



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017 - 2018

“Building a Strong Foundation in Faith and Knowledge”

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School

1719 Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824
Phone: 203-255-0556 FAX: 203-255-0596
www.stasonline.net

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School was founded in 1921. Located in the heart of historic Fairfield center on the campus of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, we are a Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic elementary school under the jurisdiction of the [Diocese of Bridgeport](#).

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Catholic environment and community where every child knows that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as by the teachers. United with each other by meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students grow in an understanding of their Catholic faith. At St. Thomas Aquinas, we are attempting to "teach as Jesus did." The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas.

Mission Statement

The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School community strives for *academic excellence* in a faith-filled *Catholic* environment that encourages children to reach their full potential and to become lifelong learners. By word and example, we teach our students to model *Christ's message of love*.

Philosophy

The community of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School believes that our primary purpose is to prepare our students academically and spiritually to become good Christians. We believe that goals of academic excellence must espouse a value system based on Gospel truths and Catholic beliefs. Motivated by a spirit of compassion and charity, students are encouraged to assume leadership roles that will promote truth and justice. The St. Thomas Aquinas School faculty believes that a complete education includes a religious dimension with Christ as the foundation of the entire educational process.

Our philosophy is based on a code of Christian conduct. As disciples of Christ, we exist to nurture our students. This nurturing leads our students to a clearer and more personal understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Church. Furthermore, this nurturing promotes a sense of respect within the community while instilling moral and social values which prompt our students to seek and to exercise sound judgment. By adhering to this code, we strive as a community to teach our students to bear witness to Christian beliefs and values.

The curriculum is directed toward these ends. We are cognizant of the unique background and creativity of each student and the variations in individual patterns of maturation, motivation, and development. We offer education in an atmosphere that guides, inspires, and leads students to achieve excellence and to search continually for methods of personal improvement.

Vital to the success of this community of faith is the commitment of our parents and clergy, who share common goals with the faculty and students. These goals help our students achieve personal academic excellence while they develop the fullness of their spiritual lives.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GOALS

- To create an awareness of social justice within the parish, civic, and worldwide communities
- To reaffirm and to promote the dignity of all, regardless of race, gender, ethnic identity, or individual ability
- To guide the students in developing a healthy concept of self which will enable them to become well adjusted members of society
- To equip students with the ability to adapt and to seek new solutions in a changing society

LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Our education is predicated on the belief that each student is a child of God. As such, the education guides each student to become:

A Faithful Active Catholic Who:

- Celebrates faith through prayer, sacraments, Christian service, words and actions
- Practices Catholic faith and is a Christian role model
- Understands Catholic heritage and tradition through study and works of mercy
- Uses scripture as a guide in the journey to faith

A Lifelong Learner Who:

- Develops critical and analytical problem solving skills
- Seeks knowledge and is goal oriented and self-disciplined
- Utilizes technology competently and responsibly to facilitate learning, research and growth
- Appreciates the cultural uniqueness of all people

An Effective Communicator Who:

- Articulates ideas clearly and creatively in writing and speaking
- Listens actively and openly to others
- Expresses opinions compassionately, appropriately, and respectfully
- Resolves problems with integrity

A Responsible Citizen Who:

- Acts as a considerate, respectful and charitable Christian steward
- Values the privileges of our democratic society
- Protects God's creation
- Possesses an ability to make decisions based on the teachings of the Catholic faith

A Healthy, Self-Confident Person Who:

- Values the gift of life
- Respects and appreciates the diverse abilities and talents of others
- Works to discover, to develop, and to utilize his or her God-given gifts and talents

Admission Information

Nondiscriminatory Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School:

1. Siblings of current St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School students
2. Registered members of a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Bridgeport
3. Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas School

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not have programs that address the needs of special education students.

Requirements

Children entering Pre-Kindergarten must be four (4) years of age by October 1st.

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by October 1st.

All new students seeking admission to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School are required to submit:

- * Application Form
- * Birth Certificate (original)
- * Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- * Registration Fee (per family)
- * Home School Association Fee (per family)
- *First month's tuition for mid-year acceptances
- * Parish Affiliation
- *SMART Tuition Payment Form
- * Health Assessment Records
- * Report Cards & School Records
- * Standardized Test Results

Also part of the admission process for students entering Grades 1-8 are:

- An interview with the student (5-8 only) and the student's parents. (1-8)
- A classroom visit. (Grade 1 if requested by teacher conducting screening; required for students entering Grades 2-8)
- Academic testing

For students seeking admission to Kindergarten the following is required:

- Kindergarten Screening
- Visit to the classroom if requested by the teacher conducting the screening

The records for students applying for Admission in Grades PreK-8 will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the students. **All new students will be conditionally accepted** and given a trial period in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

Tuition Payment Policy

A goal of the Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools is to provide a Catholic school education to every student that desires one. Tuition payments are an investment in a student's education and religious formation. Tuition payments are also a financial reality necessary to keep the school in business.

Every family must be registered with FACTS Tuition Management.

The school relies upon the tuition and fees for a substantial portion of the budget to operate an excellent spiritual and educational program. Therefore, when tuition and fees payments become delinquent it is a serious matter.

The following procedures will be used for the payment of tuition to Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School per the Diocese of Bridgeport policies and procedures.

Tuition is billed, collected and deposited by FACTS Tuition Management Company.

In very rare cases where tuition payments are made in cash at the school level, the Bookkeeper will record the cash payment in the tuition management system, print a receipt for the parent and one copy for the school;

Delinquent Tuition/Fees:

When payments are not made in the manner described by a parent/guardian's tuition agreement form, the following steps will take place:

30 Days Past Due

1. When an account becomes 30 days past due under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written or phone call notification from FACTS that their account is past due.
2. It is the responsibility of the family to contact the respective ES School Bookkeeper within 15 days of receipt of the past due notice to correct the situation or make an acceptable alternate plan for payment.
3. If the parent does not contact the Bookkeeper, the Bookkeeper will contact the family to set-up a payment plan by sending a letter via certified mail, email or regular mail.
4. If families are unresponsive, the Principal will arrange for a meeting to discuss the delinquency.
5. The Bookkeeper will prepare a mutually agreed upon payment plan with the family and agreed upon by the Principal.
6. Late Fees will be assessed based on the school's Tuition and Fees Agreement Form.

60 Days Past Due

1. When an account becomes 60 days past due under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written notification from the Principal that their account is past due and their child(ren) may not return to school until an acceptable tuition payment is made.
2. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until payment in full is received.
3. Students will not be permitted to register or to return for the following academic year until the balance is paid in full or an acceptable alternate plan for payment is in place.
4. Late Fees will be assessed based on the school's Tuition and Fees Agreement Form.

90 Days Past Due

1. When an account becomes 90 days past due under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written notification that their account is past due.
2. Students will be withdrawn from their respective Catholic school at the end of a quarter.
3. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until payment in full is received.
4. In connection with tuition and fees commitment delinquencies, the school may pursue legal action against, or require promissory notes from, parent/guardians for failure to honor their tuition agreement. Such notes or legal action will only be sought in an amount equal to the fair market value of the educational goods and services provided as established annually by the school, or the parent/guardian's unpaid tuition and fees commitment, whichever is less.

Parent/Guardian account information and activity will be submitted to the Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Superintendent of Schools, and diocesan attorney for review.

If a parent/guardian refuses to act in good faith, the administration, after consultation with the diocese, may refuse to accept the child(ren) as students in the diocese and may turn the delinquent balance over to a collection agency.

Families with 8th Grade Students:

1. All account billing and fees for 8th graders must be paid by May 1st or the family must have an alternate plan for payment approved by Principal.
2. 8th grade students will not be permitted to participate in graduation ceremony or receive grade transcripts until the balance is paid in full or acceptable arrangements for payment are made.

End of School Year Balances

1. All account billing and fees must be paid by June 1st or the family must have an alternate plan for payment approved by Principal.
2. Families with account balances and unpaid fees that do not have an alternate plan for payment approved by Principal shall receive written notification that their account is past due with copy of this commission policy.
3. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld.
4. Students will not be permitted to register or to return for the following academic year until the balance is paid in full or an acceptable alternate plan for payment is in place.

Financial Aid

Financial aid requests should be made in writing to the Principal and by utilizing our outside assessment organization FACTS for an independent evaluation of financial status. The Principal will review the material and award assistance when funding is available.

Accreditation

All Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport are required to be accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC). Accreditation of an institution by NEASC indicates that it meets or exceeds NEASC standards and criteria for the assessment of institutional quality. This process is achieved through a peer group review process every ten years. Each year, the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School administration and the faculty review the school's mission, goals and objectives, curriculum and instruction, policies and procedures to insure school improvement.

Parent's Role in Education

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

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

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (grades Pre-Kindergarten to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all

authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

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

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Non-support

When it becomes apparent that a family no longer supports the school's philosophy, policies, or procedures and the principal judges the family is no longer maintaining the necessary and appropriate relationship with the school, the family will be asked to withdraw their student(s) from the school.

Home School Association (HSA)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Home School Association is an integral part of the school. The parents work together with the Principal and faculty/staff to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, faith formation and building community are goals of this organization. The HSA provides volunteers for a wide variety of activities and contributes to the positive climate of the school.

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, we ask parents to set rules and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
- Is dressed according to the school dress code
- Completes assignments on time
- Has a nutritional breakfast, snack and lunch every day
- Abides by all rules, regulations, and procedures stated in the school handbook, posted in classroom, or communicated in letters or notices.

We ask parents to:

- Complete and return to school any requested information promptly
- Notify the school when the student will be tardy or absent
- Actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences and parent meetings
- Notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers
- Meet all financial obligations to the school
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health
- Read school notices and to show interest in the student's total education
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school and to attend Mass regularly on Sundays
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school
- Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems
- Pay for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student

School Hours

School Hours: 7:50 AM – 2:10 PM (Full days) and 7:50 AM – 11:10 AM (Early Dismissal Days)

Office Hours: 7:35 AM – 3:00 PM

The school doors are opened for students at 7:00 AM and classrooms at 7:35 AM. Students arriving before 7:35 AM go directly to the Before School Care Program located in the gym. At or after 7:35 AM students go directly to their locker (Grades 6-8), if necessary and then to their homeroom classroom.

At St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions.

Tardy Arrival:

Students not in homeroom at 7:55 AM (once prayer has begun) are considered tardy and a parent/guardian must sign their child(ren) in at the office and receive a late pass for their child to take to the homeroom teacher. This is done to ensure the safety of your child(ren). Lateness to class disrupts learning. Excessive lateness has a direct impact on a student's daily academic performance. Students who are late begin the day with more anxiety and are less prepared to learn.

Dismissal before school day ends:

At dismissal time, there are many directives a teacher gives that students need to be present to hear. **Please do not request early dismissal for your child except for emergencies.** After school activities are not considered to be emergencies. Parents who are volunteering in school (ie. serving as a parent reader, Art in the classroom; library) and finish their obligation before 2:10, are not permitted to take their children out of school early.

Late Pick-up:

Regular dismissal time is 2:10 PM. Please check the school calendar website for early dismissal dates. Early dismissal time is 11:10 AM. Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to be picked up at dismissal time. Students not picked up by the end of dismissal will be sent immediately to the St. Thomas Aquinas After School Care Program. Parents are charged the hourly per child rate for using this program.

Inclement Weather Closings, Delays, Early Dismissal

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School follows the Fairfield Public School System for weather-related closings and delays. For announcement of changes, refer to the local TV stations or call 255-8255 (255-TALK).

Delayed openings are based on a 9:55 AM opening (2 hours later than normal time). The plan detailed in your Emergency Dismissal Form will be activated should an early dismissal be called for any reason. Your child should be informed of your plan so that they know where to go if it is necessary to dismiss early.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School uses an automated emergency call system for emergency situations only. These emergency situations do NOT include weather-related situations determined by the Fairfield Public Schools the evening before or the morning of a closing or delay. If an early dismissal is determined by the Fairfield Public Schools during the school day due to weather, the automated system will be used.

Change in Student's Dismissal

Homeroom teachers should be advised **in writing each and every day** if a child of any age is to go home by a different means than normal or if a child (of any age) is to stay after school for After School Care, choir, an enrichment class or any other activity.

After school plans should be made prior to arrival at school. **Changes in the dismissal routine will be handled by the office only in emergency situations.**

Office Telephone

The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Use Policy

Cell Phones: St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not encourage students to carry cell phones to school. However, we do understand that some parents of older students may feel that having a cell phone is necessary because of activities that may involve their child during after school hours. Please note the following as related to this regulation:

- 1. No student in Grades Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 5 is permitted to bring a cell phone to school for any reason.** Children of this age level should be closely monitored during their after school activities by an adult. Those directly responsible for their supervision after school will be the persons who contacts parents if needed.
- 2. While the administration discourages this, students in Grades 6-8 only are permitted to bring a cell phone to school and will be expected to follow the guidelines here regarding cell phones:**

According to diocesan policy “students who need to have a cell phone must have them turned off and may not use them at all during the school day.” If a parent determines that his/her child should carry a cell phone, we ask that the parent explain to the student that:

- Cell phones must be turned off and stored in the student’s locker (Grades 6-8) and may not be accessed under any circumstance during the school day.
- Your child should not draw attention to the cell phone.
- St. Thomas Aquinas is not responsible for any loss or damage to cell phones carried into the school building.
- Under no circumstances may pictures, videos, recordings, email or text messaging be used by students on the premises of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. The same guidelines apply while traveling on school buses to and from school sponsored events.
- Cell phones may not be carried by students on class trips even if the cell phone is their “camera”. Only teachers/chaperones may carry cell phones on these trips.
- Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to review any content including but not limited to electronic communications received, stored, or sent while on school grounds or on field trips off of school grounds.
- Students who need to call parents during the school day must request permission to go to the school office and call their parents in the presence of school personnel.

Any student who does not follow the Cell Phone Policy, will receive the following consequences:

First Offense:

- Student will have the cell phone taken away and will not be returned until a parent comes to retrieve it.
- The student will receive a behavior detention.

Second Offense:

- Upon a second incident a student will lose the privilege to carry a cell phone for the remainder of the academic year.
- The student will receive an in-school suspension.

Electronic Devices (I-pods, DS, video cameras, cameras, personal tablets)

No student in any grade (Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 8) is permitted to bring an I-Pod, DS, video camera, camera, personal tablet, or any other electronic device to school for any reason. (This includes field trips.)

Any student who does not follow the Electronic Device Policy, will receive the following consequences:

First Offense:

- Student will have the device taken away and will not be returned until a parent comes to retrieve it.
- The student will receive a behavior detention.

Second Offense:

- Upon a second incident a student will receive an in-school suspension.

More serious consequences may result from misuse of cell phones depending on circumstances.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedure

Parents are asked to proceed with extreme caution when dropping off or picking up their children. Cell phones are not to be used by adults while driving on the school grounds. Please follow the traffic directions given by the teachers on duty.

Arrival

- Bus riders exit the bus and walk directly into the school.
- Parents dropping off students should enter the lot from the Ruane Street entrance directly in front of the school and move around the circle of traffic in an orderly fashion. Students exit the vehicles in front of the school and should follow any direction of the teachers monitoring the lot. Parents should not leave their cars while in the drop off rotation.

At 7:55 AM, the morning will begin with a prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, playing of the National Anthem and important announcements.

Dismissal

The school day ends at 2:10 PM, with afternoon announcements. After announcements, bus students are dismissed by bus number in an orderly manner. The final call for all bus students is at 2:20. Walkers & riders stay in the building until all buses depart the school grounds.

Please do not drive into the parking area before 2:20. Parents who are picking up students must exercise patience and care while waiting for their children.

- Enter the Church parking lot from Ruane Street.
- Make the deep U turn to the far end of the Gym.
- Form a Single line and STOP at the orange cone.
- Wait until the cone is removed by staff.
- Drive to the pick up area where teachers are waiting for you with your children.

After School Care and Enrichment participants will be picked up by the person in charge of the activity and brought to the location of the after school program. (See Appendix for dismissal diagram.)

Bus Transportation

The Town of Fairfield provides bus transportation for Fairfield residents who live more than one (1) mile from the school. Conduct on the bus should allow the driver to give full attention to driving. Inappropriate behavior or behavior that puts anyone's safety in jeopardy will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action and/or suspension from the bus. Buses maintain video surveillance equipment.

School Visitors

For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the main office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure.

See Appendix A for the Diocese of Bridgeport Safe Environment Training "Virtus" requirements for all volunteers.

Attendance

Frequent student absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress.

Absence

When a student is absent from school, a parent is asked to call the office by 8:00 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School students.

Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year as well as a winter and spring vacation. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Excessive absence can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year.

Absence - Missed Work & Homework

Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

When a student is absent, a parent should refer to the classroom page on the school's website to obtain homework assignments.

Students in grades 5-8 are responsible to get work and notes missed while they are absent from school; failure to make up assignments will result in consequences outlined in the Discipline Policy. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. All students in grades 5-8 must see all individual teacher(s) when they return to school to obtain missed assignments.

Family vacations should coincide with school vacation dates. In situations where absence cannot be avoided, the Principal and teachers should receive written notification well in advance. **Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations.** Teachers may choose to give the student work to take along or have the work available when the student returns, depending on the grade level of the child and the type of work missed. Students are responsible, under the supervision of their parents, for the mastery and completion of work missed during an absence. Teachers will assign a reasonable length of time in which assignments are to be completed. Work that is not made up will be marked as incomplete and graded accordingly.

Absence and Sports or Extra-Curricular Activities

If a student is absent from school, under no circumstances will he/she be allowed to participate in any sports or extra-curricular school activities on the day of the absence. Students must be in school for a minimum of 4 hours, otherwise they are considered absent.

Appointments during the School Day

Requests for early dismissal or late arrivals for doctor or dentist appointments are strongly discouraged. Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent. Parents are required to come to the school office to sign out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must also be signed back into school in the office by a parent/guardian.

Parent Travel without Students

When parents, but not children, are traveling the school office must be informed of the following:

1. Name of the adult in charge of the children
2. Emergency phone numbers
3. Other pertinent information regarding the children

School Property

If a child carelessly or intentionally destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property the parent will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks used by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student's parents will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

Lockers

Each student in Grade 5-8 is assigned a locker in which to store clothing and textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Lockers are to be locked when not in use. No decorations are permitted on the outside of lockers.

Lost and Found

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school office or placed in the Lost and Found boxes on the lower level of the school. **Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items are discarded or donated to charity.**

Communication

Office Records

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

School Directory

At the annual Meet the Teacher/Package Pick up Day, each family will receive one directory at no cost. Parents may purchase additional copies if desired. The School Directory lists students' and parents' names, addresses, home telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. The School Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s) classmates and parents. These directories should not be **used** or **sold** for other purposes.

Student Assignment Pad

The student assignment pad is to be used to communicate with the teachers in grades 1-8. It is the responsibility of the student to carry their assignment pad with them to all classes to record homework assignments. Parents should

check their child's assignment pad for homework and communication. A teacher may require a parent to sign the communication or homework assignment.

School Website

The school's web site, www.stasonline.net, provides information about the school's spiritual and academic mission and school life. It is an avenue by which parents and other parties can contact the school or teachers directly by e-mail. It is essential for parents to check the website frequently for updates and information.

Teacher E-MAILS

All faculty and staff have school related email addresses. E-mail is for parental use only. The teachers' email addresses are posted on the web page. Teachers check their email at least once per day, (times vary depending upon their schedule). **Emails will not be checked during a teacher's absence. Any information about lunches, emergencies related to dismissal or after school plans should be communicated through the office and not email. E-mail should only be used to communicate general information. Specific issues regarding a child should be addressed in person or in writing.**

E- Newsletter

The e- newsletter is a weekly, electronic newsletter that is sent to each family's email address. Registration is mandatory and done based on the e-mail address provided on your application. The e-newsletter is the primary source of communication between the school office and the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic school families. If a family's e-mail address should change, please notify the office in writing.

See attached **Appendix B** of the Diocese of Bridgeport Acceptable Use Policy regarding Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use and **Appendix C** – Parent Permission Form for Publishing of Student Generated Work and Images.

Academic Information

Curriculum

The Diocese of Bridgeport curriculum mapping and guidelines are consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, and followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The curriculum and maps can be accessed via the school website as well as the Diocese of Bridgeport website (www.bridgeportdiocese.org) St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subjects:

Science	Computer Literacy
Language Arts	Social Studies
Religion	Fine Arts (Art & Music)
Physical Education	Handwriting
Health Education	Mathematics (ability grouping begins in Gr. 6)
Library Skills	Foreign Languages of Spanish & French

Homework

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences. Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will not assign homework on Fridays in order to allow children to spend time with their families. In addition, they will not be given quizzes, tests, or have long – term projects due on a Monday.

All teachers will send an email to parents on the first school day each week listing the homework for the week. Changes do occur so students are encouraged to refer to the hard copy of their assignment book daily.

Testing

The Terra Nova Test of Basic Skills is given in Grades 3 through 7 each year in the spring. The ACRE Test (Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education) is given to students in Grades 5 and 8 in the spring to assess the religious education program that St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School provides.

Middle School students (Grades 6 – 8) may be given a **maximum of 1 quiz and 2 tests per day.**

Library

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School library is open five days a week for students, faculty and parents.

Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition. Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out. The Fairfield Public Library is utilized by the students in a partnership forged by the school.

Field Trips

1. Field Trips have an educational purpose. Trips to amusement parks/areas, water-related events are prohibited.
2. Saint Thomas Aquinas Field Trip Permission Forms are required for all field trips. Permission forms must be signed by a parent or guardian.
3. A student who does not have a signed permission form may not go on the trip. Parent phone calls and/or hand written notes are not acceptable. A faxed permission slip is allowed.
4. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
5. The ratio of children to adult chaperones will be determined by the Principal or Teacher. Ideal ratios for preschoolers are 5 to 1; for other grade children, 10 to 1. Chaperones should be aware of their responsibilities prior to departing. All chaperones must be in full compliance with the Safe Environments Policy of the Diocese of Bridgeport (See Appendix A).

Sacramental Program

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. Preparations for three sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist (Grade 2), Confirmation (Grade 8) form the core of our efforts. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Service

We believe that service must become a way of life for our students and not simply a “project”. Students in grades K-8 at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School participate in grade level service opportunities designed for their age. The diversity of the projects will offer the students a myriad of opportunities in which we can assist God’s children throughout the world.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be issued four times during the academic school year: November, January, April, June for students in Grades 1-8; three times (January, April and June) for Kindergarten and twice for students in Pre-Kindergarten (January and June) Progress Reports will be given mid-

way between each grading period for students in Grades 1-4. Parents of students in Grades 5-8 will not receive paper progress reports since all parents have the ability to view their child's grades online twice each month

Grading Scale

The Grading System for the elementary schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport shall be as follows:

Grades 1-8 (All Subjects)

A	94-100	Outstanding
A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	
B	84-86	Above Average
B-	80-83	
C+	77-79	Average
C	74-76	
C-	70-73	
D	66-69	Below Average, but passing
F	65 and below	Failing

Kindergarten

M	Meeting success
P	Progress shown
I	Improvement needed
N	Not yet expected

First and Second Grade Science and Social Studies

S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
N	Needs Improvement

The following grade codes are used in Grades K-3 for the following subjects only:

S	Satisfactory	{ Foreign Language
U	Unsatisfactory	{ Art
N	Needs Improvement	{ Music
		{ Computer Skills
		{ Physical Education

Study Skills Conduct/Effort and Social Development (Grades 1-5) Conduct/Effort (Grades 6-8)

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Improvement needed
4. Unsatisfactory

Conduct grades can be altered by the Principal for behavior outside the classroom such as on the playground, the bus, the lunchroom, at a sports event – wherever students represent St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

Honor Roll Policy

The Honor Roll for Grades 6 through 8 will be published after each report card. Criteria for the Honor Roll is as follows:

High Honors: No grade lower than an A- and nothing lower than a 2 in conduct and effort. All subjects are included in calculating High Honors

Honors: No grade lower than a B- and nothing lower than a 2 in conduct and effort. All subjects are included in calculating Honors

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Two Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences are held each year in the Fall and Spring. The Fall conference is for all students and the Spring conference is by request of either the teacher or parent. Conference schedules are prepared and issued by the school office in advance of the scheduled date. Parents requiring additional conferences during the school year may make arrangements with the individual teachers or may call the administration and request a team meeting.

Student Records-Transcripts/Recommendations

Parents requesting records /transcripts / recommendations must make a request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the St. Thomas Aquinas School Office for distribution. Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts.

No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

Promotion Policy and Retention Policy

Advancement to the next grade in St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Class Lists

The Administration and faculty take many factors into consideration when determining the class lists. If a parent has a special needs situation, they can address it in writing with a letter to the Principal prior to May 15th. The Principal has final approval for all class lists.

Milk & Lunch Program

Saint Thomas Aquinas offers daily lunch choices through a "hot" lunch program. Parents order lunch using an on-line ordering system. Milk is also offered as an option.

Students may choose to bring their lunch each day. Lunches should be labeled with the student's name. Lunches should be nutritious. Candy and soda are not allowed. Glass containers are not allowed.

Late lunches should be brought to the office by 11:00 AM and will be delivered to the cafeteria by the school staff. **Parents should not bring lunches from carry-out restaurants.**

Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy and respect must be shown to classmates and our lunch monitors at all times. Rules for the lunchroom will be posted and followed.

Uniforms and Dress Code

It is our strong belief that a student's appearance for school has an impact on his/her attitude, behavior and readiness to learn. A formal dress code is not meant to stifle the individuality of our students since every child still remains unique and special while wearing a uniform that shows membership in our community of faith and learning. It is important that we establish a standard of modesty and decorum that contributes toward an environment of respect and mutual understanding. Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their children follow these guidelines. Teachers also have a responsibility for taking appropriate action when guidelines are not followed.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

The students in the Pre Kindergarten Program wear a modified and age appropriate uniform. This uniform consists of the following components:

- **SHORTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue shorts – knit or mesh with the school name
Please note that shorts may not be worn to school from Mid – October to May 1st.
- **PANTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue sweatpants with school logo
- **SWEATSHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue crew sweatshirt with school name
- **T-SHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue t-shirt with the school name
- **SNEAKERS** basic sneakers without wheels or other “accessories”
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks above the ankle bone)

UNIFORMS

The regular school uniform is to be worn on each school day except during the time period designated for the “warm weather uniform” or on days when a student is scheduled for physical education class. If a student is scheduled for physical education on a day when a First Friday, Holy Day or special liturgy is taking place, the regular uniform must be worn. Typically, the optional warm weather uniform may be worn from the first day of school until mid-October and from May 1st until the last day of school. These dates may change at the discretion of the principal.

All students must have all the components required of the regular and Physical Education uniforms. Please use a laundry marker and write the name of your child on the inside of each item- especially sweaters and other items that may be added or removed during the day. We recommend having multiple Physical Education uniforms, ties, etc. since substitute items are not permitted.

Only the principal of St. Thomas Aquinas School may grant exceptions to the uniform policy. On any days when the uniform guidelines are relaxed or changed, specific guidelines will be given to students about appropriate attire.

UNIFORM SUPPLIER

In order to keep continuity within the school, there is only one supplier of our Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Uniform: **Dennis Uniform Company**. They have conveniently located stores and online ordering is available. Special discounted prices are available from mid-June through mid-July.

Dennis Uniform Company www.dennisuniform.com
500 Post Road, Orange
Phone: 203-795-5457

St. Thomas Aquinas Code: NW00TA
(00 is numeric)

SHOES FOR REGULAR UNIFORM

Students are expected to wear solid color navy blue, black or brown shoes with the regular school uniform. Parents are asked to make sure that shoes are sturdy and appropriate for climbing stairs. Tie or slip on shoes may be worn in styles similar to Merrell, Oxford, Saddle Shoes, or Loafers.

The following are not permitted: moccasins, slippers, sandals, open-back shoes, mules, any type of shoes that resemble sneakers, boots, hi-top shoes, clogs, crocs, Birkenstock or any shoes with a heel over two inches (measured from the back exterior of the shoe).

SHOES FOR OPTIONAL WARM WEATHER UNIFORM

Students who opt to wear the warm weather uniform may wear the uniform shoes or solid white or black sneakers without ornamentation. Students are to wear white ankle socks that are either blue or white in color.

CLOTHING

All clothing should be clean, wrinkle-free, with all buttons attached, without rips, tears or hems that need to be sewn. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Students who fail to meet these standards may be given a behavior infraction.

JEWELRY

Jewelry must be kept simple and only inexpensive/replaceable items should be worn to school. One watch, one ring and a simple cross or holy medal on a chain may be worn. Other neck jewelry, bracelets, elastic wrist/ankle accessories are not allowed.

No body piercing is allowed except for pierced ears. Girls may wear one set of pierced earrings to school but these must be small earrings no larger than a dime. This is an important safety issue. Boys may not wear earrings to school. No tattoos are permitted.

SCOUTS

Scouts may wear their scout uniforms on meeting days and on other appropriate days with prior permission of the principal.

HAIR/ACCESSORIES

Hair styles must be neat and conservative. Bangs must be above the eyebrow for both boys and girls. Boy's hair must be above – not touching- the shirt collar and trimmed around the ears. Hair should be clean and no extreme hair coloring, styles such as mohawks or bleaching is permitted.

Scrunchies, hair clips, bows, etc. may be worn in the hair (not the wrist) and should be in school plaid or solid colors that match the colors of the uniform. No bandanas are permitted.

MAKE-UP/NAIL POLISH

Girls may not wear make-up of any type to school. Only clear nail polish is permitted and artificial nails are not allowed. There may be special times when the principal allows this guideline to change.

Specific Uniform Information

Boys - Grades K-8

Regular Uniform Requirements *(Mid-October to May and all school liturgies and assemblies)*

- **SHIRT** white Oxford shirt (short or long sleeves)
We recommend the shirts from the uniform company because of their durability. If you choose another shirt, it should be a blend that does not wrinkle easily. If you choose a shirt that does wrinkle easily, please make sure that it is ironed before your son comes to school. All shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- **TIE** Grades K-5: Dennis Uniform plaid tie *or* Grades 6-8: Dennis Uniform solid blue tie
- **PANTS** khaki dress pants
We recommend the uniform company pants because of the reinforced knees, durability and strong fabric. If you choose another pant, it must be khaki color - **not** stone or white - and the material should be a blend and not one that wrinkles easily. All pants worn by boys must be neat and start the day without wrinkles!

Kindergarten The Dennis Uniform company does carry pull on khaki pants for Kindergarten boys in a wide range of sizes. Kindergarten boys do **not** need to wear a belt with these pants.

- **BELT** A black, brown or navy belt **must** be worn with the pants in Grades 1-8
- **COOL WEATHER LAYER** Each boy **must** have one or more of the following and bring it to school for colder weather since temperatures in the school do vary:
 1. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece vest with school name and/or
 2. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece jacket with school name and/or
 3. Dennis Uniform navy blue cardigan sweater with school name and/or
 4. Dennis Uniform navy blue pullover sweater (V-neck or crew) with school name and/or
 5. **Grades 6-8** Only may wear the Dennis Uniform blue crew Middle School sweatshirt with “STAS” letters
 6. Grade 8 students may wear the school approved “8th Grade hooded sweatshirt”

Please note that other sweatshirts, jackets and sweaters MAY NOT be worn in school. Team basketball sweatshirts are not part of the school uniform and may not be worn during the school day.

- **SOCKS** white or blue ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle). No other colors are permitted.

Optional Warm Weather Uniform

May be worn daily - including liturgies and assemblies - from the opening day to Mid-October and May to closing day

- **SHIRT** Dennis Uniform blue polo shirt with school name
- **PANTS/SHORTS** long khaki dress pants or khaki walking shorts with belt
- **SOCKS** white or blue ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle). No other colors are permitted.
- **SHOES** solid white or black sneakers without ornamentation or regular uniform shoes may be worn with the warm weather uniform

Physical Education Uniform Requirements

This uniform is to be worn on physical education days except when we have a school liturgy or special assembly/event

- **SHORTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue shorts – knit or mesh with the school name
Please note that shorts may not be worn to school from mid – October to May 1st

- **PANTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue sweatpants with school name
- **SWEATSHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue crew sweatshirt with school name
- **T-SHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue t-shirt with the school name
- **SNEAKERS** basic sneakers without wheels or other “accessories”
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle). No other color is permitted.

Specific Uniform Information Girls Grades K-5

Regular Uniform Requirements *(Mid-October to May and all school liturgies and assemblies)*

- **BLOUSE** white uniform blouse with Peter Pan collar (short or long sleeves)
We recommend the blouses from the Dennis Uniform company because of their durability. If you choose another blouse, it should be a blend that does not wrinkle easily. If you choose a blouse that does wrinkle easily, please make sure that it is ironed before your daughter comes to school.
- **JUMPER** Dennis Uniform Campbell plaid jumper
The jumper may not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee all year. Please consider this before making any alterations.
- **COOL WEATHER LAYER** Each girl in Grades K-5 **must** have one or more of the following and bring it to school for colder weather since temperatures in the school do vary:
 1. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece vest with school name and/or
 2. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece jacket with school name and/or
 3. Dennis Uniform navy blue cardigan sweater with school name
 4. Dennis Uniform navy blue pullover sweater (v-neck or crew) with school name

Please note that other sweatshirts, jackets and sweaters MAY NOT be worn in school. Team basketball sweatshirts are not part of the school uniform and may not be worn during the school day.

- **SOCKS** navy blue or white knee socks or tights
- **LEGGINGS** Dennis Uniform dark navy blue w/St. Thomas Aquinas logo (*Worn under jumper*)

Optional Warm Weather Uniform

May be worn daily, including liturgies and assemblies - from the opening day to Mid-October and May to closing day

- **SHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue polo shirt with school name
- **SKORT/SHORTS** Dennis Uniform khaki skort or Dennis Uniform khaki walking shorts with black, brown or blue belt. The length of the skort or shorts is to be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- **SHOES** solid white or black sneakers without ornamentation or regular uniform shoes may be worn with the warm weather uniform

Physical Education Uniform Requirements

This uniform is to be worn on physical education days except when we have a school liturgy or special assembly/event)

- **SHORTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue shorts – knit or mesh with the school name
Please note that shorts may not be worn to school from mid-October to May 1st
- **PANTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue sweatpants with school name (*Dennis uniform company carries an “open bottom” version without elastic for girls*)
- **SWEATSHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue sweatshirt with school name
- **T-SHIRT** Dennis Uniform navy blue t-shirt with the school name
- **SNEAKERS** basic sneakers without wheels or other “accessories”
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle)

Girls Grades 6-8

Regular Uniform Requirements (*Mid-October to May and all school liturgies and assemblies*)

- **BLOUSE** All girls in grades 6 -8 will wear a Dennis Uniform white over-shirt jersey with the school logo. This jersey is available in short or long sleeve and is designed not to be tucked into the skort or skirts.
- **SKORT/SKIRT** Campbell plaid Dennis Uniform skort or Campbell plaid Dennis Uniform skirt. The skort or skirt may not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee all year. Please consider this before making any alterations.
- **COOL WEATHER LAYER** Each girl in Grades 6-8 **must** have one or more of the following and bring it to school for colder weather since temperatures in the school do vary:
 1. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece vest with school name and/or
 2. Dennis Uniform navy blue fleece jacket with school name and/or
 3. Dennis Uniform navy blue cardigan sweater with school name and/or
 4. Dennis Uniform navy blue pullover sweater (v-neck or crew) with school name and/or
 5. Dennis Uniform navy blue crew Middle School sweatshirt with “STAS” letters
 6. Grade 8 students may wear the school approved “8th Grade hooded sweatshirt”

Please note that other sweatshirts, jackets and sweaters MAY NOT be worn in school. Team basketball sweatshirts are not part of the school uniform and may not be worn during the school day.

- **SOCKS** navy blue or white knee socks or tights
- **LEGGINGS** Dennis Uniform navy blue w/St. Thomas Aquinas logo (*Worn under skort or skirt.*)

Optional Warm Weather Uniform

May be worn daily - including liturgies and assemblies from the Opening Day to Mid-October and May to Closing Day

- **SHIRT** Dennis Uniform blue polo shirt with school name OR new white short sleeve over-shirt jersey with school logo
- **SKIRT/SKORT** Dennis Uniform Campbell plaid skirt or Dennis Uniform Campbell plaid skort or Dennis Uniform khaki skort
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle)

- **SHOES** solid white or black sneakers without ornamentation or regular uniform shoes may be worn with the warm weather uniform

Physical Education Uniform Requirements

This uniform is to be worn on physical education days except when we have a school liturgy or special assembly/event

- **SHORTS** Dennis Uniform navy blue shorts – knit or mesh with school name
Please note that shorts may not be worn to school from Mid-October to May 1st.
- **PANTS** Dennis Uniform blue sweatpants (an “open bottom” version without elastic is also available for girls) with school name
- **SWEATSHIRT** Dennis Uniform blue crew sweatshirt with school name
- **T-SHIRT** Dennis Uniform blue T-shirt with the school name
- **SNEAKERS** basic sneakers without wheels or other “accessories”
- **SOCKS** white ankle socks (socks must be above the ankle)

Scheduled Out of Uniform Days

During the year there will be certain days when the uniform is not required. Dress on those days will be in compliance with the rules of modesty and decorum. N.U.T card usage is also covered under this policy.

Guidelines:

Students may NOT wear:

- *skirts/dresses shorter than three inches above the knee
- *shorts shorter than three inches above the knee
- *flip-flop sandals
- *open back shoes
- *tank tops
- *T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- *sneakers that convert to roller skates
- *biker shorts
- *pajama pants
- *make-up

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.

ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.

Health Procedures

Please keep your child at home if he/she has a fever or is ill.

An emergency form for each student is kept on file to provide information for locating parents, guardians, or designated emergency contact persons. It is essential for parents to keep the information on the health history and emergency cards up to date.

The school and the school nurse must be advised in writing of all health problems or changes, especially food allergies, immediately. Any child with an orthopedic injury must be assessed by the nurse on the first day back to school and bring a note from the doctor stating the child's activity limitations.

Medication

Whenever possible, medications should be given to children at home either before or after school. If a physician indicates that it must be given during school, the parent must furnish written authorization from a physician for this administration. Forms may be obtained from the school nurse.

Medications must be in pharmacy prepared containers, properly labeled with the following information:

- a. name of the child
- b. drug
- c. strength
- d. dosage
- e. frequency
- f. physician's name
- g. date of prescription

Parents must deliver the medication to the school and must sign an authorization form before the medication can be administered. All medications must be picked up by the last day of school or they will be discarded.

Students are not allowed to use cough drops in school, because cough drops contain medication.

Food Allergy Policy

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is an “allergy-friendly environment”.

Research indicates that milk, egg, peanut, tree nut, fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat are the most common forms of food allergies in children. It is impossible to avoid all of these items in a school environment where lunch is served or brought in from individual homes. Therefore, we cannot guarantee an allergy – free or nut-free environment. However, we can take some universal precautions and then follow more specific procedures for the most common life-threatening allergies.

We encourage each family, even those without children who have food allergies, to review the following guidelines:

- Students are only to eat food brought from their own home or provided by the hot lunch program at school. You will be given ample notice of any exceptions to this policy.
- Students **MAY NOT** share food or drink with other students.
- We will celebrate the birthday of each student with special recognition in the classroom, over the intercom system and by a simple gift from me to the student. Teachers will make sure that birthdays are acknowledged in an age-appropriate way but we will not distribute any birthday items (including food *and* non-food treats). We respectfully ask parents to save food and other birthday treats for celebrations among family and friends that are held off campus.

- We will continue to *limit* the practice of celebrating special holidays with food treats that are often related to instruction. While there will still be some days when we celebrate with food, all parents will have ample notice so that they may send in a healthy or more appropriate snack for their child.
- The gym and all classrooms, including those used for special subjects, will have a no-nut policy for school events. Signs indicating this are posted outside of each room. Students who bring snacks to school to eat in their classrooms **may not** bring snacks that contain nuts or have been processed with nuts or nut oil. The list of ingredients should be checked on food labels. Please note that nuts **MAY** be contained in school lunches but not school snacks.
- During lunch, we will continue the practice of having a nut-free table. If your child has a friend with a nut allergy and you send a note to his/her homeroom teacher **guaranteeing** that your child will carry a safe, nut-free lunch to school, he/she may sit at the nut-free table. A list of those who are expected and permitted to sit at that table will be available in the MPR (Multi-Purpose Room). *We sincerely hope that some parents will consider this option so that students with nut allergies do not have to sit by themselves!*
- Since there are now some products (soy nut butter, sunflower butter) that imitate peanut butter, we ask that parents sending in a lunch with these products to take the extra time to use a marker on the lunch bag to write that this is a safe product. If a product looks and smells like peanut butter, and we don't know that it is an imitation, the student may be asked to sit at another table.
- Special care will be taken to clean all tables between lunch periods.
- The Religious Education Coordinator is willing to work with us by asking the students/teachers in that program to promote nut-free classrooms as well.
- In some of the classrooms where students have severe allergies that could lead to anaphylaxis or death from contact with allergens, the teacher may ask students to wash their hands with a wipe before entering the classroom in case they ate nut products or came into contact with them between home and school. Please understand that this precaution may be necessary to save the life of a classmate.
- Please contact the school nurse if your child is diagnosed with any food allergies or conditions that need special attention. We will make every effort to be vigilant and to help your child be safe in school.

The nurse will assist us in creating a health team. We will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/ guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has/have a potentially life threatening allergy. The classroom teachers will be part of this team and learn the nature of the life threatening allergies faced by students, how to respond, and how to maintaining a healthy environment.

Event Food Policy

with Allergy Awareness

In an attempt to create an allergy-aware environment for our students, food brought to school sponsored events involving students at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School should follow these guidelines.

1. Food should be purchased and not prepared at home; and
2. Food labels should be read to be sure the food contains no nuts and is not processed in a facility that handles nut products; and
3. Food should be served in original containers with original labels intact; and
4. When possible, individual serve packages should be used; and
5. If food is provided from outside vendors, care should be taken to determine that they are a "nut-free" facility. The vendor/s names will be available so that parents may make their own determination as to safety.

6. No policy exists with respect to allergies and beverages.
7. Parents must determine the safety of individual items and events for their own children.
8. The principal reserves the right to evaluate each event and the food planned to be served on a case by case basis.

Town of Fairfield Health Department – Administrative Policy

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, each student enrolled in the Fairfield schools shall be required to have a health assessment by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine (physician or osteopath licensed to practice in the United States), or by an advanced practice registered nurse, registered nurse, or Physician Assistant licensed to practice in Connecticut.

- prior to initial entrance into preschool programs
- prior to initial entrance into kindergarten
- for transfer students, prior to initial entrance into grade 6 and 10
- for upper grade students, prior to initial entrance and whenever a health assessment is required for students of the same age cohort as the upgraded student.

Health assessments shall be done on or after August 15th of the school year preceding initial enrollment into these grades.

Incomplete health assessments shall be returned to the parent with a letter from the school nurse indicating the information needed for completion. No student shall be permitted to enter or continue to attend school or participate in sports until the required health assessment is complete.

Please see the revised Board of Health Policy and Administrative Regulations on Health Assessments in its entirety. Any questions may be directed to me at the Fairfield Public Health Nursing office at 203-256-3150.

Immunizations

State law requires that a complete immunization record must be presented before a child enters school. For Specific requirements, please contact the school nurse.

No student will be permitted to enter St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School until evidence of adequate immunization is provided. The dates of the child's immunizations are needed.

Immunizations may be available from the student's own health care provider or from the Town of Fairfield Well Child Clinic. For further information contact the school nurse or the Town of Fairfield Public Health Nursing office at 203-256-3150.

Connecticut state statutes permit exemptions from receiving immunizations if vaccination is medically contraindicated and such contraindication is certified by a physician and is in accordance with the provisions of state law, *or* if immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the child and there is parent/guardian statement to that effect. A written statement is needed. For further information, contact the school nurse.

Screening Programs

The following health screenings are provided in school:

- Vision Screening: Grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 6.
- Hearing Screening: Grades Pre-Kindergarten (four years old by January 1st and older) through 3, grades 5 and 8.
- Postural Screening: Grades 5 through 8.
- Color Vision Screening: Grade 1 and all new students in grades 2 - 8 who have no prior recorded findings.

- Pediculosis (Head Lice): In elementary schools, the class is screened when a case of head lice is identified in the class. In all schools, siblings and close contacts of the child with head lice are screened when a case is identified.

Accidents & Illness

The school is responsible for first aid only, i.e., the immediate and temporary care given to a student whose illness or injury occurs on the school premises during school hours or in school sponsored/supervised activities. Although temporary care may be given in school as needed for accidents or illnesses that have occurred at home, parents should consult their family physician for care. Parents are urged to report to the school nurse as soon as possible when their child has a communicable disease. Students are not to attend school when ill. It is recommended that a student remain home for 24 hours after his/her temperature has returned to normal. In the event of a medical emergency, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the hospital. Medical policies and procedures for sudden illness and injury are prepared and approved by the Town of Fairfield Health Department.

Communicable Diseases

Communicable diseases or conditions should be reported to the school nurse. These include but are not limited to:

Chickenpox	Measles	Salmonella	Vaccinia Disease
Coxsackie Virus	Meningitis	Scabies	Swine Flu
Diphtheria	Mononucleosis	Scarlet Fever or Scarletina	Food Poisoning that is confirmed by a physician
Fifth Disease	Mumps	Shingles	
German Measles	Pinkeye	Smallpox	
Haemophilus influenza	Poliomyelitis	Strep Throat	
Hepatitis	Pneumonia	Tetanus	
Impetigo	Ringworm	Tuberculosis	
Influenza	SARS	Whooping Cough	

If your child is suspected of having one of these diseases or conditions, your physician should be consulted immediately.

Code of Conduct

Since the Catholic school is a unique educational institution, the spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and mutual cooperation are essential to the learning environment. The Catholic school, as a faith community, encourages an atmosphere conducive to learning, not only academic skills, but also Catholic values.

The primary goal of Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is to provide a learning environment that fosters each student's Catholic Faith development and academic excellence. We believe it is important to work with parents and to encourage the development of responsible, respectful students. We support positive peer relationships and foster a positive teacher-student relationship. We stress the care of personal belongings and our school facilities.

The immediate objective of the school discipline policy is to maintain effective learning conditions. The ultimate objective is student growth in abilities, attitudes, and habits essential to acceptable and self-controlled behavior. In order to accomplish this, heavy emphasis will be placed on techniques designed to instill in each child a sense of individual responsibility for his/her own actions.

Students are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct of Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. Should infractions or detentions occur, students will be held accountable for violations, and disciplinary measures will be taken.

Athletic Programs:

According to policies of the Diocese of Bridgeport and the Metropolitan Bridgeport Catholic School Conference the following rules and regulations will be adhered to at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School as relate to the Diocesan Sports Program.

Rules and Regulations

Academic Requirements

1. Any student receiving a grade below a “C-“ in any subject at progress report time or report card time will be declared ineligible to participate in any conference-sponsored activity until such grade is removed. Students with special needs and/or disabilities will be considered eligible at the discretion of the Principal.
2. Any student participating in any conference-sponsored activity who fails to complete homework and/or project assignments may be declared ineligible until such assignments are made up. These assignments shall be reviewed by the Principal.

Conduct

1. Students who receive a four (4) in any subject area including Conduct and Effort will be declared ineligible to participate in any conference-sponsored activity until reinstated by the Principal.
2. Students are ineligible to participate in any conference-sponsored activity including practice sessions on a day in which they are absent from school **for any reason.**
3. Students are expected to show respect to coaches, officials, other students, and spectators at all times.
4. If a player is ejected from a game, he/she will sit out the next conference-sponsored tournament or league game.

Effective discipline requires the cooperation and active participation of all students, parents, and faculty members. Teachers and staff members recognize the importance of effective discipline by enforcing rules through consequences. The following discipline programs for grades 3-5 and 6-8 are adhered to at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

Infractions leading to detention, automatic detention, in-school suspension, probation, and expulsion will be handled in the following manner:

Grades 3-5 (Intermediate Level)

INFRACTIONS

Intermediate level students may receive an infraction in two separate categories: Missing Assignments or Behavior. These two categories will be treated separately as follows:

Missing Assignment Infractions:

Students are expected to complete assigned work (this includes having tests and quizzes signed by parents, and long-term projects), bring it to school with them and hand it in to the teacher on the date it is due. They are also expected to have the proper supplies for class. Failure to do this will result in the following procedure:

Step One: “Oops Slip”: (First Quarter only at the Intermediate Level) The teacher will send home what is referred to as an “Oops Slip” which is simply a notice to parents that the child did not complete his/her homework. No consequences are given if the child turns the assignment in the next day.

If a child does not do more than one of their homework assignments on a given day, one “Oops Slip” will be sent home to cover all of the missing assignments.

Step Two: Missing Assignment Infraction: After an “Oops Slip” is issued and homework continues to be incomplete, then a system of infractions begins. Three Missing Assignment Infractions will result in a detention.

It is possible for a student to receive a detention as a result of Missing Assignment Infractions in the following ways:

1. Infractions for the same assignment:

- If a student is not prepared for class by failing to complete homework, projects or in-class assignments, fails to bring the assignment to class, or comes to class unprepared with the proper supplies, s/he will receive a **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** that will need to be signed and returned the following day with the missing work. (First Infraction)
- If both the signed missing assignment infraction notice and the missing work/supplies are not brought back to the teacher the next school day, a second **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** will be given. (Second Infraction for same assignment)
- If the student still does not present the assignment and the signed missing assignment infraction notice to the teacher the **second day after it was due**, the student will receive a **detention**. (Third Infraction for same assignment)

2. Infractions for separate assignments:

- If a student is not prepared for class by failing to complete homework, projects or in-class assignments, fails to bring the assignment to class, or comes to class unprepared with the proper supplies, s/he will receive a **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** from each teacher. This could result in a student receiving three infractions from three separate teachers either on a given day, or within a quarter resulting in a detention.

The following information should be noted with regard to Missing Assignment Infractions:

- √ Missing Assignment Infraction Notices serve as written notification to the parents of the missing work and consequence.
- √ Missing Assignment Infraction Notices are cumulative within a quarter until serving a detention. At the end of the quarter all infractions are erased.
- √ If the assignment is turned in after one infraction it will be given partial credit (-10 pts). If it is turned in after the second infraction it will be given partial credit (-20 pts). If it is not turned in by the time a detention is issued, the assignment will be given 0 credit.

Please be aware of the following:

- **Students will not be permitted to call home to ask a parent to bring an assignment or supplies they have forgotten.**
- **Notes from parents to teachers informing them that a student did not do an assignment will be accepted only if the student was ill. If a note is not given to a teacher with this explanation, an infraction will be issued.**
- **If a student is absent on the day the assignment is due, then the assignment is to be turned in on the first day s/he returns to school.**
- **If a student is absent the day the assignment is given, s/he is given one day to complete the assignment and turn it in. If absent two days, then s/he is permitted two days to complete the work and turn it in.**

Behavior Infractions: Students at the Intermediate level are expected to abide by and cooperate with school rules and regulations. Failure to do so will result in behavior infractions leading to a detention. Three Behavior Infractions equal a Behavior Detention.

Examples of Behavior infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom disruptions
- Inappropriate hallway, bathroom, recess or lunchroom behavior
- Gum / candy eaten in class
- Food eaten in school without permission
- Uniform violations without a note of explanation from the parent
- Nail polish, jewelry, inappropriate hair length on boys, makeup not consistent with handbook regulations
- Violations of any items listed in the school handbook set forth as rules

- √ These examples will be posted and discussed in all classrooms at the beginning of the school year.
- √ Behavior Infractions are **cumulative** for the quarter. At the end of the quarter the Behavior Infractions will be erased.
- √ Behavior Infraction notices serve as written notification to the parents of a student's behavior and are given at the teacher's discretion.
- √ Receiving **three** Behavior Infraction notices within a quarter will result in a detention.

DETENTION

In addition to receiving three Behavior Infractions within a quarter, or three Missing Assignment Infractions within a quarter resulting in a detention, there are also certain behaviors resulting in **automatic detentions**. Some examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting
- Lying
- Cheating
- Forgery
- Plagiarism
- Stealing
- Disrespect of authority
- Inappropriate language, gestures, written language, or materials
- Abuse of school property or the property of others
- Misuse of technology
- Cell phone/electronic device used during school (includes "texting")
- Leaving the building without permission
- Failure to serve a detention unless ill

- √ Detentions served in any quarter will equate to marks for skills/development on the report card.
- √ Failure to return the signed detention notice the next day will result in the teacher calling the parents and a Behavior Infraction.
- √ Detentions will be served once a week on Wednesdays from 2:20 – 3:20 p.m. and will be supervised by a faculty member. Parents will be given a twenty-four hour minimum notice for detentions. Again, detentions will be given at the discretion of the teacher. Failure to serve a detention, unless ill, will result in an automatic second detention.
- √ Upon receiving a **second detention** during the year, the homeroom teacher will call the parents and schedule a meeting. Two detentions will also result in loss of privileges for the student as identified at each grade level.
- √ If a student receives **three detentions** during the school year, a meeting between the parents, student, teachers and principal will be required. The student may receive an in-school suspension as a result. The final decision on in-school suspension and its length lies with the principal.

SUSPENSION

IN SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In addition to the possibility of receiving an in-school suspension for three detentions in a year, a student may receive an out of school suspension as a result of serious offenses at the discretion of the administration. The Principal will determine the length of the in-school or out of school suspension.

When a student is given an **In-School Suspension**:

- √ The student is removed from all classes to a designated area of the school for a duration of time determined by the principal.
- √ The student is held responsible for obtaining and completing all school work assigned during the suspension, as well as all classroom/homework assignments given during the period of suspension. The student is responsible for taking all tests that were missed the day s/he returns to class.

When a student is given an **Out of School Suspension**:

- √ The student is removed from school and remains at home for a duration of time determined by the principal.
- √ The student is held responsible for obtaining and completing all school work assigned during the suspension, as well as all classroom/homework assignments given during the period of suspension. The student is responsible for taking all tests that were missed the day s/he returns to class.
- √ The principal may require a student to receive professional counseling prior to returning to the school environment.

Examples of behavior that may result in **immediate Out of School Suspension or Expulsion** include but are not limited to:

- Violent behavior
- Harassment, bullying
- The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products

Harassment: Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School shall maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment. No student in the school shall be subjected to any form of harassment. Students will need to notify the proper school authority (verbal or written) when a harassment issue occurs and the school will address the situation using appropriate disciplinary consequences, counseling methods, and parental/guardian contact and involvement in accordance with the nature and frequency of the offense.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Harassment includes physical, visual, verbal, and sexual forms of behavior. Students engaging in harassment or bullying may be subject to the following:

- A meeting of the parents, student, teachers and Principal
- An in-school suspension (This decision lies with the Principal)
- Expulsion (at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport)

If the harassment or bullying continues after the above consequences, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child from Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products: Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will provide a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products is a violation of civil law and, therefore, is considered a serious violation of school policy. Students who engage in any of these activities on school grounds, at school functions, on the way to or from school functions, or are involved in any mention of violence to the school community or property that is reported to the school will be subject to

immediate suspension or withdrawal for cause. Students involved in these activities may be subject to the following:

- A meeting of the parents, student, teachers and Principal
- An immediate out of school suspension
- Expulsion

PROBATION

Probation is a final consideration if all other means have failed to correct a problem. The purpose is to afford the student an opportunity to improve the behavior in question. The principal will determine the length and conditions of the probationary period, and will communicate this information to the parents, student, and teachers in a meeting. The student's behavior during the probationary period will have a direct bearing on continued attendance at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the most serious means of addressing a discipline problem. If a student's behavior presents a serious threat to the physical, spiritual, or moral well being of any member of the school community, the child may be expelled from school under the direction and authority of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

In addition, if a student's behavioral choices do not change as a result of infraction notices, detentions, in-school suspension, and probation, the student may be expelled under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The teachers and staff recognize that the majority of students at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School take pride in themselves and their school, and willingly conform to school rules. Through this discipline policy, it is our intent to provide a safe learning environment for all children at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

Grades 6-8 (Middle School)

INFRACTIONS

Middle school level students may receive an infraction in two separate categories: Missing Assignments or Behavior. These two categories will be treated separately as follows:

Missing Assignment Infractions:

Students are expected to complete assigned work (this includes having tests and quizzes signed by parents, and all long-term projects) bring it to school with them, and hand it in to the teacher on the date it is due. They are also expected to have the proper supplies for class. Failure to do this will result in the following procedure:

Three **Missing Assignment Infractions** will result in a detention.

It is possible for a student to receive a detention as a result of Missing Assignment Infractions in the following ways:

1. Infractions for the same assignment:

- If a student is not prepared for class by failing to complete homework, projects or in-class assignments, fails to bring the assignment to class, or comes to class unprepared with the proper supplies, s/he will receive a **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** that will need to be signed and returned the following day with the missing work. (First Infraction)
- If both the signed missing assignment infraction notice and the missing work/supplies are not brought back to the teacher the next school day, a second **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** will be given. (Second Infraction for same assignment)

- If the student still does not present the assignment and the signed missing assignment infraction notice to the teacher the **second day after it was due**, the student will receive a **detention**. (Third Infraction for same assignment)

2. Infractions for separate assignments:

- If a student is not prepared for class by failing to complete homework, projects or in-class assignments, fails to bring the assignment to class, or comes to class unprepared with the proper supplies, s/he will receive a **Missing Assignment Infraction Notice** in each of those classes. This could result in a student receiving three infractions in three separate classes either on a given day, or within a semester resulting in a detention.

The following information should be noted with regard to Missing Assignment Infractions:

- √ Missing Assignment Infraction Notices serve as written notification to the parents of the missing work and consequence.
- √ Missing Assignment Infraction Notices are cumulative within a semester until serving a detention. At the end of the semester all infractions are erased.
- √ If the assignment is turned in after one infraction it will be given partial credit (-10 pts). If it is turned in after the second infraction it will be given partial credit (-20 pts). If it is not turned in by the time a detention is issued, the assignment will be given 0 credit.

Please be aware of the following:

- **Students will not be permitted to call home to ask a parent to bring an assignment or supplies they have forgotten.**
- **Notes from parents to teachers informing them that a student did not do an assignment will be accepted only if the student was ill. If a note is not given to a teacher with this explanation, an infraction will be issued.**
- **If a student is absent on the day the assignment is due, then the assignment is to be turned in on the first day s/he returns to school.**
- **If a student is absent the day the assignment is given, s/he is given one day to complete the assignment and turn it in. If absent two days, then s/he is permitted two days to complete the work and turn it in.**

Behavior Infractions: Students at the Middle school level are expected to abide by and cooperate with school rules and regulations. Failure to do so will result in behavior infractions leading to a detention. Three Behavior Infractions equal a Behavior Detention.

Examples of Behavior infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom disruptions
 - Inappropriate hallway, bathroom, recess or lunchroom behavior
 - Gum / candy eaten in class
 - Food eaten in school without permission
 - Uniform violations without a note of explanation from the parent
 - Nail polish, jewelry, inappropriate hair length on boys, makeup not consistent with handbook regulations
 - Violations of any items listed in the school handbook set forth as rules
 - Leaving the classroom without permission
- √ These examples will be posted and discussed in all classrooms at the beginning of the school year.
 - √ Behavior Infractions are **cumulative** for the semester. At the end of the semester, the Behavior Infractions will be erased.

- √ Behavior Infraction notices serve as written notification to the parents of a student's behavior and are given at the teacher's discretion.
- √ Receiving **three** Behavior Infraction notices within a semester will result in a detention.

DETENTION

In addition to receiving three Behavior Infractions within a semester, or three Missing Assignment Infractions within a semester resulting in a detention, there are also certain behaviors resulting in **automatic detentions**. Some examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting
 - Lying
 - Cheating
 - Forgery
 - Plagiarism
 - Stealing
 - Disrespect of authority
 - Inappropriate language, gestures, written language, or materials
 - Abuse of school property or the property of others
 - Misuse of technology
 - Cell phone/electronic devices used during school (including "texting")
 - Leaving the building without permission
 - Failure to serve a detention unless ill
- √ Detentions served in any quarter will equate to marks for skills/development on the report card.
 - √ Failure to return the signed detention notice the next day will result in the teacher calling the parents and a Behavior Infraction.
 - √ Detentions will be served once a week on Wednesdays from 2:20 – 3:20 p.m. and will be supervised by a faculty member. Parents will be given a twenty-four hour minimum notice for detentions. Again, detentions will be given at the discretion of the teacher. Failure to serve a detention, unless ill, will result in an automatic second detention.
 - √ Upon receiving a **second detention** during the year, the homeroom teacher will call the parents and schedule a meeting. Two detentions will also result in loss of privileges for the student as identified at each grade level.
 - √ If a student receives **three detentions** during the school year, a meeting between the parents, student, teachers and principal will be required. The student may receive an in-school suspension as a result. The final decision on in-school suspension and its length lies with the principal.

SUSPENSION

IN SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In addition to the possibility of receiving an in school suspension for three detentions in a year, a student may receive an out of school suspension as a result of serious offenses at the discretion of the administration. The Principal will determine the length of the in-school or out of school suspension.

When a student is given an **In School Suspension**:

- √ The student is removed from all classes to a designated area of the school for a duration of time determined by the principal.
- √ The student is held responsible for obtaining and completing all school work assigned during the suspension, as well as all classroom/homework assignments given during the period of suspension. The student is responsible for taking all tests that were missed the day s/he returns to class.

When a student is given an **Out of School Suspension**:

- √ The student is removed from school and remains at home for a duration of time determined by the principal.
- √ The student is held responsible for obtaining and completing all school work assigned during the suspension, as well as all classroom/homework assignments given during the period of suspension. The student is responsible for taking all tests that were missed the day s/he returns to class.
- √ The principal may require a student to receive professional counseling prior to returning to the school environment.

Examples of behavior that may result in **immediate Out of School Suspension or Expulsion** include but are not limited to:

- Violent behavior
- Harassment, bullying
- The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products

Harassment: Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School shall maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment. No student in the school shall be subjected to any form of harassment. Students will need to notify the proper school authority (verbal or written) when a harassment issue occurs, and the school will address the situation using appropriate disciplinary consequences, counseling methods, and parental/guardian contact and involvement in accordance with the nature and frequency of the offense.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Harassment includes physical, visual, verbal, and sexual forms of behavior. Students engaging in harassment or bullying may be subject to the following:

- A meeting of the parents, student, teachers and Principal
- An in-school suspension (This decision lies with the Principal)
- Expulsion (at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools for Diocese of Bridgeport)

If the harassment or bullying continues after the above consequences, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child from Saint Thomas Aquinas School.

The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products: Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will provide a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, ammunition, or tobacco products is a violation of civil law and, therefore, is considered a serious violation of school policy. Students who engage in any of these activities on school grounds, at school functions, on the way to or from school functions, or are involved in any mention of violence to the school community or property that is reported to the school will be subject to immediate suspension or withdrawal for cause. Students involved in these activities may be subject to the following:

- A meeting of the parents, student, teachers and principal
- An immediate out of school suspension
- Expulsion

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy on Bullying/Harassment

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport. It must not be tolerated during the school day nor during any school sponsored activities on or off the school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of "love your neighbor as yourself," and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school and deprives the student of a safe and caring learning environment.

Bullying is defined as any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity

where acts against are repeated against the same student over time. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

1. Students may report acts of bullying anonymously and each school shall set up a procedure for such reporting and publicize the procedure. Each school shall also set up a procedure so that parents/guardians of students may make written reports of acts of bullying.
2. Any school that receives an anonymous report from a student, or a written report by a parent/guardian shall investigate such report. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to the consequences listed below.

Investigation Procedures

Upon learning about a bullying incident, the administrator or his/her designee shall thoroughly investigate the circumstances. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff, review of school records, and identification of parent and family issues.

Bullying incidents that demand in school/out of school suspension shall be reported to the respective Deputy Superintendent (elementary schools) or Superintendent (high schools).

Consequences/Intervention

If it is concluded that an act of bullying has occurred, the parents/guardians of the student who committed such acts, and the parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed shall be notified. Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the result of the investigation and may include a parent conference, professional counseling, detention, suspension, and expulsion. Depending on the severity of the incident, or the series of incidents, the administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising the students involved, providing staff support for students when necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with the parents.

PROBATION

Probation is a final consideration if all other means have failed to correct a problem. The purpose is to afford the child an opportunity to improve the behavior in question. The principal will determine the length and conditions of the probationary period, and will communicate this information to the parents, student, and teachers in a meeting. The student's behavior during the probationary period will have a direct bearing on continued attendance at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the most serious means of addressing a discipline problem. If a student's behavior presents a serious threat to the physical, spiritual, or moral well being of any member of the school community, the student may be expelled from school under the direction and authority of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport. In addition, if a student's behavioral choices do not change as a result of infraction notices, detentions, in-school suspension, and probation, the student may be expelled under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The teachers and staff recognize that the majority of students at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School take pride in themselves and their school, and willingly conform to school rules. Through this discipline policy, it is our intent to provide a safe learning environment for all children at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school and Diocese of Bridgeport, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in

all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them. **Bullying under any circumstance is not tolerated and will be addressed with disciplinary action immediately.**

The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Off-Campus Conduct

The administration of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day.

Child Abuse Laws

St. Thomas Aquinas School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Connecticut. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Families.

Emergencies

Safety takes precedence over convenience at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic school. Doors will be kept locked at all times when students are present and all visitors must sign in.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic school has safety and security practices in place that have been approved by the Town of Fairfield Police Department. These procedures were created to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the school. Should an incident happen, we will implement emergency plans to keep your child(ren) safe. The plans include procedures to notify you and reunite you with your child(ren).

Extra-Curricular Information

Sports

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School offers its students exposure to a range of individual and team athletic activities through both its physical education program during the school days, various intramural sports that are offered periodically in an after-school environment, and competitive team sports for students in the 5th through 8th grade. Athletics at St. Thomas Aquinas is based on students' understanding hard work, sportsmanship and positive reinforcement.

St. Thomas Aquinas offers its 5th through 8th grade boys and girls the opportunity to participate in cross country and on varsity and junior varsity basketball teams that compete in various diocesan leagues based on the competition level. Participants on these teams are expected to represent the mission of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School at all times in their sporting activities.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Athlete's Handbook is **Appendix D** at the conclusion of this school handbook.

Before & After School Care Program

The program is considered part of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School and is available only to children, grades K-8, attending this school.

Before School Care:

- The program is located in the gym of the Parish Center building, and is supervised by a faculty member.
- The program begins at 7:00 a.m. Students who arrive early are supervised from 7:00 a.m. to 7:35 a.m. at which time they are dismissed to their classrooms.

- When there is a delayed opening due to inclement weather, the program runs from 9:00 a.m. to 9:35 a.m.
- There is no charge for use of this program.

After School Care:

- The Program begins after dismissal at 2:30 p.m. and ends at 5:30 p.m.
- The Program is housed within the school building. A designated classroom is the primary gathering space used for attendance, homework, and board games. The gym, multi-purpose room, and playground are also available on many days. Children are encouraged to do homework and will be assisted if necessary. However, they will complete their own work.
- The children play outside daily, weather permitting. Please make sure your child has the proper outerwear.
- Snacks are not provided. It is a long day, and sending a drink and snacks that comply with the allergy friendly policy is suggested.
- If you are late picking up your child from school for any reason, he/she will automatically be sent to the After School Care Program. There will be a minimum fee of one hour charged when the students attend.
- Fees are charged hourly per student. Please be punctual with pick up. An escalated fee of \$10.00 will be charged for each additional 15 minutes after your child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m.
- Attendance is taken at the beginning of the program. All children need to report for attendance so that teachers know who is present for the program.
- Students who attend other school sponsored extracurricular activities and then come to the After School Care Program (as indicated on their dismissal note) must report to the teachers on duty immediately upon arrival to be signed in. A classroom teacher or supervising adult will escort these students to the program.
- Once a student leaves the St. Thomas Aquinas School premises, they may not return for After School Care.
- Registration/Emergency Forms need to be completed prior to attendance in the program, including the names of people you wish us to contact in case of emergency and people authorized to pick up your child/children.
- If you wish someone to pick up your child, and the name is not on the emergency form, you must write a note and send it to your child's teacher or fax it to the main office. A phone call is not acceptable. This person must have acceptable identification with him/her.
- If there is No School, there is No Before or After School Care Program. If school is dismissed early, there will be No After School Care Program that day.
- When picking up your student:
Please call the phone number for the After School Care Program: 203-255-0556 ext. 300.
A supervising adult will then let you into the building for pickup.

Student Council

Any student serving on the Student Council will exhibit the following qualities:

- **Kindness and compassion** to all – A member of the Student Council will include all of his or her classmates in discussions and decisions for our school. Student Council members know that excluding students is not a behavior that supports our school's mission.
- **Respectfulness** – A member of the Student Council will not be involved in gossip, talking unkindly about others, or ignoring or embarrassing anyone. He or she will show respect to all teachers, staff personnel, and fellow students at St. Thomas Aquinas School, in our church, in our parish, and in our community.
- **Compliance** with all school rules, comply with the uniform code, help keep the school clean, be a responsible member of the parish and the community, and protect the environment.
- **Responsibility** to the school family.
- **Virtues** of honesty, truthfulness and sincerity.

Student Council Officers and the Student Council Representatives will serve as role models. Offices include:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Secretary of Public Relations

All students interested in holding an office must complete an application which includes three teacher signature recommendations and submit it to the teacher moderators.

National Junior Honor Society

The National Junior Honor Society is an organization that promotes recognition for students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of : Scholarship; Character; Leadership; Citizenship; and Service.

Students are invited to provide information to the faculty selection committee to support their candidacy for membership. Invitations are sent to students in the spring of their 7th grade. The activities and grades from the applicants 6th & 7th grade are evaluated. Selection will be guided by the Principal & faculty selection committee.

Students must meet the requirements in each of the five areas. Criteria for each area is listed below:

Scholarship

Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average in each subject, of at least 90% for each of grades 6 and 7.

Leadership

Leadership roles in both school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified. The student who exercises leadership:

- Is resourceful in identifying problems, applying principles, and proposing new solutions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises a positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Exemplifies a positive attitude
- Inspires positive ideas in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Holds school offices or positions of responsibility successfully

Service

The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Is willing to represent the school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
- Participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious groups, volunteer services for the poor, elderly or disadvantaged
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students

Citizenship

The student who demonstrates citizenship:

- Understands the importance of civic involvement
- Has a high regard for freedom, justice, and respect of the American form of government (representative democracy)
- Demonstrates mature participation and responsibility through involvement with such activities as scouting, community organizations, and school clubs

Character

The student who demonstrates character:

- Shows an outstanding record of conduct and behavior with regard to school and community rules, guidelines, and policies
- Shows sufficient growth and improvement to compensate for previous inadequacies
- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows concern, courtesy, and respect for others
- Has self discipline

The Principal notifies the students of their acceptance within one week of the faculty committee's evaluation. An induction ceremony for new members is held in the spring.

Students not accepted into the National Junior Honor Society are informed by the Principal. They are encouraged to resubmit information the following year for consideration if they have successfully addressed the areas in which they were deficient.

Right to Amend

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the school communication system. Check the website for updates and postings.

APPENDIX A

Diocese of Bridgeport Safe Environment Training

VIRTUS PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN **FOR ADULTS**

This is the mandatory 3- hour training required of every person age 18 and over who works or volunteers within the Diocese of Bridgeport. This training teaches adults how to identify early warning signs of child sexual abuse and how to prevent it. Awareness training is required by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young Persons. For more information please visit www.bridgeportdiocese.com under Safe Environments or call (203) 372-4301 Ext. 563.

HOW TO REGISTER?

1. Go online to WWW.VIRTUS.ORG or WWW.VIRTUSONLINE.ORG
2. Click on the yellow link labeled “**REGISTRATION**” in the left hand column
3. Select The Diocese of Bridgeport from the pull-down menu list of organizations by clicking the downward arrow and shading The Diocese of Bridgeport by holding down your mouse button.
4. Create A **USER NAME and PASSWORD** that you can easily remember. This is needed for registering and for continued training online for persons who come into contact with children.
5. Select the location where you work or volunteer, not necessarily where you attend services (if different). If you work or volunteer in multiple locations please select additional locations as needed.
6. Select your role(s) with the Diocese (employee, clergy, volunteer etc).
7. Record your title (Clergy, teacher, D.R.E., Catechist, choir member, parent, employee, or volunteer for example)
8. Other required fields include name and phone number
9. **ENTER YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS –It is REQUIRED**
10. If you do not have an email address, you may obtain a free email account at www.yahoomail.com or www.hotmail.com or any other free email service. Your local library will assist you in setting up an email account.
11. If you have neither Internet Access nor an email address, you may use a co-worker or friend’s internet access to register for the upcoming training. If you are using a library computer or a friend’s computer and you do not have email, you will need to enter noaddress@virtus.org as your email address. This will notify the VIRTUS coordinator that you do not have an email address. Or you may call (203) 372-4301 Ext. 563 to register.
12. Finish filling out the form and click “Submit” at the bottom of the screen. Now on the new screen...
13. Click the button to the left of the class for which you wish to register. If the page indicates that all trainings are
14. full, you will need to contact your VIRTUS Coordinator, Erin Neil (203) 372-4301 Ext. 563. Please carefully
15. read the training details to determine if the training is an open session or reserved for a select group of
16. individuals. Additional Training Opportunities will be posted monthly.
17. 15. Click “Submit Registration” and you have been registered.

You must sign-in at the beginning of your training session and you should receive a certificate of completion from your VIRTUS facilitator. Please provide this certificate to all locations where you work or volunteer in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE REGISTRATION PROCESS YOU MAY CONTACT - Director of Safe Environments & VIRTUS Coordinator to register for your training session. (203) 372-4301 Ext. 563

APPENDIX B

Diocese of Bridgeport Acceptable Use Policy – Internet Safety

October 2002

Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use Including Related Systems, Software, and Networks

By Students and Staff

The Catholic Church understands that technology has opened the world of Cyberspace where not only adults but also our children live and learn.

The Catholic Church understands that technology is an educational tool the rapidity of whose development sometimes outstrips the concerns for its effects. The Internet offers a dizzying array of undifferentiated facts, knowledge and wisdom. It is a place of instantaneous long distance connections and multiple sources of information from newsgroups, to chat rooms, instant messaging, listservs, audio and video conferencing, etc.

New technologies are often seen as good in themselves without consideration of their far-reaching consequences for individual human beings and for humanity as a whole. We must learn to question not only what we are doing but also why and whether we should be doing it.

While it is true that this technology carries with it the potential for unprecedented good it also brings the possibility of incredible risks of which the Church is ever conscious. This understanding is especially critical in light of the Church's responsibility to assist its people in the making of good moral decisions.

With these facts in mind, the Church, nevertheless, also understands that it would not be faithful to its mission should it fail to use telecommunications technology to bring others to Christ. Along with other forms of media, today the Church encourages schools to make wise use of the Internet. In a paper promulgated in February 2002, Archbishop John Foley, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, stated that, "the Internet is relevant to many activities and programs of the Church – evangelization ... catechesis and other kinds of education." The Pastoral Instruction *Communio et Progressio* spoke of the urgent duty of Catholic schools to train communicators and recipients of social communications in relevant Christian principles (n.107). In the age of the Internet, with its enormous outreach and impact, the need is more urgent than ever. The world has become a global village through telecommunication, and, as a result, technology has become increasingly more necessary as a means of spreading the message of Christ. Effective catechesis depends on the wise use of the latest communication's technology, and our teachers must continue to develop themselves in the use of technology not only to advance the cause of academic excellence but also to promote and proclaim the Gospel.

Since as Catholic educators and students in Catholic schools, we are called to follow the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, we willingly agree to comply with the provisions of the ***Acceptable Use Policy*** listed below as an expression of our love of God, neighbor and self.

ARF/jl
10/09/2002

DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

October 2002

Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use Including Related Systems, Software, and Networks

By Students and Staff

I. Office for Education Responsibilities/Rights

1. To create and *Acceptable Use Policy* for the schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport
2. To publish said policy
3. To review it annually
4. To be free from liability for presence of unacceptable materials
5. To comply with State and Federal Regulations
6. To cooperate with authorities in criminal investigations
7. To be free from liability for financial obligation incurred through unauthorized use of system
8. To amend the policy at any time

II. School Responsibilities/Rights

1. To oversee resources including scheduling
2. To place reasonable restrictions on systems and technology
3. To perform routine system maintenance
4. To search individual Internet activity with reasonable suspicion
5. To own all files on school network
6. To be free from liability for presence of unacceptable materials on the school's system
7. To comply with Diocesan, State, Federal Regulations
8. To provide a filtering system in accordance with CIPA, as protection measures
9. To provide opportunities for technological training for staff
10. To cooperate with authorities in investigations of criminal activities
11. To bypass passwords to determine activity
12. To publish student works on its web site
13. To deny student/staff access

III. Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities/Rights

1. To see their child's e-mail file upon request
2. To deny their children Internet access
3. To prevent the use of the children's names and pictures on the Internet by the school

IV. Student Privileges/Expectations/Understandings

1. To use Internet in distance learning
2. To access World Wide Web for educational purposes
3. To have individual e-mail accounts to send and receive e-mail
4. To receive instruction in technology use
5. To have reasonable protection measures
6. E-mail or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential
7. To use Internet to consult experts
8. To communicate with other students
9. To locate information to meet educational needs
10. To have staff assistance to find, use, discriminate among, information services

V. Prohibitions

1. Modifying documents or files without permission
2. Playing unauthorized games
3. Making purchases
4. Conducting commercial or private business
5. Personal use – unrelated to appropriate educational purposes

6. Political lobbying
7. Installing software for personal use
8. Installing school software at home without school permission
9. Altering, interfering with, dismantling, disengaging internet
10. Installing educational software Office for Education permission
11. Installing stand alone (CD/Diskette) without Office for Education approval
12. Illegal activities
13. Accessing knowingly inappropriate material
14. Downloading large files without permission
15. Sending chain letters
16. Spamming
17. Plagiarizing
18. Copyright infringements
19. Profane, obscene language/defamation
20. Accessing and transmitting pornography
21. Accessing information advocating violence or discrimination outside the scope of research under direction of a teacher/supervisor
22. Accessing, modifying, erasing, rename, making usable or unusable another's files or programs
23. Modifying, copying, transferring software provided by school, faculty, another student without permission
24. Aiding or abetting another student in policy violation
25. Introducing or spreading viruses or other harmful programs
26. Divulging passwords

VI. Individual Responsibilities

1. To comply with security measures
2. To report illegal activities
3. To report improper language or unacceptable activities on the Internet
4. To report any damage or tampering with equipment or system
5. To report any violations of privacy

VII. E-Mail Etiquette

1. Be patient
2. Be polite
3. Keep paragraphs short
4. Use "Subject Line"
5. Include signature
6. Capitalize only to highlight important points

ARF/jl

10/09/2002

APPENDIX C

**DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use Including Related Systems, Software, and Networks

I _____ parent/guardian of _____
Parent/Guardian Student

at **St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, Fairfield, CT** have read and understand the ***Acceptable Use Policy*** of Diocese of Bridgeport as to the rights, responsibilities, expectations, understandings, prohibitions, and etiquette as specified in said ***Acceptable Use Policy***. In addition, I agree to allow my child to participate in the technology programs and Internet use under the provisions specified at **St. Thomas Aquinas School, Fairfield, CT**. Furthermore, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the principal of the school if I wish to exercise my right as a parent as specified in **III** of ***Acceptable Use Policy*** of the Diocese of Bridgeport.

_____ *Date* _____

_____ *Date* _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature

TO BE SIGNED ANNUALLY and KEPT ON FILE IN PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

RF/jl

10/09/2002

APPENDIX E



Media Release Form 2016-17

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School and the Diocese of Bridgeport have active marketing programs. Students and their work may appear in school newsletters, newspapers, brochures, videos, websites and official social media pages as well as other promotional material. Such productions may be used for educational or marketing purposes and may be copied or copyrighted with the school retaining any and all rights. Parents and guardians reserve the right to object to the use of their child's image by completing this form and returning it to the school principal.

___ I do **NOT** wish to have my child's image made public and I hereby do **NOT** give consent to Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in the Diocese of Bridgeport and its agents and representatives to take photographs and/or videos of my child while he/she is participating in school –sponsored activities. **This does not include the school yearbook and class photos.**

Child's name: _____

Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

SPORTS - METROPOLITAN BRIDGEPORT CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONFERENCE

Membership

The Principals and students of all Catholic Elementary Schools located in the towns/cities of: Bridgeport, Fairfield, Monroe, Shelton, Stratford, Trumbull, and Wilton are members of the Metropolitan Bridgeport Catholic School Conference. St. Catherine Academy students will be eligible to participate on any Catholic school team at the appropriate developmental level.

The Principals are directly responsible for all Conference rules and regulations which support the policies of the Office for Education of the Diocese of Bridgeport. **(This responsibility may not be delegated to anyone else)**. It is the Principal's responsibility to communicate these rules to all.

Decisions of the Principals, in concert with Diocesan policy, are final. The Principal's signature is required on all league and tournament documents.

Goals

The Metropolitan Bridgeport Catholic School Conference has as its goals to:

- 1) provide students with opportunities to participate in all interscholastic and extra-curricular sports activities which are part of each school's program
- 2) to insure that all participants, including students, coaches, faculty, and parents support the efforts of the conference to reinforce Christian attitudes, good sportsmanship, school spirit, fairness, and a healthy sense of competition.

Diocesan Policy

All members of the Conference will operate in accordance with the stated policies of the Office for Education on Interscholastic Activities and Other Activities.

Rules and Regulations

Academic Requirements

3. Any student receiving a grade below a "C-" in any subject at progress report time or report card time will be declared ineligible to participate in any Conference-sponsored activity until such grade is removed. Students with special needs and/or disabilities will be considered eligible at the discretion of the Principal.
4. Any student participating in any Conference-sponsored activity who fails to complete homework and/or project assignments may be declared ineligible until such assignments are made up. These assignments shall be reviewed by the Principal.

Conduct

2. Students who receive a four (4) in any subject area including Conduct and Effort will be declared ineligible to participate in any Conference-sponsored activity until reinstated by the Principal.
3. Students are ineligible to participate in any conference-sponsored activity including practice sessions on a day in which they are absent from school **for any reason.**
4. Students are expected to show respect to coaches, officials, other students, and spectators at all times.
5. If a player is ejected from a game, he/she will sit out the next conference-sponsored tournament or league game.

Coaching Expectations and Requirements

1. Coaches involved in conference activities are approved by the Principal and are expected to be Christian models for the students and schools they represent.
2. Coaches for all sports teams must meet the following qualifications:
 - a) Acceptance, integration, implementation, and a clear understanding of the school's mission and goals
 - b) Ability to constructively teach all participants, regardless of skill level
 - c) Ability to organize, run, and control practices
 - d) Positive attitude and coaching style
 - e) Good communication skills
 - f) Coaching ability to effectively teach the sport
 - g) Adequate knowledge of the sport
 - h) Ability to provide a safe and physical environment for all
3. No coach may coach alone. The Diocesan Code of Conduct including the "Rule of Two" must be followed at all times. All coaches must have a background check and be Virtus trained prior to the start of the season.
4. Any coach whose behavior and demeanor is not acceptable and such behavior does not enhance the Conference goals, may be dismissed by the Principal. Behaviors which are not conducive to good discipline include:
 - a) Repeated screaming done by a coach or assistant. This is professionally unacceptable.
 - b) Threats of unrealistic punishments
 - c) Repeated warnings with no follow up
 - d) Inconsistent adherence to rules
 - e) Foul language

Basketball Team Eligibility Rules

Members of all Catholic elementary school basketball teams:

1. Must be a full time student in a Catholic school
2. Must not have completed eighth grade

3. Must be under fifteen (15) years of age before September first (1st) of the school year. St. Catherine Academy students may participate as members of Catholic school teams at the appropriate developmental level, regardless of age.
4. Cannot play for a parish team while a member of the school team. Also cannot play for an independent team while a member of the school team when the independent team is participating in the same league as the school team.

Clarifications

1. The Conference recognizes the discretion of the Principal in all decisions rendered.
2. All coaches will submit a listing of the league their teams will participate in, and the tournaments they intend to enter, to the Principal, as soon as possible.
3. Our league complies with all state and local health requirements. Sports physicals are necessary yearly for all players.
4. All players must have a signed permission slip in order to participate.
5. Each team should have a first aid kit at all sports practices and games.
6. All players need to be covered by insurance.
7. The Conference expects that all Conference school teams will participate in a league program that is made up of other Catholic school teams **ONLY unless it is impossible.**
8. Coaches are expected to insure the participation of all team members in all sports games for a minimum of three (3) minutes . This includes all Conference-sponsored activities and tournaments except league playoffs, the Diocesan Basketball Tournament held in March and the New England CYO Basketball Tournament.
9. Each team may participate in three (3) basketball tournaments (4 for host schools). League playoffs, Diocesan and New England Diocesan Tournament games are not considered to be part of the tournaments (3) that a team may enter.
10. A Catholic school basketball team can play in only one league.
11. **Without exception, no games involving Conference teams will be held before 12:00 noon on Sundays. School night games (including Sunday night games) may not be scheduled to begin after 7:30 PM. This includes tournaments.**
12. An individual need not have a child on a conference team to serve as a coach.

Approved. October 12, 2007

Traffic Pattern for Car Pick Up

