Saint Thomas Aquinas
Regional Catholic High School
Hammond, Louisiana

Student / Parent Handbook
2026-2027

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Saint Thomas Aquinas does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission processes, extracurricular activities, or other school related activities.

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FOREWORD

According to Admissions Requirements set down by the Diocese of Baton Rouge (*Diocesan Policy 4.3.2*), **"Parents who seek a Catholic education for their child/children enter into a contractual agreement between the school and the parent/guardian and/or the rules of the school covering all areas of the student's development as stated in the school's philosophy. As part of the contractual agreement there are explicit (expressed) and implicit (implied) expectations placed on both parent and administration. These rules and regulations are included in the parent/student handbook and school communications."**

According to Diocesan Policy 5.8.1, "Catholic schools operate under contract law. The handbook is the printed contract between the parents of minor students and the school or between the adult student and the school. It is required that the parents/guardians and their child sign a statement that they and their child have read the handbook and agree to abide by its policies, rules, and regulations set forth therein. By signing this statement, parents and students agree to be governed by the rules and regulations stated in the handbook." Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student and/or his/her parent/guardian may result in administrative action up to the student's removal from the school.

In developing the rules and policies for Saint Thomas Aquinas, the administration has tried to anticipate as many circumstances and problems as possible. As new and unusual situations arise, the **principal will have the authority to use his/her discretion in whatever circumstances the handbook rules do not precisely address. The principal also reserves the right to amend the handbook, if he/she feels it is necessary.**

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS ADMINISTRATION

Principal:	**Mr. Will Johnson**
Assistant Principal / Dean of Students	**Mr. Aaron Lips**
Academic Coordinator:	**Mr. Mike Miller**
Advancement Director:	**Ms. Jammie Dowden**
Technology Director:	**Mr. Joshua Wittie** (Contact for Technology Issues)
Athletic Director:	**Mr. Josh Wittie** (Contact for Athletic Issues)
Assistant Athletic Director:	**Mr. Raymone Andrews**

Campus Minister: **Ms. Michelle Bates**
Counselor: **Mrs. Mary Guin, LMSW**
Business Manager: **Mrs. Brandi Cambre** (Contact for Financial Issues)

Mission Statement

Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School is a diocesan co-educational school shaped by Christ-centered values and the Dominican tradition of Truth. Our mission is to teach Gospel values in an environment of academic excellence that fosters the development of the whole person in a Catholic-Christian community.

Statement of Philosophy

Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School (STA) is a regional, co-educational Catholic high school serving a wide geographic area and a diverse population of varying socio-economic backgrounds, academic achievements and religious traditions. Located in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Saint Thomas Aquinas carries on the educational mission of the Catholic Church in the Dominican tradition of Truth: Veritas.

In the spirit of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the patron saint of students, we pursue truth through study and strive for academic excellence. Our college preparatory curriculum offers a variety of courses designed to meet the varying needs of every student. Curricular and extracurricular activities challenge and guide students in their spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional, social, and physical development. Saint Thomas Aquinas offers students opportunities to learn life skills needed for the present and the future, including Christian living, leadership, critical thinking, oral and written communication, decision making, and conflict resolution.

The STA experience involves interaction with dedicated parents and professional educators. This community provides a nurturing, faith-filled environment to support our students in living a life rooted in Gospel values.

Saint Thomas Aquinas

Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) has been called “the most Saintly of the learned and the most learned of the Saints.” The youngest son of an Italian nobleman, he joined the Order of Saint Dominic over the protest of his family. As a student he received the highest degree awarded by the University of Paris. His major work, “Summa Theologica,” is still the basis of much of the Roman Catholic doctrine. Thomas was known for his compassion and kindness and his availability to the sick and those in need. In paintings, he is generally represented in the Dominican habit and carries a book,

symbolizing his great learning. His crest includes the ox, for which he was nicknamed; the sun, which appears on his chest; and the chalice which represents his writings on the Eucharist.

The History of Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School

STA became a reality after years of hard work and planning by many who remained dedicated to fulfilling the promise for quality Catholic education in Tangipahoa Parish and southeast Louisiana. What began as a small regional concept quickly expanded into a multi-purpose facility located on a 30+ acre tract north of Hammond. The support and cooperation of a large group of community leaders and church officials, including Bishop Stanley Ott of Baton Rouge and Fr. Mark Leuer, OP, and families, were secured to render the undertaking of STA's ambitious beginning.

Staffed by the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois and lay men and women, Saint Thomas Aquinas opened its doors in 1986 with a freshman class of 35. Today the school has an enrollment of more than 350 young men and women.

The award-winning STA plant consists of modern and well-equipped classrooms, laboratories and administrative offices designed by the local firm of Holly and Smith. A new classroom building, designed by the local firm of Gasaway Bankston, was added in 2015 featuring eight classrooms, two laboratories, and guidance offices.

The school gymnasium includes a weight room, training room and coaches' offices. Soccer, softball, baseball, and football fields and an all-weather track round out the athletic facilities.

Springfield, Illinois Dominican Sisters

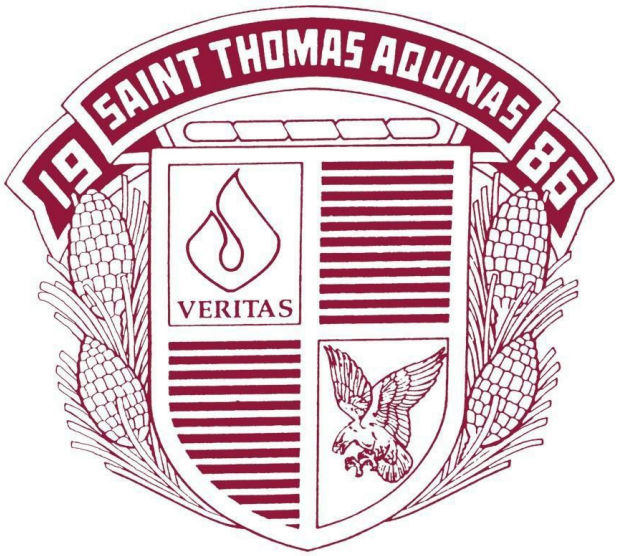
The Springfield Dominican Sisters trace their historical and spiritual roots back to Caleruega, Spain. It was there that Saint Dominic, founder of the Dominican Order, was born in the thirteenth century. The first congregation of U.S. Dominican sisters was founded in Sienna Vale, Kentucky in 1822.

In 1873 six sisters from the convent of Saint Catherine of Siena, founded in Springfield, Kentucky, were sent to Jacksonville, Illinois to start a school. Courageously and joyfully, they undertook what was to become a familiar pilgrimage: the move from a secure and cherished home to a new and unknown place of ministry. With this move, a new foundation was established. In 1893, because of growing numbers, the Jacksonville community, its foundress still living, moved its Motherhouse to Springfield, Illinois. In 1905 the Dominican identity which they lived was sealed by an official affiliation to the Order of Preachers, and they became a Papal Institution.

Over the next decades the Congregation grew in number and in its works of service: teachers and administrators in schools and diocesan offices, administrators and health care professionals in hospitals and clinics, pastoral associates and Directors of Religious Education in parishes, employees in various positions in diocesan offices, missionaries, to name a few.

In 1986, the Springfield Dominican Sisters were invited to staff a new diocesan, regional Catholic high school in Hammond, Louisiana. The original group consisted of Sr. M. Roselle, principal, and Sr. M. Antoinette and Sr. Patricia Burke, teachers.

The Shield



The **Shield** is surrounded by a mantling of **pinecones**. The pine is an emblem of courage, resolution, and good fortune. It also represents the Tangipahoa Parish area.

The date, **1986**, is the year that Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School opened its doors to the first students.

The **bandeau**, above the Shield, consists of six twists of black (sable) and white (argent). These colors represent the Dominican Order.

Dividing the Shield into four quadrants is a **cross**, which is significant for Christians. It was by dying on the cross that Jesus redeemed us.

Within the Shield in the upper left quadrant is the **Flame** and the Latin word **Veritas**, which means Truth. Truth is the motto of the Dominican Order. The Flame and the motto are the Dominican commitment to preach the Gospel as exemplified by St. Dominic, who burned with a passion for Veritas, the Truth of God's love made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. The flame of this passion and the Truth of God's Word and love ignite the mission of the faculty, staff, and students of STA.

The lower right quadrant holds the **Falcon**, the school's mascot. In Renaissance art, the falcon, which represents a holy person, or one converted to the Christian faith, is often held by a page in the company of the Magi, who were seeking the newborn Christ.

The other quadrants, filled with black and white, represent the shield of the Dominican Order. These colors have been their symbol for eight centuries.

Profile of a Saint Thomas Aquinas Graduate

An STA graduate is a person with a
strong understanding of Catholic Christian doctrine
and a strong commitment to Gospel values.
Prayer is a part of the daily life of an STA graduate.

An STA graduate exhibits integrity and
honesty, exemplifies high moral and ethical
standards and respects the uniqueness of
each person
and the sacredness of creation.

An STA graduate takes responsibility for personal actions
and commitment and becomes
a respectful disciple, family member and citizen.

An STA graduate lives a spiritually, physically, intellectually
and socially balanced life and values growth.
A thirst for knowledge, critical
thinking, effective communication
and
self-discipline are attributes of an STA graduate.

An STA graduate is a confident and contributing
member of school and church communities, society and
our world.

An STA graduate treasures learning, strives for
excellence and holds truth as an ideal.

ADMISSIONS POLICIES

Diocese of Baton Rouge Statement of Policy: The schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. They do not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Additionally, in compliance with Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, no person in the schools of the Diocese shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity except as permitted under said Title IX.

Finally, the schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, have adopted and will implement the imperatives of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act as amended, and will inform parents and students of their rights under this amendment to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This policy applies to Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School.

Collection Policy Guidelines: It is the goal of STA to work with each family to provide a Catholic education for their children. We understand that many families are sacrificing to invest in their child(ren)'s education. The financial health of STA depends on the prompt and full payment of tuition and other fees. The STA budget is based on a stable and predictable cash flow to operate the school. It is important that there is open and honest communication about timely tuition payments. A tuition payment plan will be set up with STA when submitting student's enrollment packet. Please contact the STA school office to request further information. Enrollment in an STA approved tuition payment plan requires that all payments be made timely and when due. The failure to make timely payments under a tuition payment plan negatively affects funds received by STA necessary to operate the school.

Each family must have paid all fees and either have paid tuition in full for each student or be enrolled in an STA approved tuition plan for the coming school year by the posted deadline. For students accepted late, fees and tuition must be paid in full or enrollment in an STA approved tuition plan must be completed within fifteen (15) days after acceptance. If you are enrolled in an STA approved tuition payment plan and you are unable to meet a tuition payment, it is your responsibility to contact the STA Business Manager to advise of the delinquency. A tuition payment is in default if it remains unpaid for more than thirty (30) days. STA is willing to work with you if you contact us before a tuition payment comes into default. Students of families whose tuition payments are in default will not be allowed to (A) register for the next school year, (B) participate in graduation, (C) attend Prom and other school sponsored social activities, (D) take final or mid-term exams, (E) participate in athletic extra-curricular activities, and (F) are subject to suspension and expulsion from STA. If you

are in default, you will receive notice of default. If the default remains unsatisfied for fifteen (15) days after notice, your child(ren) will be immediately suspended from school. If the default remains unsatisfied for five (5) days thereafter, your child(ren) will be immediately withdrawn (expelled) from school and all tuition and other fees previously paid will be forfeited.

Collection and Legal Action: If it is necessary for STA to hire an attorney to enforce payment of tuition and any other fees due to STA, the family will be responsible for all attorney fees and costs incurred in the collection effort, including the costs and attorney fees to file suit.

Tuition Assistance Policy: Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School is committed to enrolling students from diverse economic, ethnic, racial, and social backgrounds. The school attempts to select the most qualified students for admission based on each applicant's academic abilities, personal qualities, and potential to contribute to the life of the school community. STA strives to make such admissions selections independent of a family's ability to meet the full cost of a Catholic education. As part of that commitment, the school has established a program of Tuition Assistance for families who would otherwise be unable to consider STA. The school's philosophy regarding Tuition Assistance is that it be based on financial need. As such, the financial aid program enables the school to attract well-qualified students who represent the socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic diversity of the local community.

It is difficult to predict whether a family will qualify for Tuition Assistance since individual circumstances vary so widely, and the overall demand varies from year to year. The following information may help you decide whether to apply for Tuition Assistance.

Intended as a supplement to family resources, awards are made to families whose ability to pay school costs are extremely limited and to those that may need only a minor subsidy to meet tuition requirements. Because there is more need than there are school funds available, the Committee will consider all reasonable means of spreading the available funds among the most qualified recipients.

Tuition assistance at STA serves a two-fold purpose:

1. To provide deserving students the opportunity of a high quality, Catholic education that otherwise might be unobtainable for them, and
2. To provide the school with a well-qualified student body reflecting a broad social and economic mix of the surrounding region.

Thus, it is essential that ability to pay the full tuition is not the deciding factor in determining whether a promising young person may attend the school.

SELECTION PROCESS

All supporting documents and records must be received by STA **BEFORE** an official acceptance offer

can be issued.

Registered students qualifying based on financial need outnumber those the school can afford to assist. Therefore, St. Thomas Aquinas does not fully fund 100% of any student's tuition. Each family will need to contribute a portion of the cost of educating their child.

Decisions must be made to determine the allocation of available funds. The final distribution among applicants demonstrating such need and completing the application process within the time frame allotted will be based on an evaluation that considers the following:

1. Is the applicant a practicing Catholic?
2. The student's Academic record
3. Is the student presently enrolled at STA?
4. Does the student have a sibling enrolled at STA?
5. Is the student transferring from another Catholic school?

All decisions of STA's Tuition Assistance Committee, as approved by the school's Principal, shall be final, subject only to the appeal process set forth below. Everyone interested in attending STA, without the full financial means for doing so, is encouraged to apply for Tuition Assistance regardless of whether they meet all, some, or none of the criteria set forth above.

Transfer Students: Students in good standing from another school will be considered for transfer admission after the following has been accomplished:

1. A conference with the Admissions Director, parents, and student has been held to discuss the goals, religious mission, and expectations of the school.
2. If requested, parents have provided a written statement indicating their reasons for seeking enrollment for their child at STA.
3. Previous educational records have been supplied to the school including, if available and applicable: current grade transcript or report card, most recent standardized testing results, Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Service Plan, etc.
4. Transfer students are responsible for providing transcripts and report cards from previous schools.
5. If appropriate records are not available or if there are other educational concerns, the principal may require entrance testing of the student and direct consultation with the previous school to determine appropriate educational placement before admission is granted.
6. Updated Immunization Records have been received.
7. STA supports the disciplinary decisions of other schools. Therefore, a student expelled from another private or public school may not be considered for enrollment until one year after the expulsion date and then only at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

New Student Provisionary Status: All new students are enrolled on a provisionary basis for their first quarter of enrollment.

Withdrawal and Dismissal: The $450 registration/enrollment fee and any incidental charges are nonrefundable. **Tuition will be prorated through the student's last official day if withdrawn before the beginning of the 2nd semester. After the 2nd semester has begun, all tuition is forfeited.**

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

An integral part of the overall philosophy and focus of STA includes fostering the spiritual dimension of the students and staff. This important mission is the goal of the Campus Ministry Department. By supporting parents in their role as Christian educators, assisting established programs of local church parishes, and extending the religion lessons of the classroom to lived faith experiences, STA Campus Ministry strives to involve students in the mission of Jesus Christ and His church.

Student Ministry Team: The Student Ministry Team, led by the Director of Campus Ministry, sponsors events and activities to enhance spiritual growth and development in the school. Through liturgies, presentations, retreats, faith-sharing service opportunities, and response to justice and peace issues, the Student Ministry Team invites students and staff to utilize their God-given talents and abilities to ensure that Gospel values are practiced. The Student Ministry Team consists of students who are selected and trained by the Campus Minister.

Retreat Programs: Retreats are a vital part of the spiritual growth of the students of STA. These days afford students the opportunity to come together outside the structure of a classroom to spend quality time focusing on their relationships with classmates and God. All students are required to attend the class retreats. All students attend a one-day off campus retreat; in addition, seniors attend an overnight off campus retreat.

- Participation in senior class retreat is mandatory for graduation except in extreme circumstances approved in advance by administration. (Death in the family, severe injury, etc.)
- Participation in underclass retreats is a mandatory part of the Theology curriculum.
- Participation in class Beautification Days is a mandatory part of the Theology curriculum.
- The consequence for missing a retreat will be completing a Saturday service day (6 hours) with the Campus Ministry Department. Exceptions may be made only through the discretion of the principal.
- Students are also encouraged to participate in other retreat programs offered by the Diocese and church parishes.

Christian Service Program: One of the main goals of Catholic education is to bring young

people to an understanding of their responsibility to serve others just as Jesus did. Each grade level has a specific number of service hours in the areas of church, school, and community that are required to pass Theology that year. These hours must be documented by a supervisor. The service program, school supervised activities and program sites are coordinated through the Campus Ministry office. Student service records become a part of the student's permanent record. In addition to individual service hours, seniors will participate in a class service project which will be held during school hours. Participation in the class service project is a mandatory part of the Theology curriculum. The Campus Ministry Department also offers the opportunity to attend the National March for Life in Washington D.C. No portion of this trip is refundable due to a student's violation of the academic or discipline standards explained in the trip contract. ****Additional information can be found in the Service Hour Manual posted on the school website**.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

STA strives to maintain an atmosphere conducive to academic achievement. The staff is willing to help each student meet success. Students are expected to work to the best of their ability, and to maintain standards of academic honesty.

Assignments are given to assist the students' learning processes in each subject area. Students are expected to complete assignments on time and to develop an effective pattern of study. If a student fails to submit an assignment, the teacher may schedule a required session after school for the student to complete the work and/or penalize the grade.

Repeated failure to do homework may result in loss of credit for the course. Parents are expected to monitor their student's progress through utilizing RenWeb on a regular basis.

Scheduling: STA has a schedule consisting of 7 classes per year. All classes will meet each day on a rotating basis.

Grading System: Final achievement marks are given in letters corresponding to the following percentages:

GRADE	NUMERICAL PERCENT	Grading Scale
A	90 – 100	4.0
B	89 - 80	3.0
C	79 - 70	2.0
D	69 - 60	1.0
F	Below 60	0.0
I	Incomplete	

Grades are determined based on all the work of a particular period including daily work, assignments, class participation, quizzes, and test grade. Final grades are determined using the following values: **Q1 20%, Q2 20%, Mid-Term Exam 10%, Q3 20%, Q4 20%, Final Exam 10%.**

Midterm Exams/Final Exams/Averages: If the overall average of a student's course is at least 60%, the student has passed the course.

Exemption from Final Examinations: Students who have received a final quarter grade of an "A" for each of the 4 quarters and an "A" on their mid-term exam, will have the opportunity to be exempt from their final exam. Please note that choosing to be exempt from an exam may affect the students final G.P.A. For that reason, any student who would like to take their final exam has the option to do so. Seniors may be exempt from their First Semester Exam with an A in both 1st and 2nd Quarter. Teachers have the final discretion in whether to allow for exam exemptions or not.

Theology Courses and Service Hours: If a student in any grade fails a Theology course, he/she may be required to successfully complete the course at STA the following summer, at the parents' expense, to be eligible to return to STA. Seniors may not receive diplomas until Theology IV is successfully completed. Service hours must be completed to pass any Theology course.

Advanced Placement and Honors Courses: Students taking Advanced Placement courses receive a weighted grade of 1.50 for each course. The student's total numerical average for a class is multiplied by 1.50 and used to figure their overall cumulative average. Honors courses (including dual enrollment) receive a weighted grade of 1.25. This weighting is used only for determining Top 10, Valedictorian, and Salutatorian at the end of the senior year. *Cumulative average and GPA are not the same thing.* Reporting of cumulative GPA for colleges, universities, scholarships, or placement in advanced classes is based on the unweighted GPA as indicated on the grade report every nine weeks. In May, students in Advanced Placement courses will be required to take the AP exam, which is their financial responsibility. To be eligible to receive college credit for Advanced Placement courses, students must pass the AP exam with the score required by the university they will be attending. **Admission into AP and Honors courses is determined by each department. All departments use objective criteria, such as standardized test scores and grades in required courses to determine admission eligibility. All students in AP courses will be required to pay a $100 non-refundable fee, due to STA by February 13, 2026.**
For transfer students who have been at STA for a minimum of two years and are eligible to be in the top 10, they will receive Honors/AP credit for all Honors or AP courses completed at their transfer school that are currently offered as Honors or AP courses at STA.

Class Rank: Class rank is used for determining the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and the Top 10 students at the end of their senior year. Ranking is based on the high school cumulative average, not GPA. Students in the Top 10 will be notified after the completion of the 4th Quarter and all tests/assignments are completed. Only Valedictorian and Salutitorian will receive their rank.

Criteria for Salutatorian/Valedictorian: Determined by the top two students' cumulative averages based on weighted percentages of final grades, using honors and AP weights for junior and senior level honors courses. Student must have attended Saint Thomas

Aquinas for four full years. If there is a tie, those tied will share the position. The Top 10 is also determined by the same criteria; however, students only must attend Saint Thomas Aquinas for two years.

Unofficial transcripts will be available one time at the beginning of senior year during Senior Night, to be used for college and/or scholarship applications.

Awards for Nine Week Grades: **Principal's List** is awarded at each nine-week grading period to students who have grades of "A" only. **Honor Roll** is recognized for students whose nine-week grades are "As" and "Bs".

Eligibility for Participation in Sports or Extracurricular Clubs or Groups:

The following rules pertain to students who are eligible to participate in sports that dismiss during the school day.

Per the LHSAA, STA Student Athletes participating in Fall Sports (*football, volleyball, cross country, swimming)* must have a 1.5 GPA for the preceding spring semester ending in May. STA Student Athletes participating in Winter and Spring Sports *(indoor track and field, outdoor track & field, boys' and girls' soccer, boys' and girls' basketball, baseball, softball, power lifting, golf, tennis)* must have a 1.5 GPA for the semester ending in December.

Additionally, at the end of the fall semester, LHSAA eligibility requires that a student not be failing more than one subject.

An athlete failing any subject that a sport's early dismissal requires them to miss will not be released from that class until the grade book shows a passing grade. Should the grade drop to failing again, he/she will not be released.

This does not render the student ineligible; he/she shall not be released from classes he/she is currently failing in order to attend an athletic event. He/she shall be released early only from classes he/she is passing.

Academic Probation: Students who receive one or more "F" at the end of a semester are put on Academic Probation. Notification is sent to the parents. At the end of the next semester, a student may be removed from probationary status, may have the probation extended, or be dismissed from STA. If a student fails two (2) or more credits during a school year, the student may not be allowed to return the following year.

In Season Athletic Participation: Students may not have more than one F in any classes to participate in practices and/or games during any given week. Exceptions include missed assignments for excused absences that **must be verified by the coach with the teacher BEFORE the student may participate in practice or games.**

Academic Credit Recovery: If a student fails a course during the year, they will need to

attend an academic credit recovery course during the summer through a recovery program offered by the Tangipahoa School System or another approved agency. The cost of the recovery course is the responsibility of the parent and is not included in tuition. Students are eligible for credit recovery one time with a maximum of two courses. Continued failure of classes may lead to re-evaluation of enrollment status.

Graduation: No student will be allowed to graduate without completing eight semesters of course work and service hour requirements. All financial accounts must be settled before May 1, and all previously issued detentions must be served. Failure to do so will exclude the senior from participation in graduation ceremonies. All seniors are required to attend the Baccalaureate Mass, or they will not be allowed to participate in the Commencement exercises.

ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS

State law requires that a student attend a specific number of days of class per semester to receive credit for courses. A student who misses more than ten (10) days per semester in any class, whether the absence is deemed excused or unexcused, may not be eligible to receive credit in that class. Students will be expected to make up the class time missed (over 10) in order to receive credit at a time designated by the school**.** Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the principal in a case such as serious extended illness as verified by a physician.

Medical: In the case of illness, a parent or guardian is to notify the school office before 8:00
a.m. Upon return after an absence, a written note signed by the student's parent or guardian is to be presented to the school office before 7:45 a.m. the day of the student's return. The office will issue a form which the student will use to be admitted to class. If a student fails to submit a note within two days of returning from an absence, the absence will be considered unexcused. Repeated and/or extended absences *(of three or more days)* require a written doctor's excuse for the absence to be excused.

If a student becomes ill during a school day, she/he should report to the office. The office will notify the parent. **The student may not contact his/her parent via cell phone during the school day.**

STA and LHSAA (Louisiana High School Athletic Association) Policies for Absence: If a student is absent, he/she may not attend any school function that evening without permission of the principal. If a student is absent on Friday, the same is true for any weekend events. This includes athletes participating in athletic events. A student must be in attendance for the full day of any extra-curricular tryout.

ALTHOUGH the LHSAA (Louisiana High School Athletic Association) policy states that "a student shall attend school at least one hour prior to release time in order to be released to participate in a contest," STA policy states that "a student must be present for a minimum of four (4) full class periods to participate in a contest/practice/tryout/extracurricular activity."

to participate in a contest/practice/extracurricular activity.

Homework Policy: Homework assignments provide the student with an opportunity to review class work, reinforce skills already taught, and supplement learning. Parents should make every effort to ensure homework is being completed. Homework Assignments will be available on Ren-Web. Students are expected to complete and return assignments according to the teacher's requirement. Failure to turn in homework will result in a "0" for that homework assignment.

Make-Up Work: All assigned work and tests announced prior to a student's absence are required to be made up the day the student returns. If a student is absent, whether the absence is deemed excused or unexcused, the day a test is given, the student will be responsible to take that test the day they return. No make-up tests will be given during class time to minimize missed class time. The student will be expected to contact their teacher, via email, prior to their return to schedule a time, either before or after school, to take the test the day they return. Exceptions may be made if the student has missed new material presented while he/she was absent. Students will be allowed the number of days missed to make up missed assignments that were given during the student's absence (i.e.: major projects, essays, lab reports, etc. This does not include homework or daily assignments.) Once a teacher has reviewed the correct answers to a given assignment, the assignment should still be completed by the student; however, credit for that assignment will not be given.

Late Work/Missing Assignments: **Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in a 25% loss of points** per school day **until the assignment is turned in. On the fourth day, the grade will be a 0.**

Foreseen Absences: If an absence is anticipated, the front office should be consulted one week in advance by means of a note from the parent/guardian containing a request and an explanation of the upcoming absence. Once the request is received, the Office will give a "Foreseen Absence Form" to the student, which is to be signed by the student's teachers. The student should then get his/her parent's signature and turn in the completed form to the front office prior to the absence. Failure to follow this procedure may result in a grade of "0" for work missed and will be responsible for making up all schoolwork. Teachers may request that long term assignments be handed in prior to the student's departure.

Students, who are not exempt, must be present for exams at the end of each semester. Extenuating circumstances must be discussed with the principal. Arrangements may not be made with teachers. **No student may take an exam early without approval from the principal**.

Check Out Policy: **The ONLY approved ways of checking out a student is through School Pass. ABSOLUTELY NO PHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED – NO EXCEPTIONS. This includes**

students who are 18 years of age or older. No student will be allowed to check out after 2:00PM without prior permission from an administrator. The cut off to enter check out in School Pass is 1:00PM.

College Days: **Juniors and Seniors** who visit a college during school time may be allowed a college day at the discretion of the Counselor and/or Principal. Verification of your visit is required. ***Students requesting a college day are to complete the College Day form located in the Counsel front office.***

Tardy Policy: Students are expected to be in their desks ready to work when the second morning bell rings for class. Students late for school are to report to the office. **Any unexcused tardy for first period will receive a detention.** Checking in after first period without a valid excuse will result in a detention. **Failure to report to a scheduled detention on may result in an immediate Suspension.** If a student is tardy for school because a parent continually brings him/her to school late and with no valid reason, the Dean of Students will require a conference with the parent. Continual tardiness puts the student in danger of losing credit for classes missed. Students who are late for a class will first be given a warning by that teacher. On the 2nd tardy in that class, the teacher will email the parent/guardian and on the 3rd tardy in that class, the student will be issued a detention.

Truancy: Truancy is being absent from school, leaving campus, or being absent from class without permission. In case of truancy, the student's parents are notified. The student receives no credit for work missed because of truancy. A student who is truant from a single class or a full day of school will receive a full day of Suspension. Truancy is indicated on the student's record, and the student is placed on disciplinary probation. If the student is truant a second time, he/she may be dismissed from STA. Repeated absences during Mass will result in disciplinary action.

Unexcused Absence: An unexcused absence is one in which the student is absent without an approved reason or simply as a matter of convenience (i.e., out-of-town trips, work, hair appointments, non-school-related practices, etc.). The student can receive no more than 50% of the credit of assignments missed during the absence. If no doctor's excuse or note from the parent explaining the absence is submitted within two (2) days of the absence, the absence is considered unexcused.

UNIFORM AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Dress Code: STA administration, faculty, and staff consider the dress code an important part of the discipline of the school, but also an important training ground for career readiness. STA

students should take pride in their appearance and be appropriately dressed during the school day and at school events. It is the responsibility of the parent to assure that all uniforms meet the uniform requirements at the time of purchase. Final decision as to whether something is appropriate is made by the administration. Uniform violations will result in a school detention.

ID BADGES

ID/Key cards must be worn on a lanyard and be visible at all times (outside of the shirt or outerwear). Students may only use the STA lanyard or a solid black, white, maroon, or grey lanyard. A student not wearing their school ID will be issued two warnings prior to receiving a detention on the third offense. There is a $20 fee to replace a lost ID.

BOYS' UNIFORM

Pants – Official grey slacks of poly-blend fabric from uniform supplier (Old School, School Time or Inka's. **NO OTHER GREY PANTS WILL BE ALLOWED**).

Dress Shirt for Mass and Special Events – Long-sleeve white oxford shirt with crest from uniform supplier, along with the school approved sweater vest, must be worn with tie **(throughout the day)** and collar and sleeve buttons fastened (during Mass). Please note that the sweater vest and white shirt must BOTH have the school crest. Long-sleeve white oxford shirts can be worn on any day in place of the polo style shirt. Shirts MUST be large enough to button the top button.
Tie – Official school tie, purchased from the school for $20, must be worn with dress shirt on all Mass and special event days. **HOODIES MAY NOT BE WORN WITH MASS DRESS.**

Casual Shirt – Official short sleeve white, Polo-style shirt with maroon crest worn on days other than Mass or special events, shirt tail must be long enough to easily keep tucked.

Undershirts - Solid white short-sleeve t-shirt (shirts must not have writing on them).

Belts – **Solid black ONLY.**

Socks – Solid black crew socks **with or without STA on them. Approved athletic team crew socks are OK. NO ANKLE SOCKS.**

Shoes – Solid black leather lace up dress shoe with black soles. Example: Plainview by E Eastland or Dr. Scholl's Black lace-up dress shoe. **Any black tennis shoe or casual shoe is NOT acceptable.** Shoes with shoelaces must be properly tied. LOAFERS OR

SLIP-ONS
ARE NOT ALLOWED.

Outerwear – The only acceptable outerwear is the school approved sweatshirt, the school approved pullover jacket or a Letterman jackets. Both the sweatshirt and jackets are available at the Old School. NO OTHER OUTERWEAR IS ALLOWED.
Students may not wear outerwear to Mass.

GIRLS' UNIFORM:

Skirt – Uniform skirt worn at natural waist and fully zipped and buttoned. Hemline of skirt must reach the top of the knee. Skirt length in the back must be equal to skirt length in front. Students are not allowed to roll skirts at waist. Suggestion: When purchasing skirts, make sure they have large hems so that it can be let out as needed.

Shorts – Shorts **must** be worn under skirt but must be short enough not to be seen.

Casual Blouse – Official short or long-sleeve white blouse with maroon crest and collar buttons buttoned; shirttail long enough to easily keep tucked. ALL BUTTONS MUST BE FASTENED EXCEPT FOR THE VERY TOP COLLAR BUTTON.

Undergarments – Girls' undergarments should be white or skin-tone and must not be visible under the school shirt. No writing on any undergarment is allowed.

Dress Blouse for Mass and Special Events – Long-sleeve white oxford shirt from uniform supplier, along with school approved sweater vest, must be worn with tie **(throughout the day)** and collar and sleeve buttons fastened (during Mass). Please note that the sweater vest and white shirt must BOTH have the school crest. Long-sleeve white oxford shirts can be worn on any day in place of the white blouse. The shirt must be large enough to button the top button.
Tie – Official school tie, purchased from school for $20, must be worn with dress shirt on all Mass and special event days.

Undershirts - Solid white, short sleeve t-shirt or solid white tank top if desired. (SHIRTS MUST NOT HAVE WRITING ON THEM)

Sweater – Cardigan or pullover in official solid maroon

Socks – sock with the STA logo is the only approved sock (available at The Old School).

Tights – Solid black or grey with heavy weave for cold days

Shoes – Black and white saddle oxford. Example: Jumping Jack Pompom or

Cheerleader
saddle oxford (Available at Perrone's, Payless.com, and Old School.)

Outerwear - In the event of extremely cold weather, students will be permitted to wear a solid color heavy coat while outside moving from building to building. Once inside the classroom, the coat should be removed. Students may wear a hoodie purchased from the spirit store or an authorized merchant of St. Thomas apparel. **Students may not wear more than one sweatshirt or jacket at a time in class. Students MAY NOT wear a hoodie underneath another sweatshirt.** Students may not wear the hood on their heads in any building at any time. Students who wear their hood inside will have to remove their sweatshirt and may retrieve the sweatshirt from the Dean of Students at the end of the day. Multiple infractions of this policy will result in detentions.
Hoodies **MAY NOT** be worn with Mass dress.

General Requirements for Boys: Shirts must always be tucked in (belt visible). Chain wallets, earrings, and posts are not allowed. Body piercing of any type is unacceptable. Tattoos may not be visible at any school function or event. Boys may not wear earrings at any time to school or at school functions.

General Requirements for Girls: Blouses must be modestly buttoned (only the TOP button can always be unfastened) and tucked in (waist band visible). Body piercing of any type other than the ear lobe is unacceptable. Tattoos which are visible at any time are not allowed. Sweaters or sweatshirts may not be worn around the waist.

Grooming for Boys: Hair must be of moderate length in the front, back, top and sides. **Hair may not be longer in front than the eyebrows, not over the ears, and may not touch the shirt collar**. **Hair may not be tucked behind the ear. NO ponytails, buns, or mullets are allowed.** Hair must always be clean and neat. Layered hair, shaving, or carving into the natural hair line, dyed, or tinted hair, plaited hair, shaved heads, and other cuts considered by the administration as extreme are not acceptable. **NO LINES, CUTOUTS, DESIGNS, ETC. ARE PERMITTED**. Adding gel substances to the hair to disguise the length will not be allowed. Boys must be clean-shaven, male students not incompliance will be required to shave at school and pay a $2 supply fee. Sideburns should not extend below the bottom of the ear lobe. **Students who do not adhere to the hair guidelines will serve detention the following day and every day until the situation is resolved.** Students who have not reported to school clean-shaven will be required to shave and issued a disciplinary consequence. Students who are not in compliance with the hair policy will not be allowed to attend class until their hair is within dress code and the absence will be unexcused.

Grooming for Girls: Hair should be clean, neat and properly combed. Hair that is excessively dyed, tinted, or not a natural hair color is not acceptable. No dyed or tinted streaks are permitted other than natural hair highlights. **Students who do not adhere to the hair guidelines will serve detention the following day and every day until the situation is resolved.** Makeup should be moderate and in good

taste. Girls are not allowed to have any brightly colored fingernails, fingernail designs, and/or excessively long fingernails (determined by administration.) Fingernails may be natural pink/nude colors and French tip is also acceptable. Students not in compliance will receive a detention and accompanying detention fee each day the fingernails are not in compliance. *

*The exception is for the one week before and after Homecoming and Prom. Females will be allowed to have the nail design of their choice; however, it is the students' responsibility to plan for the removal of the fingernails prior to returning to school the following week.

Jewelry: All jewelry should be simple and discreet. A student may wear one gold or silver necklace with or without a religious medal, or a student may wear an appropriate necklace or symbol that is representative of a Catholic/Christian retreat or camp experience. Multiple necklaces are not allowed. Girls may not wear large or dangling earrings. Girls may wear a matching pair of earrings in each ear lobe. A second matching pair may be worn in each lobe. No more than two pairs, per lobe, may be worn.

Shoes: Only the uniform dress shoe is allowed. Shoelaces must always be properly laced and tied. Any shoes that are collapsed at the heel, defaced, or are in poor condition (no tongues, shoelaces, etc.) must be replaced.

Hats: Hats of any type are not allowed to be worn during the school day.

Physical Education Uniform: All students who are enrolled in P.E. I., P.E. II, or Strength and Conditioning are required to wear the approved P. E. uniform. The uniform must be purchased through the school website. During cold weather, if class is outside, students may wear sweatpants or wind pants (BLACK, GREY, OR MAROON ONLY) in place of the shorts. Only the schools approved outerwear may be worn outside.

Out of Uniform Days: On special days, students will be permitted to come to school in "basic-colored" JEANS, an STA SHIRT, and a closed-toe/heel shoe. The days will be announced, and guidelines stated. The T-shirt must be an official STA shirt and cover the midriff. Clothing must not have holes or rips. Students who fail to comply may be sent home. Spirit Dress will consist of an authorized spirit dress shirt with jeans, khakis, or school bottoms only. No exceptions. **NO joggers, sweatpants, shorts, skorts, skirts.** Students not in compliance will be issued a detention, parents will be called to bring school uniform, and may be prevented from participating in future Spirit Dress days.
Shoes must be closed toe and closed heel. No Crocs, slides, flip flops, sandals, etc.
No hats are allowed on Spirit Dress days.

CODE OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

COVERING STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Receiving a quality, morally based education can best be served when student, parents/ guardians, and school officials work together in partnership. Such partnerships are centered

on mutual respect, communication, and courtesy. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require a parent/guardian to withdraw his/her child.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that students who are registered at St. Thomas Aquinas High School behave in a manner both on and off campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school at its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of STA.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the parents/guardians of a student shall also conform to the standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school at its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of STA. The parents have a right to withdraw their child at any time and the school has a right to ask a family to withdraw from St. Thomas Aquinas.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of this school system.

Students and parent/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel (see grievance policy in the handbook). However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor-driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive. This includes, but is not limited to, any social media outlet.

These expectations for students and parents/guardians include, but are not limited to, all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g., athletics, conventions, field trips, etc.)

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children
- Abusive or personal comments about STA and/or its staff, students, or other parents
- Bringing the school in disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libelous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behavior, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching school security procedures

The school reserves the right to determine if an action falls short of meeting the Christian principles of STA. Failure to follow these principles will normally result in a verbal or written warning to the student and/or parent/guardian. Should questionable behavior continue,

further actions will be taken (e.g., suspension of student, withdrawal of the student, or suspension of the parent/guardian's privilege to come on the campus grounds and/or participate in school activities, volunteer work, etc.)

STA reserves the right to determine, at its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without a warning and/or an intermediate step short of asking you to withdraw your child. The principal is the final judge in all matters of discipline.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Diocesan Code of Conduct: A student must conduct himself/herself on campus, off campus, and traveling to and from school in a manner consistent with his/her status as a member of the Catholic school community. Students have a responsibility to dress and appear on school campuses according to standards of modesty, safety, and health as prescribed by the local school board/commission/council.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Discipline Philosophy: The purpose of discipline at STA is to enable students to become disciples of Jesus Christ and faithful members of the church; to promote genuine student development, increase respect for self, for peers, and for authority; to assist in the growth of self-discipline; and to provide a classroom environment conducive to learning where Christian living can flourish. Discipline is an aspect of moral guidance and not simply a form of punishment. It is expected that the students of STA be courteous, respectful, punctual, neat, clean and responsible. They should come to school prepared for schoolwork. It is the responsibility of the student, with parental support, to cooperate with and respect others, to obey the rules of the school, to do class work and assigned homework, and to arrive at school on time. We expect all students to behave appropriately throughout the school day and at all school-sanctioned events. In addition, students are always expected to be a positive representation of the school. This includes, but is not limited to, all school-sanctioned events (both on and off campus) and social media outlets. At no time should any student prevent or disturb the learning experience of another student. **It is to be noted that the behavior of students, when they are not at school, can have grave effects on the school and its student body. For this reason, actions that so effect the school will be dealt with by the school in order to protect all its members. This may result in a student being asked to leave.**

If a student is present when wrongdoing is evident, or a civil law is being broken (such as vandalism, smoking, vaping, dipping, underage drinking or use of alcohol or other drugs, etc.), that student has the obligation to remove himself/herself immediately from that

situation; otherwise, she/he shares in the consequences related to such misbehavior. These may include detention, suspension, or dismissal.

Parental Cooperation: As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians freely make the choice of a Catholic education for their children. Registration at STA is an agreement by the parent/guardian to accept and abide by the rules and regulations of this institution and to support its philosophy of education.

A cooperative relationship between STA personnel and a parent/guardian is essential for the overall education of a student. It is critical that a cooperative relationship be maintained through constructive dialogue with the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian refuses to abide by the rules and regulations of STA or by word or action which is unsupportive of its goals or otherwise fails to meet his/her obligations under STA or Diocesan policies, the administrator may require the guardian to withdraw their student from our school community.

Additionally, parents/guardians will be held to the same standards of respect as students are regarding their interaction with administrators, teachers, staff, and students.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. This includes work on research papers, homework, and other assignments, as well as on tests. **Students are prohibited from loaning any form of their work to other students. If work has been copied, there will be assumed guilt on the part of all students involved**. Student's work or behavior that, in the opinion of the teacher and/or administration, is a violation of academic honesty will be subject to disciplinary action. Students should have a strong desire to do their best and not to take credit for the efforts of another student. Tutoring is understood as providing clarification or explanation of a subject, not sharing answers to an assignment or other work. Work that is turned in that is not entirely the work of the student is considered a violation of academic honesty.

A student is engaged in Academic Dishonesty if they:

- Copy, fax, duplicate, or transmit technologically any assignments that will be turned in as original work
- Exchange assignments by printout, disc transfer, modem, or other electronic or recorded means, then submit as original work
- Write formulas, codes, key words on his/her person or objects for use on a test
- Use hidden reference sheets during a test
- Use programmed materials in watches, calculators, electronic devices, or computer programs when prohibited
- Relay questions or answers from a test or quiz to students who have not yet taken the test/quiz or obtain questions or answers about a test or quiz prior to taking it. This includes receiving information from students who have already taken the test/quiz

- Submit someone else's assignments as his/her own, in whole or part
- Submit material (written or designed by someone else) without giving the author/artist name/or source
- Submit for credit the same work in more than one class without prior teacher approval
- Take credit for group work when little contribution was made
- Do not follow additional specific guidelines on cheating as established by a department, class, or teacher
- Steal tests, answers, or materials, or have unauthorized possession of such materials, including the possession or attempted possession of materials designated for teacher use
- Sabotage or destroy the work of others
- Copy answers from another student's assignment, quizzes, or tests

A violation of the academic honesty policy of STA is punishable by disciplinary action including, but not limited to a grade of 0 on the assignment/test, suspension, removal from extra-curricular and athletic activities, and possible withdrawal or expulsion. This code covers all school-related tests, quizzes, reports, class assignments, projects, essays, homework, etc.

Plagiarism: STA considers plagiarism a very serious offense. Consequences will include, but are not limited to, a grade of zero for the assignment, suspension, and/or removal weighting from Honors or AP classes. **Additionally, the plagiarized assignment must be appropriately completed.** All work is to be considered individual in nature unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

Addressing Adults: All adults are to be addressed using the proper title (i.e.: Mr., Mrs./Miss/ Ms., Coach, Dr., followed by last name)

Automobiles and Parking: **Students who drive to school must operate their cars in a careful and responsible manner. Failure to do so could result in the loss of driving privileges and/or disciplinary consequences.**

All students who drive to school must pay a parking fee of **$50.00** per school year and register their cars in the school office by no later than the fourth day of school. If students change license plates or cars during the school year, they must notify the office. Students must display STA parking tags on their cars. New drivers, throughout the course of the year, must immediately notify the office if they will be parking at school. *Lost or unreturned parking tags will incur a $10 replacement fee.*

On campus parking is allowed only for student drivers with a valid Louisiana driver's license. Employees and seniors will have assigned parking spots. The parking spaces in the northern lot will be first come, first served for other students.

In parking spaces marked by parallel lines, cars must use only one space per car. Certain spaces are reserved for handicapped. Students may not park in the faculty-designated areas. Ant no time is anyone to park by the curb marked with red paint or under the canopy. Parking on grass or islands is prohibited. The school will make reasonable efforts to protect the vehicles and property of students but will not assume responsibility for any loss or damage to cars or their contents. Anyone found parking ANYWHERE on campus

without a parking tag will be subject to disciplinary action including the car being towed at the parents' expense.

Care and Use of the Facilities: Students shall use the building, its furnishings and equipment only for the purposes intended. Students may not enter classrooms, the Media Center, computer lab, field house, weight room, track, or the gym / gym locker rooms before, during, or after school unless a teacher or coach is present.

Cell Phones / Electronic Communication Devices (including Smart Watches with texting capabilities): Students are not allowed to bring any electronic devices, such as MP3 players, handheld video games, video cameras, etc. to school. CELL PHONES are always to be in the off mode during the school day hours. All communication devices may not be displayed and must be turned off and stowed away throughout the academic day. **A smart watch is considered the same as a cell phone. Any use of a smart watch during school hours may result in the same consequences as using a cell phone.** If a student chooses to have the cell phone in their possession, the following will take place:

- **First offense**: Device will be confiscated and given to the Dean of Students/Front Office. It will be returned to the student after school and the student will be assigned a detention.

- **Second offense**: Device will be confiscated and given to the Dean of Students/Front Office. The student will be assessed a $20 fee, and the phone will not be returned until the fee has been paid and the student will be assigned a Saturday detention.

- **Third or More offense**: The Device will be confiscated and given to the Dean of Students. Once the phone has been taken and given to the Dean of Students, the parent of the student may come to the office and pick up the phone from the principal and pay a fine of $50 to offset the principal keeping the phone. It may only be picked up by a parent/guardian of the student. The student will again be assigned a Saturday detention.

Students may only use a communication device for academic purposes during school hours with the permission and monitoring of a supervising teacher. If a phone is taken away from a student, the school reserves the right to search the phone, including, but not limited to, calls, instant messaging, email, photos, Twitter or other Social Media outlets, text messages, etc. on that phone**. Saint Thomas Aquinas is not responsible for loss of, or damage to, cell phones or watches.**

Commons: Orderly conduct is always to be observed in the Commons. Proper use of the furniture and the food area is expected. In addition to the Commons, students may eat outside in unrestricted areas. Eating lunch in restricted areas is not permitted. No eating or drinking is allowed in the school building except in the Commons area. Failure to clean up after yourself in the Commons **will** result in disciplinary action.

Derogatory Words or Actions: The good name, reputation and personal safety of each student, faculty and staff member as well as the good name of each Catholic school in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, are vitally important. In order to protect students, employees, and the institution itself, each student, employee, parent or other family member are expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect.

Derogatory words, gestures and /or actions against any of the above by a student, a parent or other family member, or an employee will be seen as an extremely serious matter, whether this is done orally, in writing, via email or on the web, including social media outlets, and whether it is done on a mobile device or school or home computer, or by remote access during or after school hours. Any individual found to be participating in any derogatory activity will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Likewise, because of the issue of copyright infringement, any unauthorized use of our school's name or logo, the school website, pictures of the school buildings, activities or other students is prohibited whether done in the printed word, through technology or by any other communication format.

The school is not in charge of monitoring a students' use of the Internet, e-mails, text messaging, social media outlets, or similar communications. However, if a student's inappropriate use of these communication formats is brought to the schools' attention, or if the school becomes aware of communications that reveal personal information of a student, the school will take appropriate actions and will notify the parent/guardian of its concern.

Dishonesty: Dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating of any kind, academic dishonesty, forging parents' signatures, stealing, plagiarism, or willful lying, makes a student subject to corrective action including detention, suspension or dismissal.

Distribution of Printed Materials: The distribution of printed materials on the school grounds without administrative permission is prohibited.

Electronic Equipment and Technology: Students are not allowed to bring radios, video cameras, I-Pads, MP3s, or tape recorders without teacher permission. These items may not be used during lunch. These devices must be locked in lockers when not in the student's possession. Saint Thomas Aquinas is not responsible for lost or damaged electronic equipment. **No headphones are to be used at any time during the school day unless directed by a teacher.**

All school electronic and audio-visual equipment may be used only for school purposes. Student access to school technology is governed by a required "Acceptable Use Policy" contract. Students who violate the terms of the contract are subject to disciplinary action including suspension or dismissal.

Fighting: Any hostile, physical, or verbal altercation on the school grounds, at a school-related function, or at a pre-arranged location is strictly forbidden and could result in suspension or dismissal. **All students involved in any on-campus altercation will be sent home for the remainder of the school day with possible further discipline being issued by the administration.**

Gum: Chewing gum is prohibited anywhere on campus and will result in a detention or other disciplinary action.

Inappropriate Language: The use of any language or gesture that is impolite, lewd, indecent, or contrary to the moral or religious principles of the Roman Catholic Church or the goals and principles of STA is prohibited and will result in consequences as deemed appropriate by the Administration.

Locker Assignments: St. Thomas Aquinas reserves the right to assign each student a locker for his or her personal use, but for any reason the school decides, may choose to not issue lockers to students. In the event lockers are issued, each student will be assigned a locker for his/her personal use. It is the responsibility of the student for the orderliness, care and contents of the locker. If a student would like a lock for their locker, they must purchase a lock outside of school and provide a key or the combination to the lock to the office. If a student chooses not to lock their locker, it is strongly advised not to keep money or valuables in that locker. STA is not responsible or liable for stolen items. Students may go to their lockers before school, before and after lunch, between classes, and after school. Lockers may be inspected at any time by the Administration. Tampering with another student's locker or possessions is a serious offense and is subject to disciplinary action.

Possession of another person's property without permission of the student may be regarded as theft and is subject to disciplinary action. To prevent loss of personal property, students should have their names clearly marked on all personal items. Missing property should be reported to the office.

A student may request to use a locker. The student must provide a combination lock and the combination must be provided to administration.

Medication: Every effort should be made by parents/guardians to have both prescribed and non-prescribed medication administered at times other than when the student is at school. When it is medically necessary for the medication to be given during school hours, whether prescribed or not, the parent/guardian must complete the Catholic Mutual Medication Form, available on the school website, prior to medication being dispensed. School personnel will

only be able to administer medication once that form has been completed and turned into the office. All medications must be left with the designated school personnel for safekeeping in its original container. Students MAY NOT have on their person any medication at any time.

Minor accidents are treated by the school staff. No oral medications, including aspirin, Advil, or Tylenol will be administered unless the Catholic Mutual Medication Form is on file. In case of illness or serious accident, a parent will be notified. To avoid discomfort for student and exposure of other students and staff to infection, parents are expected to keep sick children at home.

Moral Turpitude/Off-Campus Conduct: Students must conduct themselves off-campus in a manner consistent with their status as members of the STA community.

Diocesan Policy 4.9.2.8: Violations of civil or criminal law involving moral turpitude or other conduct that in the professional opinion of the school administration would reflect or cause discredit to the reputation of the school by being contrary to the moral, religious or orthodox ethical principles of the Roman Catholic Church or the philosophy, policies, goals and commitments of the Catholic school as indicated in the parent/ student handbook make a student subject to corrective action, including suspension or dismissal.

Behaviors prohibited by this regulation include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Attending, sponsoring or participating in activities in which the law is being broken by the underage use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs are sold, purchased, possessed, or consumed.
- Committing, threatening or attempting to commit acts of vandalism that affect a person's life, health, or property. Any threat of violence towards the school, administrator or staff member, teacher, other students or their family members will ALWAYS be deemed serious and disciplinary action, depending on the severity, including expulsion will be given.

Diocesan Policy A 4.9.2.10 Pregnancy: The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge are concerned with the Christian moral development of the individual and the student body as a whole. In a society, which often undermines Christian values and principles, we strive to provide an atmosphere, which stimulates and fosters the growth of these principles. Premarital sex is not in keeping with Christian values and principles and is not considered acceptable for Catholic school students. However, Catholic schools are concerned with respect for life and the individual. Should a pregnancy occur, every possible measure should be taken to encourage counseling, health care, continued education and direction to help each student make a mature decision in accordance with
the directives of the Roman Catholic Church.

Quiet Areas: The Media Center is a place of respectful quiet. Hallways adjacent to classrooms are also quiet areas. Hallways, stairwells, and entrances to classrooms are not

places for loitering and conversations. Students are to move quickly and orderly through the hallways and stairwells, keeping to the right always.

Respect for Others: Respect for all individuals is a primary component of our community of faith. Students are expected to display Christian values and attitudes in their treatment of others. Any disrespect to a staff member, including inappropriate language, talking back, class disruption or gestures, merits a detention, suspension or expulsion, depending upon the severity of the offense.

Diocesan Policy 4.9.2.7 Harassment/Bullying/Hazing:

The Diocese of Baton Rouge has a zero-tolerance policy with regards to harassment/ bullying/hazing of any kind. All students are to be treated with dignity and respect by all people engaged in school related activities. Harassment of any form is prohibited.

A. Harassment

1. Sexual harassment shall be defined as unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
   a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic success or achievement of any other nature.
   b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decision affecting the students.
   c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with a student's school performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.
2. Verbal harassment shall include derogatory remarks, jokes, or slurs, and can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another.
3. Physical harassment includes unwarranted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal schoolwork or movements.
4. Written or electronic communication harassment includes communication or any threat of, or act of sexual, verbal and/or physical harassment.

B. **Bullying**, a form of harassment, is the act of intimidating a person to make them do something. Typically, it refers to teasing in a mean way, "ganging up" on others, keeping certain people out of a group, spreading rumors, punching, shoving and other acts that hurt physically.

c. **Hazing** is a form of harassment. Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing or reckless act that induces pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights or that creates physical or mental discomfort. It is directed against a student for the

purposes of

being initiated into, affiliated with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, and athletic team sponsored or supported by any parish, elementary or secondary school in the Diocese. Culpability includes hazing practices mandatorily or voluntarily entered by any party.

STA needs to be a haven where respect is paramount in the learning environment. Our school needs to be a place where both students and employees feel safe and valued. STA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying/harassment/hazing. Anyone found to be engaging in such activity will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Both students and their parents have a moral obligation and responsibility to report any incidence of harassment, bullying or hazing to a teacher, a counselor, an administrator, the Dean of Students, or the principal so it can be addressed and corrected. STA has joined forces with the Diocese in addressing all incidents of bullying/hazing/harassment by using the "Stop It" App. This App allows students and their parents to report any acts anonymously. All families are encouraged to download this App.

Restricted Areas: Students shall not go to the parking areas once they have arrived on campus without permission of an administrator, nor loiter near parked cars, trucks, buses, outside of classrooms, behind the gym, near the modular buildings, in the parking lot or in front of the school. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Sale or Purchase at School: The sale or purchase of any items, unless approved by the administration, at school is not allowed and could result in suspension or dismissal.

Search and Seizure Policy: The legal relationship between the Catholic school and the student or student's parents or guardians is one of contract law; therefore, the school is co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.

The school reserves the right during the school day, at all school sponsored activities, or while the student or his/her possessions are on campus, to conduct reasonable searches by school officials of students' persons, vehicles, or other student possessions on campus. In cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, the administration will allow periodic random searches utilizing drug dogs for cars, student lockers, and possessions, classrooms, and other locations on campus for materials or objects in violation of school policy, Christian values and principles, and local, state, or federal laws.

Diocesan Policy 4.9.2.11 Substance Abuse Policy and Procedures: Aware of the ever-present danger of the illegal use of chemicals/alcohol by students, the school strives to provide preventative education and a drug-free climate on campus, and at all school-related functions. The use of all chemicals, including tobacco, smokeless tobacco, and tobacco products, alcohol, prescription or over-the-counter drugs, illegal drugs (here and after known as "chemicals") is prohibited. If a drug/alcohol treatment

program is mandated, it is to be financed by the parent/guardian. If drug testing is mandated, for suspicion, it is to be financed by the parent/guardian.

Tobacco, Smokeless Tobacco and Vaping: If a student is found to have in his or her possession any tobacco product, which includes electronic cigarettes and/or vaping devices, on school grounds, at any school-related function and field trips, appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action will include a mandatory drug test administered by a professional laboratory at the parent's expense. Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to, suspension. Any tobacco product found in the student's possession shall be confiscated.

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

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

Illegal Drugs: An "illegal" drug is any drug, the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state, or local law. If a student is found to be in possession of or under the influence of an illegal drug on school grounds or at any school-related function, the parent/guardian and civil authorities will be notified immediately, and appropriate action will be taken by the administration. Appropriate action will include, but is not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

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

Drug Paraphernalia: If a student is found to be in the possession of drug paraphernalia, appropriate action will be taken by the administration.

Look-alike and Imitation Products: If a student is found to be in possession of any substance or product that resembles, imitates, or is intended to give the impression of a chemical, appropriate action will be taken by the administration.

Drug Testing: Drug testing alone is not a substance abuse program, but as part of a comprehensive substance abuse program, testing can be an effective deterrent to substance abuse and an important tool to help educators identify students who need help. Drug testing will be mandated for students at STA. If a drug/alcohol treatment

program is mandated, it is to be financed by the parent/guardian.

STA Drug Testing Policy: STA remains dedicated to the concept of a drug-free campus and drug-free students. Any student may be required to be tested "immediately and without delay" for chemical abuse if there is enough cause or suspicion of a student's use of prohibited substances. Information of concern may come from several sources including but not limited to teachers, guidance staff, office staff, administration, medical facilities/emergency rooms, law enforcement personnel, judicial courts, or the parents of that student. If a student, parent, or guardian refuses to cooperate with the administration to initiate or continue the drug testing process, the Code of Christian Conduct in the Student Handbook shall be considered to have been violated and steps may be taken to immediately remove the student from the school. Those students who at any time experience a positive test can expect further screening to be done at their family's expense. A positive test result is one that indicates, in the opinion of an approved clinical lab technician or medical professional, the presence of one or more illegal substances or a prescription drug not prescribed by a licensed physician for that student. An appropriate test shall be considered as one which is conducted by a licensed professional, nurse, or medical doctor—not an over-the-counter test.

FIRST POSITIVE TEST RESULT:

- Parents are notified. If parents choose to dispute the STA results, they have 3 business days to schedule an off-campus screening at a facility approved by STA.
- The parent/guardian must sign a consent form for the drug screening facility to provide the STA Administration with complete results of the drug screening. These results must be sealed by the facility and sent immediately to STA.
- **For any use of a vaping device, tobacco, alcohol, or any other illegal substances, the student shall receive a two-day suspension. Additionally, for a period of 14 consecutive days beginning the date of the offense, the student will be suspended from all school activities including practices and athletic events- with the exception of attending classes, certain religious events, and academic field trips with approval of the administration.**
- If the student has cooperated with the process and has successfully completed any and all phases and requirements of the agreement, then the student will be eligible for consideration of returning to activities on the 15th day.

SECOND POSITIVE TEST RESULT:

Should the same student test positive at any time through the remainder of his/her academic career at STA, it must be assumed that he/she has a significant problem or has decided contrary to the mission statement of STA. The administration will require the student to participate in a substance abuse program. The student will be unable to participate in any extra-curricular events until the program is completed. The student is still

subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

THIRD POSITIVE TEST RESULT:

If there is a third positive test result at any time during the student's academic career at STA, the administration will have no choice but to dismiss the student.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THESE POLICIES, ALCOHOL IS CONSIDERED A DRUG.

Theft: Theft of any sort is strictly forbidden and will result in suspension or dismissal. Financial restitution will be required.

Vandalism: Vandalism, defined as the intentional damage or damage as a result of misuse of any sort to school property or to the property of its students or employees, is strictly forbidden and could result in detention, suspension or dismissal. Financial restitution will be required.

Diocesan Policy 4.9.2.12 Weapons: *It is a crime for any student or non-student to carry a firearm, concealed weapon, or dangerous instrumentality on campus, on a school bus, at school sponsored functions, or in other designated zones and must be reported to police. The principal is required to notify the parent of any student who is detained or arrested for the violation of this law.*

Effective July 4, 2024, Louisiana no longer requires a state-issued permit for concealed carrying of firearms by non-felons, making Louisiana a so-called "Constitutional Carry" state. The Constitutional Carry law has no effect, however, on a person's ability to carry a firearm or any other dangerous weapon at a school or any school-sponsored function. Both Louisiana law and this school expressly prohibit any student or non-student from carrying a firearm or other dangerous weapon at any time while on a school campus, on school transportation, or at any school-sponsored function including but not limited to athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activities.

At STA a weapon is defined as any instrument or substance, including, but not limited to firearms, knives, clubs, any gas, liquid or other substance, which in the manner used could cause bodily harm. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to immediate dismissal.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Tardy Notice: A tardy will only be issued by the front office if a student is late to class by the second morning bell. Tardies are issued through the end of the first period. After the beginning of the 2nd period, a student is considered absent. Tardies will be issued by teachers via Renweb if a student reports late to class the remainder of the day. Students who arrive to first period after the second tardy bell will be issued a detention (even on their first offense). Any student checking in after first period without a

valid excuse (doctor's excuse, previous arrangements with the Dean of Students, etc.) will receive a detention. Three tardies will result in a Saturday detention.

Any student who attempts to enter the school and/or gain access to the school after the second tardy bell without checking into the office and receiving a tardy slip will be suspended.

Detention: **Detentions will be scheduled as needed and will take place after school from 3:05 – 4:05pm. Students must show up to detention in their complete school uniform (students may not change clothes for extra -curricular activities prior to attending detention) with shirts tucked in. Detentions are assigned for all minor violations of the handbook. If a student does not attend a detention or fails to report ON TIME, the student will be issued a suspension.**

Saturday Morning Detentions: **Saturday morning detentions are assigned for (1.) an accumulation of less serious violations or detentions or (2.) a single more serious violation. Failure to comply will result in a suspension. Once a student has reached his or her fourth detention in a semester, he or she will be assigned a Saturday detention.**

A student will receive a Saturday detention upon receiving their 3rd detention. After two Saturday detentions, a student will be suspended. Saturday Detentions will take place as scheduled from 8:00am – 12:00pm. Students are to wear clothes they are able to work in. Closed toe shoes are required.

Detention Fees

1. 1st Detention – No Fee
2. All Subsequent Detentions - $10
3. Saturday Detention - $50

Suspension: At the discretion of the administration, a student may be suspended either in-school or out-of-school for serious misconduct or repeated occurrences of less serious behavior. A suspension serves notice to both parent and student that such conduct is of such a nature that it will not be tolerated; giving a signal that probation or expulsion could be expected if the behavior continues.

A student receiving an **in-school suspension** will be assigned to the In-School Suspension room during the day(s) of suspension. The student will be assigned tasks which address his or her specific disciplinary issues, as well as academic work for each of his or her classes. The student will not be allowed to associate with the student body for the duration of his or her suspension.

A student receiving an **out-of-school suspension** will not be allowed to attend school during any part of the school day during his or her suspension. Parents will have complete custody and jurisdiction of their student during an out-of-school suspension.

For both in-school and out-of-school suspensions, students will not be allowed to attend or participate in extra-curricular activities during the suspension period. As determined by the Dean of Students, the suspension will begin the day of the decision or the following day. The student will not be able to attend or participate in any school function from the time the suspension is issued until he/she has served a full day back in regular classes.

Additionally, for either suspension type, students will be allowed to make up assignments for full credit. However, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher immediately upon return from suspension to arrange for make-up tests and make-up work. (See "Make-up Work" in handbook). Both in-school and out-of-school suspensions will be recorded as a "suspension absence."

Probation: A student is put on probation after a second suspension. As per Diocesan policy, a student who is assigned a third suspension, whether for an accumulation of minor violations or for a single major violation, is liable for expulsion. A student may also be put on probation for one serious incident. That student will be liable for expulsion should another suspension be assigned or if he/she does not fulfill the probationary expectations. Faculty and administration will be looking for positive signs of responsible improvement in the student's behavior and attitude. At the end of the probationary period, a student may be removed from probation, may have the probationary period extended, or may be dismissed from school.

Expulsion: A student may be expelled immediately for any grave violation of discipline, or for serious public misconduct. According to Diocesan policy, may be expelled.

Exclusion from School Events: Students may be excluded from school events in conjunction with suspensions, probation or for other disciplinary reasons. Exclusion may be for one day, an extended length of time or for the rest of their career at STA, depending on the circumstances.

MISCELLANEOUS

All-School Masses/Assemblies: Students are expected to enter and leave Masses/ assemblies in orderly fashion. Books, book bags, etc. are not to be brought in the Mass/assembly area. Students are to sit in the assigned area for their class. Prior to entering the Commons for Mass, the students should remove all outerwear, the top button of their shirt buttoned and their tie properly in place. Students are expected to respect those persons conducting the assembly.

Cafeteria/Food: The Commons is an area for student enjoyment; students are always expected to keep this area free of litter and in proper condition for another students' use. Students are to eat in the Commons or the adjoining rear patio.

Lunch may be purchased through the Diocesan Child Nutrition Program (cnpbr.org) or lunches may be brought from home. **No outside lunches may be delivered to the school. No student may leave campus to get lunch.** Students should bring their lunch with them in the morning - **parents are NOT allowed to deliver lunch to school**.

Communication: Every effort is made to keep parents informed of school happenings. Important information is communicated through emails, the school's social media accounts, and the school's website, www.stafalcons.org.

Please refer to the "STA Documents" section of the school's website for important information about the FACTS Family Portal and much more.

Parents are both welcomed and encouraged to confer with the Administrator and/or teacher for discussion of specific concerns and/or complaints. Prior arrangements must be made. If you would wish to register a concern (academic/disciplinary) it should first be directed to the teacher via email or phone call. The teacher is to respond to all concerns within 24 hours (excluding weekends). If the situation is not rectified, a conference should be set with the teacher, dean of students, counselor, and parents. Only after the conference should the principal be asked to intervene. Should a complaint not be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, the step is to file a formal grievance. A grievance is a claim there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of any provision of any policy, rule, order or regulation applicable to the grievance. Procedures will be furnished to the parents by the principal when requested.

Counseling Opportunities: The STA Counseling Department strives to deliver a comprehensive School Counseling Program that adheres to both the ASCA Model (American School Counselor Association) and the LSCA Model (Louisiana School Counselor Association) for effective counseling. The STA counselors are Professional School Counselors who are available to assist all students in the areas of Personal, Social, Academic, and Career needs.

The vision of the Counseling Department is for all students to have the skills they will need to contribute to society at their highest level. To achieve this goal, our counselors strive to create an environment where students feel safe to express themselves and discuss issues that they feel are important. The counselors promote student empowerment through support and encouragement. The STA Counselors are advocates for the students, always. The counseling department is not responsible for providing ongoing mental health care services for students. Should a parent feel their child needs mental healthcare services, they should seek private counselors and/or therapists.

Student Services: The counseling department offer services which are primarily on an individual basis; however, group and/or classroom venues may also be utilized. Students may be referred for counseling services in several ways: teacher/faculty, parent, or a self-referral. When a student assents to counseling, confidentiality and its limitations are explained. For counseling to be beneficial, the student must be open, honest, and actively participate.

Confidentiality: The STA Counselors encourage all students toward personal responsibility and exploration of options. When a student encounters difficulty in the classroom, at home,

or personal conflicts, the counselors are available for assistance. The counselors have an obligation to protect the confidentiality of the counseling relationship; all counseling session discussions are confidential.

Duty to Warn: All Professional Counselors have the Duty to Warn. Should our counselors feel that outside professional help is necessary, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Also, if there is a concern for the safety of the student or the STA student body, an evaluation by a Licensed Mental Health provider will be required at the parents' expense. The student will only be allowed to return to campus when a written report of the evaluation and its findings has been received be the counseling department.

Dances: Students are expected to arrive no later than a half-hour after the dance begins. No one may leave until the dance is ended. All students may be breathalyzed upon entering and leaving the dance.

Back to School Dance is open to STA students only.

Dances, except Prom, are open to all STA students. Each student can bring one pre-registered guest, approved by the principal.

Prom is for juniors and seniors, although a sophomore may attend as a date. Those students who choose to attend Prom must have all fees and tuition current. They must be in school on the day before or the day of Prom (if Prom does not occur on a weekend.) Only Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors may attend Prom.

ALL non-STA dates MUST be pre-approved by the principal. The form for these dates can be found on the website under STA Docs. No students in grades below 8th grade will be approved. Post high school aged dates are acceptable but must fill out the same form as a high school aged date.

**No student is allowed to bring a guest of the same sex to a school dance.

BACK TO SCHOOL DANCE DRESS CODE

The Back-to-School Dance is open to all STA students and is casual dress. Comfortable shoes and clothing are recommended. For ladies, all shorts/skirts must be fingertip length or longer OR be worn with tights underneath. No strapless; one shoulder is OK. No exposed midriffs or cutouts. No low-cut necklines. For Gentlemen, jeans or knee-length shorts. No cross-dressing or mesh. **It is highly recommended that your attire be cool and comfortable as it does get very hot in the Commons.**

****It is HIGHLY recommended that you bring a photo of you in your Homecoming/ Prom dress to Administration if you have any doubts about its acceptability!!**

HOMECOMING DRESS CODE

LADIES

- Dresses must be floor length only.
- Dress may be strapless (but must fit properly) or include spaghetti straps.
- Dresses may not be cut below the bust line; cleavage may not be visible.
- Dresses may be backless, if the skirt begins at waist or higher. (One's waist is considered at the belly button)
- DUE TO REPEATED INFRACTIONS, NO TWO-PIECE DRESSES ARE ALLOWED AT ALL.
- Midriffs may NOT be exposed. This includes both front and side.
- Long dresses may not have a slit (kick pleat) that exceeds mid-thigh (fingertip length)
- No pinning will be allowed as an alteration.
- **Fabric inserts must be sewn** (see-through mesh and fringe are not allowed).
- No cover-ups (coats, shawls, sweaters) will be allowed over dresses that do not meet code.
- Dress shoes or sandals must be worn.

If bringing a date from another school, you must submit a non-student dance attendance form from the office or the website AND be responsible for your guest's adherence to our dress code.

GENTLEMEN

- Dress shirt
- Tie
- Dress pants
- Sports coat is optional.
- Dress shoes and socks.
- **If bringing a date from another school, you must submit a non-student dance attendance form from the office or the website AND be responsible for your guest's adherence to our dress code.**

SADIE HAWKINS: Dress code is generally determined by the theme of the dance and will be publicized at that time.

PROM DRESS CODE:

LADIES

- Dresses must be floor length.
- Dresses may be strapless (if they fit properly) or include spaghetti straps.
- Dresses may be backless, if they are not cut below the navel.
- **NO TWO-PIECE DRESSES ARE ALLOWED AT ALL.**
- Midriffs may not be exposed. This includes both the front and side. With arms down at your side, flesh may not touch flesh.
- Dresses may not have a slit that exceeds mid-thigh. This is fingertip length.
- Undergarments should not be visible. See-through apparel is not permitted.
- Garments that are tight or low-cut are also unacceptable, including sweetheart necklines.

GENTLEMEN

- Dress shirt
- Tie

- Dress pants
- Sports coat is optional.
- Dress shoes and socks.
- **If bringing a date from another school, you must submit a non-student dance attendance form from the office or the website AND be responsible for your guest's adherence to our dress code.**

Dress Codes for any additional dances will be publicized in advance.

Emergency Closing/Dismissal/Safety:

St. Thomas Aquinas follows all regulations concerning fire safety, sanitation, chemical hazards and combustible materials. Periodic drills for fire, tornado, and other natural disasters are held, and plans/procedures for such drills are posted and reviewed with all students on a regular basis. Parents who are in the building during one of these drills are expected to follow the same instruction as those given to the students. Parents are asked not to call the school during a tornado watch and warning. It is imperative that the phone lines remain available for calls and emergency directives from the Civil Defense Office. Students are to remain at school, even after school hours, if there is a tornado warning.

If the students need to be evacuated from campus, parents will be informed via email and the parent alert system as to where the pickup location is.

Should classes need to be cancelled due to weather or other reasons, STA will follow the directives of Tangipahoa Parish Schools. When they close, STA will close. Check the school website and your email. Facebook and Twitter will also be used, when possible, as will Parent Alert systems and the school's App.

FERPA: In order to protect the privacy of our students and their families, STA follows the regulations of the Family Educational Rites and Privacy Act of 1974. We are unable to provide information to, discuss a students' academics, social/behavioral issues or financial matters with anyone other than the students' legal guardian without written consent. Demographic and directory information may be shared with civil authorities and business partners, as the principal deems necessary in conducting the business of the school.

Fundraising/Purchasing: No individual or group can solicit funds in the name of STA or for the benefit of the school or any school organizations without specific authorization by the Office of Advancement. No individual or group can purchase anything for the school or any school organization without an official purchase order signed by the principal.

Grievance/Appeals Procedure: Recognizing the right to file a grievance in the area of school policy if an incident is perceived to be a violation, the following procedure is

followed. All efforts shall be made to address grievances in a timely manner. The ascending order of authorities to whom appeal may be made is as follows: Teacher, Principal, and the Diocese. The order must be followed.

- Person with complaint meets with the teacher or moderator.
- Depending on the situation, the person next meets with the Academic Coordinator, Dean of Students, and/or Athletic Director.
- Person meets with Principal and all concerned parties.
- If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision of the principal, the person may submit the appropriate appeals forms provided by the principal within 5 days to the Superintendent.

Informed Consent for Counseling: All students will meet with a master's level counselor at STA at least one time per year to discuss standardized test score reports, grade point averages, and schedule requirements for meeting STA and TOPS guidelines. Additionally, counselors are available to students, whether they ask for help and present on their own, or they are referred by a teacher, coach, member of staff or administration, or a parent.

STA Counselors, along with the administration of the school, will talk with students, when necessary, if risk factors such as emotional issues, drug use, suicidal ideation, or other issues pose a threat to the emotional, physical, or psychological well-being of the student is present. **Parental signing of the STA Student/Parent Handbook constitutes a contract associated with this handbook gives permission for the counselors on staff to meet, talk with, question, or evaluate and refer students experiencing troubling issues in or out of the school setting.**

Health Procedures: A current Immunization Form obtained from the Health Department, or your family physician is **required** of all students **before** admission to St. Thomas Aquinas. Parents are expected to inform the school of any serious or chronic ailment(s) (physical, emotional or mental) or condition of students. Information regarding regular medications a child must take should be placed in the student's file. When medication is needed to be administered during school hours, a medication form is available through the office.

If a contagious condition is suspected, ex: pink eye, head lice, chicken pox, measles, fifths disease, etc. a student will be excluded from school and a doctor's statement is required for re-entry. If a student is deemed sick enough to be sent home, parents will be called and are expected to pick the student up promptly. If a parent is not available, the person listed as the emergency contact is called. If there has been a change in emergency phone numbers, cell phone numbers or work phone numbers, please notify the office. **Students must be fever free for a continuous twenty-four (24) hour period (below 100 degrees) before returning to school.** Students under the care of a physician must bring a signed permission to return to school.

Learning Resource Program: St. Thomas Aquinas has one full-time resource teacher

available to work with students who need accommodations. Consideration and eligibility are given to students with qualifying disabilities. Documentation must support the student's placement in the resource room. STA is not bound by 504 or IEP regulations. However, we feel morally obligated to help students reach their educational goals. A student must have a professional evaluation by a psychologist or a physician to be eligible.

The primary responsibility of the Resource Teacher is to aid the academic performance of students that have received academic accommodation plans, to serve as a school site resource person for the classroom teacher and to provide instructional support for identified students. Specifically, students that have academic accommodation plans may receive assistance in test preparation and test administration.

Messages/Deliveries: Every effort is made not to interrupt the educational process of the students. Messages and deliveries, except in emergency, are held for the students until the end of the day. The office personnel cannot guarantee delivery of messages or deliveries to the students.

Parental Custody and Other Legal Issues: The custodial parent has the responsibility to provide the administration with all official court orders that affect the well-being of the student when he/she is in the care of the educational institution. Non-custodial parent will not be permitted to use the school for child visitation. Upon written request, from the custodial parent, the school will not, however, refuse to allow the non-custodial parent to pick up a student, unless a court order has been issued stating otherwise.

Schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school related information regarding the child. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of any court orders modifying Buckley Amendment rights.

If a teacher (or other school employee is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case or other legal proceeding, or if the school or school employee is required to provide documents pursuant to a subpoena, request for production of documents, or court or administrative order, the school will assess the subpoenaing parent all costs and attorneys' fees incurred by the school or employee in producing documents and/or appearing in court.

Physical Education: If a student is excused from P.E. for health reasons, she/he may also not participate in sports. Unless excused by illness, students are expected to participate in physical education classes. A statement from her/his physician must give specific reason, date and extent of exemption. Without an approved excuse, students who do not dress for P.E. receive a failing grade for the day. Students are expected to take reasonable steps to secure their belongings during P.E. STA is not responsible for missing items.

Release of Names and Addresses of Students: Information pertaining to students and their parents, including but not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses, are not to be released to any unauthorized person or agency. However, the release of names and addresses of graduating seniors (and their parents) is authorized, upon request, to official Catholic Student Center directors/chaplains/campus ministers serving universities and colleges. This is for the sole purpose of informing the graduating seniors who will be attending the university or college of the Catholic Church outreach and services available to the student while attending that university or college.

School Logo/Name: **Using the school logo/school name, the Falcon, or "STA" on any item without the express permission of the principal is prohibited. Any T-shirts, flyers, etc. MUST have the approval of the principal before ordering or distribution.**

Student Arrival/Pickup: For safety and liability reasons, students may not arrive before 7:15 am or remain on campus after 3:30 pm. Doors will be unlocked at 7:30 am and will be locked at 3:30 pm.

Student Insurance: All students are covered by school insurance during school hours and at school related functions including all athletic events and team sports.

Textbooks: The books are to be returned to the teachers who issued them. Allowing for reasonable use, no fines will be assessed. However, if a book has been damaged or lost, a fine will be charged accordingly. Report cards and records will not be issued until fines are paid.

Visitors: All visitors are required to check in at the office. Potential students are allowed Shadow Days only with permission of the Advancement Office.

Wellness Policy: Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization of June 2004, set forth the requirement that each local education agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell School Lunch Act must establish a wellness policy for schools under the local educational agency. The Diocese of Baton Rouge has created a policy for all Diocesan schools that is adapted from the Louisiana Department of Education Model Policy. The principal will implement and assess the policy for STA.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

STA has a wide range of extracurricular programs which are an integral part of each student's total education. Keeping academics as their priority, students are encouraged to participate in sports and/or organizations that develop and utilize their gifts and interests. Other clubs than those below may be offered depending on student interest and availability of a faculty moderator.

School Sponsored Events/Field Trips: Field trips, athletic trips and school-sponsored trips are a privilege, not a right. Students must be in good financial standing with the school, as well as maintain an acceptable academic and disciplinary record, in order to attend a school event/trip. Any staff member may request to the administration that a child not be allowed to attend the field trip because of academic or disciplinary reasons. When a student is attending a school sponsored event or field trip, the school representative of the event will send home a Field Trip Permission slip. For the student to attend the event, they must return the permission slip to the school by the date on the form or, at the very latest, the day of the event. OUR INSURANCE COMPANY WILL NOT ALLOW US TO ACCEPT NOTES FROM HOME, PHONE CALLS OR EMAILS IN LEIU OF THE PERMISSION SLIP. Any student without a permission slip turned in will remain at school until the students return from the event and or school is dismissed. All school rules are applicable while on the field trip. The administration will make the final decision concerning any participation.

Art Club: The Art Club is open to all students. The Art Club is involved in many school and community service activities. They do service projects at the Columbia Theatre, North Oaks Hospital, and Belle Maison Nursing Home. Activities include face painting, gardening, window painting, and art auctions. (Moderator: Ms. Arnold)

Students Against Human Trafficking: a club dedicated to bringing awareness and providing resources to help prevent human trafficking. (Moderator: Mr. Levy)

Key Club: Key Club is a service club open to all students. Key Club International promotes community service, leadership development and fellowship. Members work under the sponsorship of the local Kiwanis Club to provide service to the school and community. (Moderator: Mrs. Bates)

Light Team (Retreats): Open to juniors and seniors. Freshmen and sophomores may be appointed as apprenticeship. Students are selected from an application and interview process by the Campus Ministry Department. These students write and facilitate retreats including all STA class retreats and feeder schools' 7th and 8th grade retreats. (Moderator: Mrs. Bates)

Liturgy Committee: Open to all students. Students are responsible for set up and planning of all-school and class masses, planning of reconciliation and communion services and planning of any special liturgical events.

National Beta Club: The purpose of the National Beta Club is to promote the ideals of character, service, and leadership among secondary students; to reward meritorious achievement and to encourage and assist students in continuing their education after high school. Beta is open to freshmen (who were members of Junior Beta Club or National Junior Honor Society at their previous schools), sophomores, juniors, and seniors with cumulative

GPAs of 3.00 or higher and who have exemplary discipline records. A student may not have had any suspensions. (Moderator: Mrs. Jordan)

National Honor Society: National Honor Society recognizes students who demonstrate excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character. Juniors and seniors who have a minimum cumulative GPA of 93% (weighted) and an exemplary discipline record are invited to join. Students may have no more than two detentions per semester and no STA suspensions. Members are involved in various school and community service projects. (Moderator: Mrs. Silewicz)

STA Student Ambassadors: The Student Ambassador organization is a student service and public relations group working directly with the Advancement Director. Student Ambassadors are selected through a process developed and overseen by the Office of Advancement. The Ambassadors represent STA at important public relations functions both on and off campus. Ambassadors is open to juniors and seniors. (Moderator: Mrs. Silewicz)

Student Council: The Student Council is composed of an executive committee of officers and all elected representatives from each grade level. They are the liaison between the school administration and the student body. Members assume leadership roles by making recommendations to the administration and faculty to further enrich school life and by helping to plan and direct social activities. Responsibilities include Freshman Orientation, Homecoming Week, all dances except Prom, theme days, school spirit, class favorites, and more. (Moderators: Mrs. Crovetto and Mrs. Henderson)

Theatre Club: Open to all students. We meet for one hour every day after school to discuss upcoming plays, work on the theatre, design sets/costumes. Any student interested in performing in the Fall or Spring productions will still have to audition. The Theatre Club's purpose is to actively engage students with a passion for the Performing Arts. (Mrs. Petit and Mr. Goodrich)

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

St. Thomas Aquinas has a full interscholastic athletic program. The school is dedicated to excellence in athletics but will not comprise academic standards should they prove to conflict with athletics. Athletics, at its best, teaches the virtues of humanity: courage, grace, persistence, and greatness of spirit. STA supports athletics as intrinsic to the spiritual as well as the physical wellbeing of young people. The athletic program strives to support the school's mission of developing the whole person. Rules and regulations are outlined for each sport at preseason meetings and through direct correspondence from individual coaches to families. The principal/athletic director will also conduct one yearly meeting in August for all parents whose child will participate in a school sanctioned sport. **This meeting is mandatory**

for your child to participate as a St. Thomas Aquinas student athlete.

Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Individuals, regardless of their roles in activities, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.

Athletic Teams

- Football
- Cross Country
- Volleyball
- Boys' and Girls' Soccer
- Boys' and Girls' Basketball
- Baseball
- Softball
- Swimming
- Powerlifting
- Indoor and Outdoor Track & Field
- Tennis
- Golf
- Cheerleaders
- Starlettes Dance Team

Students must have completed the enrollment process before trying out for any sport.

Athletic Participation Agreement:

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School
Athletic Participation Agreement

I understand that the advancement of the Gospel mission of Catholic education is the key purpose of all programs, including athletics, at St. Thomas Aquinas (STA). Dignity and respect for everyone are some of the basic Gospel values taught throughout the curriculum. Athletics in a Catholic school is an important way of teaching and training young men and women to cope with life in competitive circumstances and reflect the Gospel values of Jesus Christ and the mission of the school.

I hereby request STA to grant permission for my son/daughter to participate in STA athletics. I understand that I am entering into a voluntary contract between myself, the parent/guardian of a STA School student, and STA

for participation in school-sponsored athletic activities.

I agree to cooperate with and support the rules and regulations of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, the Louisiana High School Activities Association, and St. Thomas Aquinas and to be governed by these rules and regulations as announced to me by the principal of STA, as published in the Parent-Student Handbook, and as announced or published in other places by the administration. I understand that I must be familiar with and accountable for these rules and regulations and the policies and procedures which govern participation in athletics representing STA.

As a player, my son/daughter understands that he/she must fulfill all religious and academic responsibilities to STA and conduct himself/herself as a committed Christian in school, outside of school, and at any activity involving athletic competition representing STA. My son/daughter agrees to be bound by the rules and regulations regarding athletics and to submit himself/herself voluntarily to the application of the rules.

As a parent/guardian of a STA athletic participant, I understand my responsibility and obligation to see that my son/daughter fulfills his/her religious and academic responsibilities including schoolwork and homework assignments and complies with the rules and regulations for participation in STA athletics.

I further agree that as an adult I will conduct myself in a responsible and mature Christian manner at all times during all practices and games, that I will show respect for authority, and will engage in no activity or conduct which in any way is disrespectful, combative or confrontational, or questions the jurisdiction of the school principal, coach, officials, or anyone connected with the conduct of STA athletics.

As player and parent/guardian, we acknowledge that a violation of any of these rules and regulations may result in forfeiture of ability to participate in athletics or attend athletic events representing STA.

I further understand that STA does provide supplemental medical insurance on students participating in school athletics. This insurance is secondary to your family insurance.

I hereby authorize and give permission for emergency medical treatment to be rendered for and on my behalf of my child, when I am not present, for any injury received while participating in any supervised school related sports activity. I hereby release all STA personnel for any and all liability associated with such necessary treatment. In addition, I assume any expenses for liability not covered by **my family** insurance of the supplemental insurance for injury received by my child while participating in sports at STA. I accept full responsibility for medical and hospital expenses, including transportation by ambulance, if any, and any other related expenses and do hereby hold harmless STA and its employees, of responsibility for any such injury or expenses and waive any and all claims which may arise against them.

Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office
Technology Acceptable Use Policy
Effective Date: July 29, 2025

A key purpose of this document is to serve as the basis for the inclusion of a Technology Acceptable Use Policy in the parent/student handbook of each of the Catholic schools (each a “School” and collectively, the “Schools”) within the Diocese of Baton Rouge (the “Diocese”).
Statement on Technology

The mission of the Technology Department at each of the Schools within the Diocese is to provide a range of technology services, tools and experiences to further opportunities for academic excellence, faith development, and leadership skills. Technology is used to support, enhance and optimize the learning process for all of our students. Emerging

technologies will influence the formation of foundational skills in students to aid them in reaching their potential in a constantly changing world. Technology must be implemented seamlessly, as everyday experiences, and must promote higher student achievement and a deeper understanding of their Catholic faith. Technology use within our Schools shall be consistent with the mission and vision of the Diocese to evangelize hearts, educate minds, encourage talent and embrace the future.

This Technology Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP") contains terms, conditions and standards ("Standards") that foster our mission and goals. By using any technology, equipment, or resources of a School or the Diocese as contemplated herein, the individual user is deemed to agree to be bound by this AUP and to strictly comply with all Standards contained herein. This AUP is reviewed annually to reflect any new technology and to address issues identified in the previous year. Each academic year, all students and parents at a School within the Diocese must read and contractually agree to abide by these Standards. Any student who violates this AUP or any applicable local, state, or federal law, is subject to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to a loss of technology privileges, potential legal liability to the School and/or Diocese, and potential legal prosecution at the discretion of local law enforcement.

As technologies continue to evolve, so will this document. The Diocese and administration of each School reserve the right to amend any item in the AUP or any technology policy during the year. Schools will notify parents and students in writing should any changes in this AUP occur during the school year.

Scope of Use

We recognize that the digital world allows anytime, anywhere access. School hardware, software, and technology services are provided for faith and academic purposes. All students using said technology shall be accountable for its use. Students are expected to use all technology resources in a considerate, ethical, moral, and legal manner, ensuring their actions are consistent with the School's Code of Conduct, which guides student behavior both on and off campus. Any potential or actual threat to the School, or the individuals contained within it, shall be viewed as a violation of this AUP and those individuals may be subject to the disciplinary measures found herein.

The types of electronic and digital communications referenced in this AUP include, but are not limited to, social networking sites or applications ("apps"), collaborative tools, cell phone calls, voicemails, voice memos, digital cameras, text messaging, email, Voice over IP, chat rooms, message board posting, blog or article comments, and instant messaging.

Device Usage

For purposes of this AUP, the term "device" includes, without limitation, cellular telephones, smart phones, personal and School-owned/issued computers, laptops, tablets and similar devices.

Privacy

All electronic resources owned or issued ("owned/issued") by a School remain the property of the School unless otherwise agreed to in writing. The individual has no reasonable expectation of privacy. The School retains the right to monitor any and all electronic resources, including personal devices as part of a "Bring Your Own Device Program" (BYOD). Each School-owned/issued technology device/accounts and the information stored on it are property of the School and are subject to the policies set forth by School administration and are subject to supervision and inspection. The Diocese and each individual School reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read, and disclose any and all messages, information,

and files created, sent, posted from, and/or stored on any School-owned/issued device/account.

General Computer and Internet Usage

At times, students will have access to varied types of electronic and virtual resources to complete educational tasks, including but not limited to storage, network communications, equipment, apps, and software.

Technology devices and resources usage is a privilege, not a right, which may be suspended, revoked or terminated in whole or in part and with or without notice by the School or Diocese, in its/their sole discretion, upon any actual or alleged violation of this AUP. By using such devices and resources, parents, and students are deemed to agree to the following terms:

- Students shall not download or install software or third-party applications on any School-owned/issued device which may interfere with the educational process (e.g., games) or which change a device's system configuration without specific instruction from their teacher.
- Students shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access to or compromise any computer or network security or engage in any illegal activities on the internet, including but not limited to, willfully introducing a computer virus, worm, or other harmful program.
- Use of a School's network and internet usage must be consistent with the mission of the Diocese and the School and of the educational goals of each. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, any of the following: (i) any internet conduct on or off School campus which reflects negatively on the Diocese and/or School or the educational goals of each, including but not limited to sending or posting photos, images, videos, messages, or other communications that contain or suggest harassment, racism, sexism or inappropriate language and/or symbols; and, (ii) sending, transmitting or displaying any unchristian, immoral, offensive, violent, pornographic, obscene or sexually-suggestive or explicit photos, images, videos, messages, or other communication in any form. Any such misuse, as determined by the School and/or Diocese in its/their sole discretion, is strictly prohibited.
- Any student who receives a message suggesting harassment, racism, sexism or the contents of which include inappropriate language, images, and/or symbols must immediately report it to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.
- Any failure by a student to immediately make known to a teacher or an administrator at the School that the student received a message which suggests harassment, racism, sexism or contains inappropriate language, images, and/or symbols will constitute misusing technology.
- If a student has access to network resources or internet access, the student will not disrupt network users, services, equipment, or data of the Diocese, any School, or another student, whether on or off campus.
- Students will not attempt unauthorized entry to any device accessible via the School network or remote network. If a student notices what is or may be a security concern, the student must notify administration immediately.
- The internet contains certain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. Students will not use network resources or internet access to knowingly visit sites that contain such material nor import, transmit and/or transfer any such material to other computers.
- Students shall not capture or transmit any image, video, or audio of School employees. Photographing and/or recording (by audio and/or video) a teacher, staff member, student, or any other individual without permission of the subject is prohibited.
- Students will not provide their password(s) or access code(s) to, or share another student's password(s) or access code(s) with, any other student or nonstudent. Students shall not use another individual's device/account or log onto the internet or network as anyone other than themselves.

- Students are responsible for all digital data, activity, and products on their School-owned/issued devices/accounts.
- Students shall observe all intellectual property laws and fair use guidelines (e.g., copyright, trademark, licensing and similar laws, rules and regulations). Copying, modifying, distributing, displaying, or transmitting the work of another without written permission or proper citation is prohibited.
- Students will not communicate the address, phone number, or other personal information of themselves or any other individual to any person or legal entity on the internet or through email without specific instructions from their teacher or administrator.
- While using any technology device at School, students are required to access the internet using the School's Wi-Fi and are prohibited from connecting to secondary Wi-Fi devices, such as a cell phone and/or other external devices. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) laws require the Schools to filter internet access to students and block inappropriate content from being accessed. This prohibition includes internet tethering and mobile hotspots that enable cellular data access on the School-owned/issued laptops.
- Content filtering alerts received by School personnel outside of normal school hours will be addressed the following school day.
- Student use of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) is prohibited at any time.
- The intentional destruction, deletion, or disabling of School-installed software on any device is prohibited. Unauthorized copying/installation of software programs belonging or licensed to a School is prohibited. Also, attempts to exceed or modify the boundaries set for the network are prohibited.
- Deleting, examining, copying, or modifying files and/or data belonging or licensed to a School is prohibited, unless specific instruction is given by a teacher for changes related to non-sensitive files/data.
- Purposeful or careless damage to School-owned/issued devices is prohibited. Each individual user will be responsible for any repair or replacement costs (at then-current rates, including associated taxes and third-party charges) and commercially reasonable administrative or replacement fees as set by the School. The School has the discretion to suspend each user's technology privileges and/or take disciplinary action.
- Students shall not dispose of any School-owned/issued device without the prior approval of the School. Any such disposal of a School-owned/issued device shall be conducted by the School or, if directed by the School, by the student in accordance with the School's directive. Prior to leaving School enrollment, if directed by the School, students must return all School-owned/issued devices.
- In the case of theft of a School-owned/issued device, parents are required to notify the School and file a police report within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. Misplaced/lost devices must be reported to School personnel immediately. If the device is not recovered, the student's parent/guardian is responsible for the replacement cost of the device.

Email and Communication Use

Some Schools within the Diocese will issue to students password-protected logins for the network, School email, and other electronic communication resources. Not all Schools will provide this access. For Schools which do have email accounts and other means of electronic communication for their students:

- Written parental permission is required for a student to have the use of a School-issued email account.
- Instant messaging, chat rooms, social networking, gaming, email, and other electronic communication between students for non-academic purposes are prohibited unless these activities are directly related to class activities and/or participation and are within the scope authorized by School faculty.
- Students shall not change their given email usernames.

● All communications sent or received may reflect on the Diocese, School, and the applicable church parish; thus, communication exchanged via the internet or email must not damage the reputation of the Diocese or School as determined by it/them in its/their sole discretion. No such communications shall be made for personal gain, to solicit others for activities unrelated to School-approved purposes, or in connection with political campaigns.
● All email communication between faculty, staff, coaches, and one or more students must be exchanged through the School-issued email account. Others, such as volunteer coaches, who are not School employees or administrators but who otherwise participate in School academic, athletic or other extra-curricular activities, may be granted access to a School-hosted email account at the School's discretion, in which event the School-hosted email account shall be used only for School purposes and shall be subject in all cases to the terms, conditions and standards of this AUP and such users, upon request, shall contractually agree to abide by Standards set forth herein. If a School-hosted email account is not granted, all such individuals will nonetheless send email communication only to School-hosted email accounts when intended for School faculty, staff, coaches and students.
● Students are responsible for reporting and rejecting any inappropriate materials and information received through electronic communication.
● Students are prohibited from attempting to access or using another student's email account.
● Students will not use network resources or internet access to broadcast messages via the School's network or email system, or to transmit threatening, obscene or harassing materials, including but not limited to chain-letters, solicitations, inappropriate images, and videos.
● The Diocese and School each reserves the right to access student email accounts at any time. This reservation includes, but is not limited to, access of the student's email account for routine maintenance and to retrieve School records. Such access also includes, but is not limited to, carrying out internal investigations, accessing internet history, and the disclosure of messages, social networking data or files.
● School employees may share any information obtained in a search of a student's email account with law enforcement as deemed necessary by the School administration at their discretion.
● Instant messaging, chat rooms, social networking, gaming, and email communication between students for non-academic purposes are prohibited unless these activities are directly related to class activities and/or participation.
● Prior to leaving School enrollment, students shall return all School-issued e-mail and user accounts. The School reserves the right to deactivate any such accounts at any time following de-enrollment.

Cellular Devices

The Diocese recognizes the convenience, logistical and safety advantages for students to have cellular telephones and other communication devices in their possession while on campus and during School activities.
● Communication devices are to be used in accordance with School policy and must not disrupt the educational environment.
● Students may use communication devices while on School campus and during School activities only with the permission of the supervising adult, such as the teacher, bus driver, athletic coach or sponsor, and only within the scope of such permission.
● The use of communication devices in an unacceptable manner in the School setting is prohibited. Examples of unacceptable usage include, but are not limited to, the following: use of a device for any purpose inside a restroom or locker room, use of a device on the School campus for cheating, cyber bullying, sexting, and taking inappropriate photos or

videos.
- Violations of this AUP may result in disciplinary measures as well as the confiscation of the communication device.

Personal Devices

Each School shall determine whether personal devices are permitted on its campus, including but not limited to Fitbits, Smart watches, or other wearable technology, tablets, computers, and cameras. To the extent so permitted by the School, such items will constitute a device for purposes of this AUP, and any such permitted use shall be subject to all of the terms, conditions and standards of this AUP.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence ("AI") refers to computing systems and tools that simulate human decision-making processes or perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These tasks include, but are not limited to, problem-solving, decision-making, language understanding, visual perception, and more. AI systems include, but are not limited to, chatbots, language learning models, machine learning algorithms, and automated tools. AI systems can learn from data, adapt to new inputs, and improve over time.

For purposes of this AUP, the terms "internet", "technology", "resources", "apps", "equipment" and terms of similar import shall include, without limitation, AI and the use of AI systems or tools through any medium. AI, in all of its forms and uses, is subject to all other terms, conditions and provisions of this AUP.

The Diocese recognizes the great potential for AI as a tool for brainstorming ideas, gaining insight, dissecting complex texts, and improving writing skills. However, AI also presents potential risks and ethical implications. Students should actively engage in ethical practices, carefully consider the validity of AI-generated content, and ensure their work reflects their original thoughts and understanding.

The use of AI within a School or for School-related purposes is not allowed except, and only to the extent, as expressly authorized by an assigning teacher for a specific purpose. Any unauthorized use of AI is expressly prohibited. Only under the assigning teacher's express approval, and within the limited bounds of that approval, are students allowed to use AI tools for any type of assigned work. For clarification, an assigning teacher has no duty or obligation to allow any use of AI by their students. Any permitted use of AI must take into consideration the following:

- Students should always consult with the assigning teacher prior to using any AI tool to determine if the task, assignment, or assessment can be completed with AI assistance.
- AI programs are tools for assistance; they are not a substitute for a student's own critical thinking and understanding of the subject matter. Any use of AI tools should promote understanding and creativity, but they should not be relied upon exclusively for assignments.
- Any assignment performed or created with the use or assistance of AI shall be subject to a verbal review with the assigning teacher. The student must be prepared to explain and discuss the content of the work without the contributions or assistance of AI.
- All work generated with the assistance of AI programs must be original. Plagiarism, even if AI-generated, is not acceptable.
- Proper citation and attribution to AI-generated content should be given if and where AI is used for an assignment.
- If required by the assigning teacher, students must document their interaction with the AI tool by cutting and pasting the conversation or interaction into a separate document that can be shared with the assigning teacher.
- Students shall not share personal, sensitive, or confidential information with AI tools unless directed to do so in a secure, School-approved platform under an assigning teacher's supervision.
- Presenting material using AI without the assigning teacher's approval (or, if required by the assigning teacher, proper citation or documentation) will be considered academic

dishonesty and will result in consequences according to the School's disciplinary policy.

A School may elect to adopt more restrictive AI use requirements than those set out above. In such case, the School's more restrictive requirements, terms or conditions shall apply.

Conflicts

Individuals subject to this AUP may also be subject to other School or Diocesan policies with respect to communications, the use of technology, or other matters covered by this AUP (each an "Other School Policy"). This AUP is not intended to modify any Other School Policy, nor should any Other School Policy be construed to modify any term, condition or provision of this AUP. In the event of a conflict between any term, condition or provision of this AUP and any term, condition or provision of any Other School Policy, the more restrictive user term, condition or provision shall apply.