: White jersey knit, overshirt (banded) with collar and STM logo worn with shorts, skirt/skort, or navy blue pants.

Blouses must be tucked in at all times while on campus. The exception is during P.E. or after checking in with extended care in the afternoon.

Jumper: Grades K-4 – with logo

Skirt/Skort: Grades 5-8

Under Shorts: K-8: Solid navy, uniform material, or STM spirit shorts (sold by Home and School) when skirt or jumper is worn; shorts are not to extend below the uniform.

Walking Shorts: Optional for all grades, except on Mass days.

Pants: Solid, dark navy blue, pants may be worn year round. The cut of the pants cannot be tapered and pants must touch the shoe.

Tights: Navy or white tights may be worn with school socks. Leggings may not be worn under the jumper or skirt.

BOYS ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL UNIFORM:

Shirt: St. Thomas More jersey knit shirts with collar and school logo; must be tucked in at all times; crew neck or v-neck, **solid** white, short sleeve t-shirts may be worn under STM shirt tucked in. Sleeves of the undershirt should not extend beyond the edge of the uniform shirt sleeve. Turtlenecks are not permitted. Shirts must be tucked in at all times while on campus. The exception is during P.E. or after checking in with extended care in the afternoon.

Shorts: Solid, dark navy blue; optional for all grades; boxer/biker shorts may not extend below the uniform.

Pants: Solid, dark navy blue with belt loops.

Belt: Black, navy blue, or brown leather or cloth; must be worn at all times.

GUIDELINES FOR ALTERNATE DRESS DAYS:

Accessory Day: Students wear the basic uniform. The following accessories may be worn in colors designated for the occasion: mid-calf crew or knee socks, ties, turtlenecks, bows, jewelry, beads, hats (not worn inside), scarves, jersey style shirts, sweatshirts, shirts worn over uniform shirts or jumpers. Ankle socks are not to be worn

Spirit Shirts are worn for field trips, special school functions, field day, and the first Friday of each month. This shirt may replace the uniform shirt. These special days will be announced.

Friday Spirit Shirts: A Friday of every month has been designated as "First Friday Spirit Day". Students may wear their spirit shirts on these Fridays. They must wear their entire uniform, replacing their shirt or blouse with their spirit shirt. This is an option, not a requirement.

Alternate Dress: Students who choose to wear alternate dress must wear uniform shorts or modest ankle length pants and a non-uniform shirt. Students may not wear tank tops, low cut, halter, sleeveless or midriff shirts, leggings, stirrup pants, tightly fitting clothing including skinny jeans, clothing with objectionable writing or graphics (including, but not limited to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual innuendos, etc.), torn clothing, skirts, dresses, backless shoes, sandals or hats. If a jersey is worn, a t-shirt must be worn underneath. Students must wear mid-calf crew socks, but they can be any color. Tennis shoes may be any color on these days. Soft soled boots are acceptable except on PE class days. All other uniform grooming code regulations apply on alternate dress days.

Sweatpants: Students may wear STM logo sweatpants in lieu of uniform shorts, pants, or skirt with the regular school uniform **on any day other than a Mass day** from November through February. Regular uniform with the sweatpants includes shirt, sweatshirt, socks, tights, and shoes. Sweatpants are ordered through the school.

GROOMING CODE:

Hair: Must be neat, clean, and styled in a conventional manner. For **girls**, bangs may not be in front of the eyes. If they are this length, they must be clipped back. For **boys**, the hair must not extend to the top of the collar in the back, to the top of the ears or the eyebrows in the front, and the sideburns may not extend below mid-ear. No weight line should be visible. Male students are to be clean shaven at all times.

All: Hair should not be slicked or moussed excessively. Hair may not be dyed, bleached, tinted, or colored in any way. No hairpieces, enhancements, embellishments, or hair extensions are allowed. St. Thomas More Catholic School does not recognize shaved heads, extreme crew cuts (where the scalp shows), asymmetrically or partially shaved heads, mohawks, wedges, or tails as conventional. No weight lines should be visible. These are examples and not a complete list of what may or may not be considered conventional.

Jewelry: **Girls** - Jewelry may be worn in moderation: one small post earring per ear in lobe; one simple chain, one watch; one bracelet per arm. Large necklaces may not be worn.

Boys may not wear earrings, and may only wear one ring per hand, one necklace and one bracelet per arm.

Make-up: Students in grades K-6 are not allowed to wear make-up or fingernail polish. Students in grades 7 and 8 may wear clear lip gloss; clear fingernail polish, and a light application of concealer as needed for blemishes. French manicures and fake fingernails are not allowed. Boys may not wear make-up.

Tattoos of any sort are not allowed.

Saint Thomas More Catholic School reserves the right to determine what is or is not appropriate dress and/or hairstyle. Students are not to have writing on their body or uniform at any time.

HEALTH AND FIRST AID

ILLNESSES DURING SCHOOL: A registered nurse is on staff. If she believes it is necessary for a student to leave school, she will contact the appropriate person to take the student home. Our expectation is that a parent or other designated adult will pick up a sick or injured child within one hour of being called. That person should report to the office and sign the student out from there. It is very important that you keep your personal and emergency numbers up-to-date. The nurse's phone number is 272-3072. Students should be free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea or other symptoms for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Students diagnosed with strep throat are to be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school. You will be called to come get your child if he/she returns to school too soon after an illness.

MEDICATIONS: The Saint Thomas More Medication Policy is adapted from the East Baton Rouge Parish Medication Policy and is based on Louisiana state laws. Students should NEVER have medications in their possession on the school grounds, except for certain emergency medications with special permission. The school nurse, teachers, and administrative staff have the right to confiscate any medication and contact the parent for appropriate information. If a student is changing households, please DO NOT send medication to school with that student. Please make arrangements outside of school for these medications to be transferred. A parent or guardian may come to school to administer medications if needed during the school day.

Medications that CAN NOT be given by the school nurse due to state laws:

1. Antibiotics
2. Short-term medications (to be given for less than 30 days)
3. Over the counter (OTC) medications for non-chronic conditions
4. Narcotic medications

Medications that CAN be given by the school nurse with proper paperwork:

1. Behavior modification (ADD/ADHD) medications
2. Severe allergy of insects, foods, etc. (Must have an Allergy Action Plan with picture of student)
3. Anticonvulsant (seizure) medications (Diastat, Dilantin, etc.)
4. Asthma inhalers or nebulizer treatments
5. Diabetic medications and blood sugar testing supplies
6. Prescription or OTC medication for CHRONIC conditions diagnosed by a physician

If a child must take one of the above-mentioned medications at school, a parent must follow these policies:

1. Medicine must be clearly labeled (see # 2, below.) Unlabeled medicine will not be dispensed.
2. A PARENT OR GUARDIAN must bring the medication to school in its original container.
 - **Prescription** labels should have the name of the pharmacy, name of student, name of medication, dosage, and specific time that the medication is to be given at school.
 - **OTC medications** should be labeled with the name of the student and the homeroom. The school nurse will label OTC medications with the dosage, frequency and time to be given.
3. Two medical forms must be complete and accompany the medicine:
 - State of LA Medication Order completed by a physician (must include diagnosis, name of medication, strength of medication, route, frequency, and any specific instructions.)
 - St. Thomas More Parent / Guardian consent form
4. A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION PAD IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. Copies of the accepted form(s) can be obtained in the nurse's office or on the STM school website.
5. Medications may not be sent to and from school on a daily basis. Please obtain a separate prescription to be left at school.
6. No more than 35 tablets for each student can be kept at school. The nurse will notify a parent if the medication is running low, and the parent will be responsible for bringing a refill to school. **DO NOT SEND MEDICATIONS TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.**
7. Medications that are considered "controlled" substances (stimulants) will be counted by the nurse and the parent, and both will sign a form each time the medication is dropped off or picked up at school.
8. To circumvent potential abuse, all medications will be kept under lock and key in a secure location.
9. Parents are to inform their child to report to First Aid at the appropriate time for medication. The nurse will not be held responsible to call students for medication.

FIELD TRIP MEDICATION POLICY: Most medications administered at school may be administered by a teacher on a field trip. Teachers may NOT administer certain medications, including insulin or Diastat. A parent / guardian may be asked to attend a field trip if the school nurse deems that it is in the best interest of the student.

Saline nose spray, some topical ointments, and cough drops may be left in the nurse's office if needed. Please call Rochelle Bowman, RN at 272-3072 during school hours with any questions about the medication policy.

ORTHOPEDIC APPLICANCE POLICY: Students sent to school with an orthopedic appliance such as a cast, sling, brace, splint, crutches, etc. for more than two days must bring a note from the physician regarding diagnosis and activity restriction. The physician's note should specifically address writing or typing, recess, sports, and physical education (P.E.). If a student is sent to school with an appliance before seeing a doctor, a parent must send a note stating if an appointment has been made and if the student is restricted from recess, sports, or P.E. at school. Extended restriction of activity, inability to write with a dominant hand, or use of a wheelchair will require more extensive school modifications and documentation from the physician. If a student will be unable to bear weight on an injured leg for greater than two weeks, we require the use of a wheelchair at school. If a student is in third or fourth grade and it is deemed unsafe for him or her to use stairs, we will address this on an individual basis. If a student is restricted from participating in PE, this will AUTOMATICALLY include restriction of recess and team sports activities. No exceptions will be made, and no doctor's note will override this policy.

PINK EYE POLICY

If it is suspected that a student has pink eye, a parent will be called and the student will be sent home from school. Students may return to school after a bacterial pink eye infection when the following criteria have been met: prescription antibiotic drops have been given for at least two doses, and there is no longer discharge from the eye or crust on the eyelashes upon awakening. Viral pink eye is more complicated and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Antibiotic eye drops cannot be administered by the school nurse per state law.

IMMUNIZATIONS

At the time of registration, a parent or guardian must provide St. Thomas More School with a current State of Louisiana Universal Certificate of Immunizations that is complete and signed or stamped by a physician's office. The immunization record must be **complete and not expired** for a student to attend classes. Please contact the school nurse at 272-3072 or rochelle@stmbr.org if you have any questions about immunization requirements.

Kindergarten/ First Time Enterers:

- *Four doses of DTP (last dose given after the 4th birthday)
- *Three doses of OPV/IPV (last dose given after the 4th birthday)
- *Two doses of MMR after first birthday
- *Three doses of Hepatitis B
- *Two doses of Varicella (or history of chickenpox disease noted on shot record)

Students Entering Sixth Grade: (In addition to the kindergarten immunizations listed above.)

- *One dose of Tdap (given after the 11th birthday)
- *One dose of Meningococcal vaccine (given after the 11th birthday)

Please notify the school nurse if your child's eleventh birthday is after the start of sixth grade. You will have one week after your child's birthday to get the vaccines and send an updated shot record to school. No other exceptions will be made.

Medical or Personal Exemptions: If your child has not been immunized for medical reasons, you must obtain proper exemption forms from the school nurse, and medical exemptions must be documented by a physician. Exemption forms must be signed by a parent/guardian and notarized to be valid. **Personal or philosophical exemptions are not accepted.** Outbreaks of certain diseases must be reported by STM to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. DHH will determine if an unvaccinated student must be excluded from school and for what period of time.

HEAD LICE (Pediculosis): If lice/nits are found in a child's hair, a parent will be called, and the child must leave school immediately. Before returning to school, any student with head lice must: (1) be satisfactorily treated as recommended by your family physician, or with an alternative lice treatment, such as a lice shampoo available at local pharmacies, and (2) be completely free of lice eggs (nits) in the hair. Before being readmitted to the classroom, the child will be checked by the school nurse. The school nurse will recheck the student one week after the initial treatment and as needed. The school nurse has information in the first aid office about the treatment of lice.

FIRST AID OFFICE PROCEDURES:

1. Students going to the First Aid office should have obtained a pass from their teacher.
2. Students are to enter the First Aid office in a quiet and courteous manner. There will be no running or crowding around the desk.
3. Students are not to come into First Aid unless there is a need for them to be there. Friends are to wait outside the door or on the sidewalk.
4. Fellow students who come to First Aid at the same time will treat each other in a courteous manner.
5. Students are to remain in the waiting area in front of the nurse's desk. They are to refrain from opening drawers, cabinets, etc. Only the nurse may get medication from the cabinet. Students are to wait courteously until they are given the medicine by the nurse. If the nurse is busy with a sick or injured student, she will dispense the medicine in as timely a fashion as possible.
6. Students are to show respect for the nurse's desk and the area around that desk as the property of the nurse and her professional work station. Students are not to pick up, remove, or play with objects on the nurse's desk. They may not write on papers, clip boards or calendars on the desk or on other work areas.
7. First Aid reports are private. No one has permission to read the Tardy Books, the First Aid Log, or the Early Dismissal Log, etc.
8. Students are responsible for coming to First Aid at the appropriate time for their medication.
9. Teachers will send students to First Aid with a written "pass", with a few exemptions.

ACCIDENT POLICY

1. The diocese provides accident insurance for students while at school or during school sponsored activities.
2. The accident claim form is available in the first aid office.
3. Our accident policy does not cover injuries due to medical diagnosis, only injuries due to accidents.
4. The claim must be filed within 90 days of injury.
5. Our insurance policy is a SECONDARY plan; it covers only costs not covered by your primary insurance.
6. Questions regarding claims are not handled by STM. Please contact Bollinger Insurance with any questions after a claim is filed. Their contact information is on the back of the claim form.

SAFETY DRILLS AND SCHOOL CLOSURE

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL: In cases of inclement or dangerous weather, St. Thomas More Catholic School will follow the same directives as East Baton Rouge Parish Schools. Local radio and television stations will carry that information.

An attempt will be made via telephone to notify parents of emergency closing. It is imperative that we have an emergency number on file.

In cases of early dismissal because of emergencies, parents (or authorized persons with a written note from parents) are requested to follow regular dismissal procedures at the time indicated by the news media.

FIRE DRILL: During a fire drill, children are to follow the instructions given by the teachers. All windows and doors will be closed upon leaving the buildings. Students are to exit quickly in single file and in absolute silence.

CHEMICAL SPILL: In the event of a chemical spill in the area of St. Thomas More, the school would notify the Diocesan Superintendent and East Baton Rouge Parish transportation. If the spill is north of school, students will be brought to the St. George gymnasium. If it is south of school, they will be brought to the St. Alphonsus gymnasium. Room mothers will be contacted to notify parents about the situation should the return to St. Thomas More be delayed beyond school time. Parents would then pick up students at the appropriate gymnasium.

SHELTER IN PLACE: In the event of a chemical spill near the school, authorities may direct us to remain on the school grounds. The following steps will be taken to protect all children:

- All students will be brought inside.
- Administration will be directed by civil authorities.
- Parents should turn on either the radio or TV for up-to-date information during an emergency.
- Parents should not try to pick up children or phone the school.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT: In compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986, Operational Technologies of Baton Rouge re-inspected the schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Our most recent inspection was conducted in June, 2012. A copy of this plan is in the office and available to the public.

TRANSPORTATION

Students are never to be picked up in the Activity Center parking lot, in front of the church, or on any street surrounding the school/church property. Students are never to wait for parents/adults in an unauthorized area or without adult supervision. Please read the arrival and dismissal instructions carefully denoting authorized areas.

Limousines are not to be used to transport children to and from school. Students may not drive themselves to school even with a learner's permit.

VISITOR PARKING during the school day is to be in parking spots next to the administration building closest to the gym.

ARRIVAL:

Students arrive at school in three ways: bikers/walkers, carpoolers, and bus riders. They may begin arriving on the school grounds at 7:25a.m. and must be in line at 7:40a.m. when the first bell rings.

Extended care students will be dropped at the sidewalk to the cafeteria in the Activity Center driveway (grades 2-8), or preschool (grades K-1) between 6:45 and 7:20a.m. After 7:20a.m., extended care students must be dropped off in regular carpool.

When a biker arrives on the campus, he/she is to dismount and walk the bike directly to the bike yard along the side of the kindergarten near the sixth grade classrooms after 7:25a.m.

Walkers arrive on campus and proceed directly to the gym after 7:25a.m.

GRADES K, 1 AND 2 CARPOOL: Carpools whose youngest student is in **grades K, 1, and 2** will be dropped off along Sherbrook Drive directly in front of the school. These students walk on the sidewalk to the front cement area or kindergarten classroom. No student should ever disembark between Dartmoor and the first Sherbrook Driveway. Please do not block intersections and driveways.

GRADES 3-8 CARPOOL: Carpools whose youngest student is in **grades 3-8** only will be dropped off in the church lot at the concrete walk. The student will use the sidewalk next to the football field for unloading as well as the covered area.

Bus riders arrive on campus and proceed directly to the gym when the duty teacher gives the signal. Please ensure students memorize bus numbers and full name of bus driver.

Arrival on Rainy Days: Students in 1st-2nd grade **carpool** may be dropped off along the covered walkways in front of the school office building. Other **carpools** should still be dropped at the regular drop off points in inclement weather.

DISMISSAL:

To ensure the childrens' safety, we have staggered the times of dismissal. Our objective is to divert as much traffic as possible from Goodwood Boulevard, Sylvan, and Dartmoor.

If there is a change in any child's normal dismissal pattern, a note must be sent to the teacher. If a note is not received from a parent, the teacher will dismiss the child in the normal way.

Please do not instruct your student to leave with bikers and walkers for you to pick them up in a different area. This is very dangerous. Disciplinary action may be taken for disregard of proper procedure.

Dismissal occurs in the following order:

- All Carpool Students
- Bikers and walkers
- Bus Riders and all other students (sports teams, co-curricular organizations with an after school meeting, etc.)

Extended care students are dismissed throughout this process to stagger their arrival to the cafeteria.

Bikers are to walk their bikes off the campus.

Walkers are to meet their parents at the Bell Tower near the gym.

Bikers and Walkers: Students going toward Sherwood Forest Boulevard are to walk down the sidewalk next to the church, turn right on Goodwood and proceed to the crossing guard at Goodwood and Sherwood Forest. Students going toward Sylvan are to walk to the sidewalk adjacent to the football field to the sidewalk on Goodwood. A crossing guard is stationed at the corner of Sylvan and Goodwood. Bikers and walkers are never to be in the areas of the church parking lot, the Activity Center parking lot, or the parking lot behind the gym. Students are to stay on sidewalks as they walk to their designated area.

Carpool – 3-8 Students: must line up in the Church lot and extend onto the shoulder of Goodwood Boulevard. Students in grades 3-8 will be ready to load the first several cars at a time unless it is raining. The student will use the sidewalk next to the church as well as the covered walk area for loading. For our children's safety, please do not park and get your child out of line.

Carpool - K-2 Students: and those riding with them are sent to the covered walk in front of the main school building. **Carpool drivers are to have an 8 ½ x 11" sign with large black letters stating the carpool name where the duty person can see it.** Grades K-2 form a carpool line on Parkwood (all along Parkwood down to Doncaster). Do not form lines on Sylvan, Mollylea, Fairhaven, or Dartmoor.

Please do not park too close to the corner as people who are traveling on Dartmoor need to be able to stop at the stop sign on the corner and to have good vision before proceeding. Please do not block the neighbors' driveways or exit cars and stand/sit in neighbor's yards. For our children's safety, please do not park and get your child out of line.

Once the children are seated and settled, the first car may pull onto the parking lot from the Dartmoor driveway and proceed along the covered walkway toward the gym. The first five cars will load at the same time. **Please have your sign ready so that we may load quickly and safely.** Carpool names will be called with a color. Students will wait at the pole with the color. Go directly to the color pole and stop. Do not stop the line if your child is not at their pole. Duty teachers will direct them to the right place.

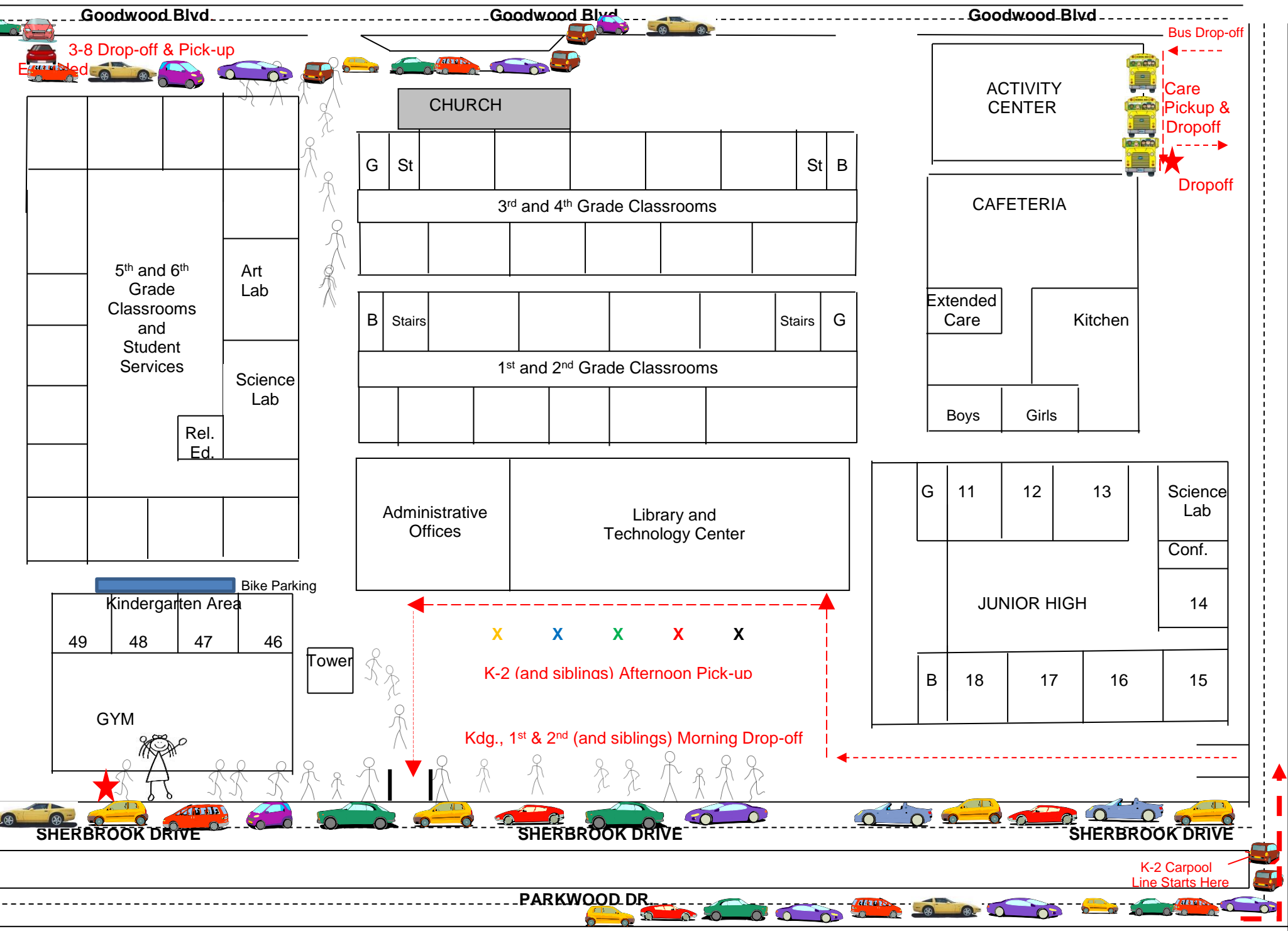
All extended care students are to be picked up the in Activity Center parking lot.

DISMISSAL ON RAINY DAYS will be at the regular carpool pick up area unless it is dangerously stormy. In that event, students are detained in an assigned building and called via the school public address system. In this event no student can be called unless there is a sign in the window of the car to indicate whom we need to call.

DISMISSAL ETIQUETTE (SAFETY!)

- Meet your child at the gym Bell Tower if your younger age child will be walking home.
- Have an easy-to-read 8½ x 11" sign with the name(s) of your CAR POOL where the duty person can see it.
- Form the CAR POOL line on Parkwood (K-2) or Goodwood (3-8)
- Stay clear of the intersections/driveways
- Drive to where you are directed by the duty teacher (as close to the beginning of the line as possible)
- Exit the parking lot single file after you have **picked up your child**
- Remind your child to leave class when the CAR POOL is called

Students that participate in athletics or co-curricular activities may not have siblings or members of their carpool with them. Those students must be dropped off and/or picked up within the regular school hours,



INCLEMENT WEATHER DISMISSAL PROCEDURES:

Administrators will make a determination about the need for Alternate Dismissal Procedures due to inclement weather (storms, lightning, etc.) by 2:15 PM. Once that determination is made, an announcement will be made concerning the need of this alternate dismissal plan. This plan is as follows:

2:22 Class Exchange
2:25 Announcements and Prayer
2:30 Dismissal Begins

Bus Riders will be called to the gym as their bus arrives.

3 – 8 Carpool Students will be asked to walk quietly to either the Church or Activity Center, depending upon which facility is available for our use. Teachers/Administrators will direct the parents in the regular 3 – 8 carpool line to the appropriate dismissal site.

K – 2 Carpool Students will be asked to walk quietly to the Junior High Commons.

Bikers and Walkers will report to the main office to call parents to arrange for pick-up.

Remaining Bus Riders will report to the Gym.

Extended Care Students will report to the Cafeteria.

All teachers will be asked to stay until the end of dismissal and the safety of all students is ensured.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

For reasons of safety, unsupervised students are not permitted on the school grounds prior to 6:45 a.m. or after regular school dismissal. Parents who must transport students at times other than school hours may register their child (ren) in the Extended Care Program where students will be properly supervised. Fees are charged for their services. Pre-registration is required.

Extended Care hours are 6:45 – 7:25 a.m. and 2:45 - 6:00 p.m. Please note that all students attending Extended Care must be registered. Drop-ins are not permitted. If a student is brought to Extended Care after their dismissal, a fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes will be charged to the parents.

If a parent is late for pick up from an after school meeting or event, the child should be picked up from extended care. A fee will be charged.

Students in grades K and 1 register at the St. Thomas More Preschool. Students in grades 2-8 register at St. Thomas More School.

Students will only be released to a parent/guardian in the afternoon. Students enrolled in Extended Care are accountable for all school policies as well as Extended Care policies.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

St. Thomas More cafeteria provides good, nutritious food for the children each day. Monthly menus are posted on the school and Diocesan web sites. Fees are set and administered by the Diocesan Child Nutrition Program. Meals can be free or at a reduced price for families in financial need. Parents should apply for this program, through the cafeteria manager, at the beginning of the school year or when financial difficulties occur.

Cafeteria fees are due in advance and can be paid annually, semi-annually, or monthly. Please be sure your payment is made before the 1st of each month. Cash, check and online payments are accepted. There is a link to "School Files" for online payments on the school website. Cash payments should be in a sealed envelope and hand delivered to the cafeteria. All payments should be identified by student name and lunch account number. Each student will have one meal account. Meal charges will be deducted daily. Parents or siblings (not enrolled in school) cannot charge their lunches to a student account. Meal service must be subscribed to by the semester. A student can opt for cafeteria meals for the fall, the spring, or both. Breakfast is served daily for a nominal fee. Students who eat breakfast in the cafeteria should exit the cafeteria by 7:30 a.m. Extra items such as milk, fruit slushies, extra entrees, and ice cream are available for purchase to students participating in the lunch program. Please deposit extra money into your child's account for extra items. Bag lunch students are only allowed to purchase milk or fruit juice. Student account balances must be current to view your child's Ed-line account. Upon payment, allow 48 hours to process payments prior to re-opening Ed-line account. Report cards will be held if there is an account balance and students will not be allowed to take exams.

Due to federal guidelines, no outside restaurant food is allowed in the cafeteria. Parents are encouraged to have lunch with their children. When you chose to do so, contact the cafeteria at 275-4347 by 8:30 a.m. Parents or siblings (not enrolled in school) cannot charge their lunches to a student account.

At the end of the school year, parents may request a refund form from the cafeteria staff to be reimbursed any extra money in a student account. Funds may be transferred between sibling accounts with written parent permission only.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Pick-up: It is the responsibility of the parent who has a child participating in after-school activities (detention, practice, games, drama, or other activities) to pick the child up on time.

TUITION: Tuition is based on the cost of educating a student each month. For purposes of applying these tuition policies, each student's tuition account is considered as one account. The student's church parish affiliation determines what level of tuition and fees is applicable. Families who are registered in St. Thomas More Parish and have children in the school are asked to contribute a minimum of \$400 per calendar year (January-December) to the church parish. St. Thomas More Church owns the school and contributes toward property maintenance.

There are two options for payment of tuition.

- (1) Tuition is automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the fourth of each month July through January, and March through May. (Registration fees are drafted in the month of February.) Any changes in your bank draft information must be submitted to the bookkeeping office in writing no later than 10 days prior to the draft.

(2) Tuition is paid in full for the total annual amount by June 20th.

Tuition payments consist of tuition, a student fee and, where applicable, a capital maintenance fee. Each of these is explained in the following paragraphs.

The amounts for tuition and fees are determined by the St. Thomas More School Board of Education which includes representatives from St. Patrick's Parish.

If a student withdraws from school, a pro-rated amount of the paid tuition will be refunded. The students fees, however, are nonrefundable. A monthly payer is responsible for the student fee for the rest of the year.

TUITION TAX DEDUCTION: If you want to take the Louisiana tax deduction for school tuition on your return, please keep your expense receipts proving the amounts you paid for tuition. If your tuition is drafted monthly, your receipt would probably be your bank statement showing each month's tuition drafted by STM. If you pay in full, your cancelled check would be your receipt. For further information, please go to the state website

<http://www.revenue.louisiana.gov/IndividualIncomeTax/SchoolExpenseDeduction>

REGISTRATION FEE: A student's registration is not considered complete until their registration fee is paid. The registration fee includes a per family assessment for the Capital Improvement Fee and Home and School dues. Registration fees are non-refundable. Students with delinquent tuition may not re-register for the following school year until all financial obligations are fulfilled.

STUDENT FEE: The annual student fee is collected as part of your monthly tuition payment in ten equal installments. For example, if the student fee is \$260 per year, each month that tuition is drafted \$26 of your tuition payment will go towards your child's student fee.

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE FEE: The capital maintenance fee is payable by those who are not members of St. Thomas More Church or those who did not support St. Thomas More, St. Patrick, St. Anthony or Immaculate Conception in Denham Springs with a minimum contribution of \$300 or more in the calendar year prior to the school year. The annual capital maintenance fee is a per family fee and is collected as part of the monthly tuition payment of the first student. For example, if the capital maintenance fee is \$300 per year, each month that tuition is drafted \$30 of your tuition payment will go toward your family's capital maintenance fee.

FIELD TRIPS: Field trips are not included in tuition. Any family who does not have the necessary funds can contact the bookkeeper.

LARGE FAMILY ALLOWANCE: The registration fee for the fourth and subsequent child simultaneously attending St. Thomas More School is waived. Tuition for the fourth, fifth and subsequent child in St. Thomas More Catholic School is free.

TUITION RELIEF: Undoubtedly for some families, tuition is a prohibitive burden. To assist parish families who need help, St. Thomas More's Pastoral Council has set up a Tuition Review Committee. Requests for relief should be made before the school year begins or when a crisis makes it necessary during the school year. For St. Thomas More parishioners, these requests are handled through **the church office**. Requests for tuition relief for St. Patrick parishioners should be handled through their pastor.

DELINQUENT TUITION POLICY:

Situations that may prevent a parent from fulfilling his/her obligation to pay tuition should be discussed with the School Administration prior to delinquency occurring. The administration is committed to assisting families in a way that is best for all parties involved.

Should a parent fail to make required tuition payments or not make arrangements for an alternate payment plan, any one of the following actions may be taken by the Administration until all financial obligations to the school are fulfilled:

1. Student report cards each quarter will be held and access to Edline will be denied. **Edline access will be unblocked 48 hours after financial obligations are met.**
2. Students will not be allowed to participate in co-curricular activities.
3. Students will not be allowed to take semester or quarter exams.
4. The student may be refused attendance should the account become severely delinquent. All student report cards and records would remain the property of the school until financial obligations are satisfied.

If it is deemed necessary, the Administration may pursue collection of delinquent tuition and fees through the use of an outside collection agency or attorney. All collection cost and legal fees incurred by the school would be the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

NSF CHECKS/DRAFTS: There will be a \$30.00 assessment for all checks/drafts that are returned to the school because of insufficient funds in the bank. All student report cards and records remain the property of the school until all obligations are satisfied. If a pattern of NSF bank drafts develops, the School Administration reserves the right to require tuition to be paid in full for the remainder of the school year.

TRANSFERS TO ELEMENTARY OR HIGH SCHOOLS: When a child transfers to another school, parents must notify the principal or secretary and the classroom teacher at least one week in advance. All school-rented books and state-supplied books are to be returned to the teacher. The student will receive a report card from the office staff. Tuition payments will be checked with the accounting office by the school's secretary. Upon request from the new school and receipt of a signed, parental release form, the child's academic records, test scores, immunization and health records will be forwarded. Once a parental release is signed, St. Thomas More will release records and/or verbal information regarding the student directly to the administration of the new school once all obligations (financial and otherwise) are satisfied.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Co-curricular activities are provided to our students to enhance their personal growth and well-being. We always strive to have these activities, but in the case where a faculty sponsor is not available the group or organization cannot exist.

Students participating in extracurricular activities are held bound by all requirements and guidelines of each organization as well as the discipline plans of the school.

ASIAN CLUB is open to any student of Asian descent.

CHEERLEADERS

7th and 8th grade squad for CSAL sports

5th/6th grade squad for CSAL football

6th grade squad for CSAL basketball

3rd/4th grade squad for Football

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION (CIA) club is offered to 5-8 grade students.

FUTURE CITY 7th and 8th grade students have the opportunity to tryout.

JUNIOR BETA CLUB this club is by invitation only to our 7th and 8th grade students.

MATH COMPETITIONS by invitation to 4-8 grade students.

MATH CLUB is open to 5-8 grade students.

MATH COUNTS is open to 7th and 8th grade students.

QUIZ BOWL is open to 5-8 students

ROBOTICS is open to 7th and 8th grade students.

STUDENT COUNCIL is for 7th and 8th grade students.

YEARBOOK STAFF membership is for 8th grade students.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE:

Athletics can be an important part of a young person's life. It teaches discipline and self-pride while helping one realize the importance of cooperation. Athletics are a component of, and interact with, the spiritual, social and academic components of the overall school program. St. Thomas More Catholic School recognizes that support from the administration, faculty, staff, coaches, parents and fans are necessary in providing a positive Catholic athletic experience for the student-athlete.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is a member of the Catholic School Athletic Association (CSAA). The purpose of the league is to provide members of school based teams the opportunity to participate in an interscholastic athletic program which is consistent with the philosophy and values of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

The purpose of the athletic program is to provide for those students at St. Thomas More Catholic School who participate in either the interscholastic athletic program or the intramural program a medium by which students can:

- Develop an awareness of their abilities
- Learn and improve athletic skills
- Acquire the true meaning of sportsmanship and practice it
- Be a part of a team effort
- Form a foundation for a healthy adult life style
- Enhance their self-esteem and feelings of belonging

At the end of a sports season, students are responsible for returning all school-owned uniforms and equipment. Failure to return school athletic property will result in withholding nine weeks report cards and/or taking mid-term and final exams dependent upon the end of the seasons and the return of all uniform/equipment.

The replacement of equipment such uniforms, field markers, etc. is based on need with consideration given to the oldest being replaced first.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: In order to be eligible to participate in St. Thomas More athletic programs, a student in grades 5-8 must maintain a 2.0 academic average on a four quality point scale in six major subjects (religion, English, math, reading/literature, science, and social studies) and a B average in conduct that is maintained each grading period. A student must have maintained the required GPA **as of the most recent reported nine week period prior to the beginning of each sport to be eligible to try out for that sport.** In order for a student to be eligible to try-out for the boys basketball team the student must have a 2.0 at the first nine weeks grading period (six major subjects) or a 2.0 in these same subjects by the first day of tryouts. If a student had a 2.0 on the first nine week grading period, the student would be eligible to participate in practice and games until the second nine week grading period at which point their eligibility for the remainder of the season would be determined. If a student was not eligible after the first grading period and became eligible by the time of the first tryouts that student would be eligible to practice but not play in games until their grades were turned in for the second grading period which would determine their eligibility for the remainder of the basketball season. Any student who fails to maintain these averages will be ruled ineligible.

A student should have been examined by a physician within 365 days of participation as evidenced by the physician's signature. Students shall be eligible to try-out for various teams in accordance with the CSAA age and weight requirements.

Disciplinary actions such as Disciplinary Code Letters, Major Disciplinary Code Letters, and/or suspension may render a student ineligible for tryouts.

TRYOUTS/PRACTICES: Tryouts will be conducted in each sport within the CSAA guidelines. There will be a minimum of two days of tryouts in each sport. Teams will be selected by the coaches of their respective sports based on ability, achievement and attitude. A child who is a member of a team is expected to attend all practices and games. Missing all or part of a practice or arriving late for a game may affect playing time.

SPORTSMANSHIP: Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Any team member who fails to do so may be disciplined by the coach and/or Athletic Director/Administration. Discipline will be administered in accordance with the action committed.

Spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which best exemplifies a Christian attitude. Appropriate behavior and attire are expected at both home and away games. Any spectator who physically or verbally abuses an official, coach, spectator, or player will be asked to leave the facility. Such actions by a parent/guardian may result in the removal of the child from the athletic program. Disciplinary action taken as a result of student/spectator conduct will be determined by the Athletic Director and school administration.

Any grievance against disciplinary action taken shall be submitted to the principal in writing within forty-eight hours of notification on the disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE: A student experiencing temporary difficulty in conduct may be removed from the team on a temporary basis. A sport season begins on the first day of tryouts. The discipline consequences below are applicable during the athletic season. See criteria below:

Receipt of 2 D.L.'s or 1 Major D.C. -

- Football: Sit out one game
- Basketball: Sit out one game
- Volleyball: Sit out one match
- Track: Sit out one meet

Receipt of 3 D.L.'s or 1 Major D.C. plus 1 D.L. -

- Football: Sit out one game with additional detentions
- Basketball: Sit out two games
- Volleyball: Sit out two matches
- Track: Sit out one meet with additional detentions

Receipt of 4 D.L.'s or 2 Major D.C.'s - Removal from team

At any time during the season, a student may be removed from the roster of a team for a serious occurrence. This decision will be made by the Athletic Director and school administration.

Consequences for a child who is suspended will be determined by the Athletic Director and school administration.

ADMINISTRATION: The Principal is the ultimate authority for the athletic program.

GYM USE: The use of athletic facilities should be reserved through the Athletic Director. The use of these facilities is for STM CSAA and intramural teams. The STM administration reserves the right to determine for what events the facilities may be used.

GYM RULES

All applicable school policies and procedures apply in the gym.

In school activities:

1. All students are to remain inside the gym at all times.
2. No gum is allowed in the gym.
3. No one (adults, students, younger children, etc.) is allowed on the stage or in the wings of the gym near the stage.
4. No STM students or younger children are allowed in the concession stand.
5. Exemplary conduct is expected from all spectators. St. Thomas More students and parents may refer to the Athletic section of the Parent/Student Handbook for a summary of expected conduct at athletic events.
6. The gym supervisor, the Athletic Director, the STM Administration, and/or the STM coaches reserve the right to determine what is considered to be appropriate behavior.
7. Appropriate attire is required. St. Thomas More reserves the right to determine what is and is not appropriate attire.
8. No outside food or drink is allowed in the gym.

Out of school activities: All of the above rules apply for out of school activities as well.

1. Only team members and coaches approved by the principal are allowed on the players' bench.
2. No one other than coaches and players involved in the game are allowed to approach the scorer's table.
3. No one (adults, students, younger children, etc.) is allowed on the stage or in the wings of the gym near the stage.
4. The area near the end lines and near the concession stand should be kept clear.
5. Parents are to arrive at the gym no later than 8:15 p.m. to pick up STM students in attendance at evening home games.
6. Everyone entering and exiting the gym must do so through the front doors. The side doors are for emergency use only.

COACHES: Coaches and players are required to behave in a dignified manner at all times. Head coaches are required to be at least 21 years of age. Assistant coaches under the age of 18 may participate but must be accompanied by an adult. Coaches are to be selected by the Athletic Director based on their knowledge of the sport and their willingness to share their knowledge with student athletes. Coaches are expected to adhere to the philosophy of the school. Coaches shall be allowed to establish player discipline policies. Coaches are encouraged to play as many players as conditions allow. Minimum playing time specified in CSAA guidelines will be followed.

AWARDS: A student will receive a pin and a chenille letter the first time he/she participates on a varsity CSAA team. (Football, girls or boys basketball, volleyball, track or cross country.) Each subsequent participation in the same sport will earn the player a bar to be placed on his/her letter. If the student has earned a letter in one sport and participates in a different sport, he/she will receive a pin designating the new sport. The only exception is track where a student will receive a medal the first year and a chenille letter and pin the second year. Recognition for athletic participation takes place after level masses.

BUDGET: The STM Athletic budget is derived from expected revenues less operating costs. The surplus is used to purchase new uniforms and athletic equipment.

If a child is absent or checks out of school or checks into school after 12:00 p.m., (with the exceptions of dentist, orthodontics, doctor appointments, etc.) he/she is not eligible to participate in athletic events that same afternoon or evening. In the event of illness and/or injury during the time of tryouts, a student must be able to participate and/or try out by the second week of the season. If a child leaves school at any time during the day because of illness and does not check back in, that child is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities that evening.

FEES: In order to keep fees to a minimum, all parents of players participating in athletics will be required to work in the concession stand or at the gate at home games and tournaments during their child's sport season. Parents are responsible for showing up for their shifts and getting coverage when they are not available. Parents who do not show for their assigned shifts and fail to get a substitute their child is ineligible to participate in their assigned game.

In order to prepare the football field for home games volunteers are needed the morning of the games. If ample volunteers do not sign up a mandatory assignment schedule will be created.

INSURANCE: All students are covered with a Diocesan student insurance policy. This covers students participating in **school-sponsored** athletics. Information on this insurance program is sent home with every student at the beginning of each school year.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Parents are encouraged to share their time, talents, skills, creativity and prayer. The service and support volunteers provide for St. Thomas More's students, teachers, and staff are invaluable.

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

The School Board is representative of the parents and is advisory to the principal and pastor. Members to the Board are elected from St. Thomas More Parish and appointed from St. Patrick Parish.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION:

The overall objective of the Home and School Association is to provide support, services, enrichments, and prayer for the students and faculty. We will complement the efforts of St. Thomas More Catholic School in pursuing the goals of Catholic education. The purposes of the association include promoting positive cooperation and communication between home and school and to provide a medium through which parents can share their talents to enhance their children's academic excellence, personal growth and faith development.

Membership is open to all parents. The membership elects a president, one vice-president, three level representatives, a recording secretary, and a treasurer. Parents have opportunities to become involved in a variety of committees which are intended to strengthen home, school, parish, and community ties and by doing so exemplify positive role models, good parenting skills, and the essence of volunteerism.

MEN'S CLUB:

The Men's Club is a branch of the church parish and school. Their busiest times of the year are holidays and summer months when the children are not in class. This provides the best opportunity for work to be done on the campus. This club also provides the opportunity for fellowship in a variety of avenues such as: watching an LSU game, steak dinner, or Christmas get-together. Membership is open to all men of STM church parish and all dads of students at St. Thomas More Catholic School.

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

2016-2017

As a member of the Saint Thomas More Catholic School Community, I agree to be governed by all policies, rules, procedures, and activities with full support and school spirit. I have read the 2016-2017 Parent-Student Handbook and am aware that the policies will apply and will be administered impartially. I understand that by Diocesan policy, "Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent/guardian may result in the student's removal from the school." **The handbook can be found on the school's web-site at www.stmbr.org.**

Date _____

Father's Signature _____

Mother's Signature _____

Student's Signature _____ Grade/Symbol _____

This form should be completed and returned to the homeroom teacher by August 19, 2016.

If the student lives with a step-parent or guardian the majority of the time, that step-parent should sign the above space. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent(s) or step-parent(s) to inform the other parents of the school policies and procedures. Room is provided below for the signature of any additional parent, step-parent or guardian responsible for the child.

Signature(s)	Relationship to Student
_____	_____
_____	_____

_____ **Photo Image Decline Statement:** We do not give permission for St. Thomas More Catholic School to use my child's photo image and personally identifiable information to be published on the Diocese and/or school's website or in advertisements for the school.

Parent Signature

Date

**Each individual student must return this form
to their homeroom teacher.**