



# ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ACADEMY

A SETON  CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**St. Thomas Aquinas Academy**  
**341 East Norwich Street**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53207**

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**<http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com/>**

## Family Handbook 2023-2024

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**\*\*\*This document is an addition to the [Archdiocese Policy Guide](#)\*\*\***

**PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK AND RETURN THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM BY FRIDAY,**

**SEPTEMBER 29, 2023.**

**THANK YOU!**

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## **WELCOME TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ACADEMY**

This family handbook is designed to help make this a happy, safe, rewarding, and successful year for St. Thomas Aquinas Academy. Please read through the handbook so you will be familiar with what's covered. Although every effort is made to include all pertinent information, the principal together with the pastor designate and the School Advisory Committee reserve the right to amend or clarify this handbook should it become necessary. For more information, visit our website at [www.thomasaquinasacademy.com](http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com) or call the school office at 414-744-1214.

Seton Catholic Schools Processes and Procedures are designed to provide consistent staff and student expectations in all Seton Catholic Schools. St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, as a member of the Seton Catholic Schools Network, adheres to all of the Seton Catholic Schools processes and procedures while maintaining its own identity. This identity is preserved while continuing to work towards the Seton Catholic Schools mission of providing the highest caliber academic and spiritual formation programs for all students.

### **Rights And Responsibilities Of Parents**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 1312*

The Catholic Church recognizes and acknowledges the role of parents to be the primary educators of their child. As such, schools partner with parents in the formal education of the child.

Schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee should demonstrate respect and support for parents in the education of their child.

Inherent in the parents' choice of a Catholic school for their child is the understanding and expectation that they will support the school's mission and its commitment to the principles of Catholic values and faith formation. Parents are also expected to support and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the school's handbooks and demonstrate behaviors aligned with good moral and ethical principles. Parents are not permitted to interfere with the operation of the school nor display distrustful, disruptive, or harassing behaviors toward parish/school staff.

Schools may develop local policies to identify potential corrective actions if parents do not support and adhere to policies and procedures outlined in the school's handbook. Such corrective action may include the termination of the enrollment of the parent's child/children.

### **Seton Catholic Schools**

Seton Catholic Schools has built a strong Catholic School community, focused on our faith coupled with high level instructional models. Seton Catholic Schools remain committed to upholding and growing our belief in a faith based, equitable, high engagement Catholic education.

### **Mission of Seton Catholic Schools**

Seton Catholic Schools is a transformational education system committed to overcoming social and academic challenges, empowering students, families, and educators to attain their God-given potential.

### **Vision Of Seton Catholic Schools**

Seton Catholic Schools provides exceptional Catholic educational opportunities in the classroom and in the community to empower students and positively impact their families and their neighborhoods.

## Mission Of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is a vibrant Catholic learning community, empowering and preparing future leaders for lifelong stewardship through an academically challenging and faith-centered environment.

## Vision Of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy

Through the combined efforts of the church, school, families, faculty, and the community, we will strive to be a Christ centered school that fosters a LOVE of learning through high academic excellence that empowers students to be responsible and accountable leaders that respectfully contribute to the world around them through a lifetime of service.

## Our Core Values

**Joy:** We rejoice in God’s love and share it generously. We believe teaching, learning, and personal growth are best nourished in joyful and engaging schools.

**Transformation:** We believe in the power of God’s grace to transform our lives and in the potential for Catholic education to transform society. We embrace opportunities to reflect, grow, and strengthen ourselves and our school communities.

**Community:** We are deeply rooted in the community. We collaborate with parents, parishioners, and each other to empower our parish communities and neighborhoods.

**Service:** We are committed to placing out personal God-given gifts at the service of others, especially the most vulnerable within our community. We believe that God calls us to share our time, talent, and treasure to improve the lives of those around us.

**All In:** We have chosen to be part of this community, are dedicated to its success and work passionately to advance our shared mission. We are united in responsibility for ensuring that students receive an education for life.

**Justice:** We strive to be a just community and advocate for the God-given dignity of everyone we encounter. Catholic teachings inspire us to lead socially responsible lives, and we encourage this in one another.

## Accreditation

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6181*

Catholic schools are accredited through the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Office for Schools, Child, and Youth Ministries and the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation (WRISA) upon demonstration that specific standards have been met.

The standards of the Office for Schools are based on the requirements for Catholic schools as they are stated in the policies, regulations, and statutes of the Wisconsin Catholic Conferences of Bishops, as well as the policies and regulations of the Office of Schools, Child, and Youth Ministries and the Wisconsin Department of Instruction.

The planning process used by the Office for Schools of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is designed to aid schools in their efforts toward providing the best possible instruction for students. Each school adapts its planning efforts to meet goals and objectives determined to best serve the local student population.

A formal seven-year planning process guides Archdiocesan schools in providing the sequential and developmental instruction offered to all students. St. Thomas Aquinas Academy participates in this process and is formally accredited by WRISA at this time.

## **Letter From The Principal**

*Welcome to Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy!*

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy provides a child-centered, Christian setting dedicated to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and psychological growth of each student. Acting in partnership with parents and guardians, valuing their vital role in the educational process, we strive to offer an academic program which encourages each student to perform at his/her personal best by utilizing a strong core curriculum that is values-driven and standards-based.

We will enhance our core curriculum with support from technology, physical education, music, and art.

We will work together to maintain a faith community in which our students can observe, learn, and internalize the values we model, and in which they can grow and mature in faith and morals. We will live our Catholic faith daily, in lessons, actions, and example, integrating our religion and its values into all areas of our program and through respectful interactions with all of God's creation.

We will aim to provide each student with an understanding of his/her responsibility in the community and beyond by promoting generous service to others. Students will recognize their call to be a light to the world, leaders who bring Christian morals and value to the society in which they live.

God bless you and your family!

Sincerely,  
Andrea Bergmann, Principal

**St. Thomas Aquinas Academy Logo**

The logo conveys our defining characteristics to the community and serves as visual embodiment of our mission, that we are the hands of God.



**Faculty And Administration**

<b>PRINCIPAL</b>	Andrea Bergmann
<b>DEAN OF ACADEMICS</b>	Gavin Smith
<b>DEAN OF OPERATIONS</b>	Stephanie Traska
<b>SCHOOL COUNSELOR</b>	Sean Kearney
<b>READING INTERVENTIONIST</b>	Heidi Lee
<b>OFFICE MANAGER</b>	Amanda Lee
<b>4K</b>	Jessica Werner
<b>5K</b>	Sandy Liban
<b>GRADE 1</b>	Morgan Rabas
<b>GRADE 2</b>	Mary Avila
<b>GRADE 3</b>	April Szymczak
<b>GRADE 4</b>	Arika Kasper
<b>GRADE 5</b>	Savannah Schenkel
<b>GRADE 6</b>	Amanda Haugen
<b>GRADE 7</b>	Lori Stolaski
<b>GRADE 8</b>	Melissa Steidl




**2023-2024 PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK**

<b>ART</b>	Kristen Boeck
<b>MUSIC</b>	Ector Rodriguez
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	Luke Miller
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Kristen Cataldo
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Jennifer Connors
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Katie Janiszewski
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Kari Lampiris
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Christina Lindbloom
<b>EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT</b>	Joshua Moore
<b>EXTENDED CARE DIRECTOR</b>	Katie Janiszewski
<b>EXTENDED CARE</b>	Laura Cvikel
<b>EXTENDED CARE</b>	Andrea Chilson
<b>EXTENDED CARE</b>	Andrea Deinard
<b>FOOD SERVICE MANAGER</b>	Irene Tovar
<b>FOOD SERVICE</b>	Maria Sanchez
<b>FOOD SERVICE</b>	Cathy Foster
<b>PRIEST</b>	Father Carmelo Giuffre
<b>PRIEST</b>	Father Philip Schumaker
<b>CATAPULT SERVICES</b>	Elana Renner

Faculty contact information is available on the school's website: [www.thomasaquinasacademy.com](http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com).

# 2023-2024 CALENDAR

St Thomas Aquinas Academy 23-24 Calendar (subject to change) ER=early release

<p><b>JULY '23</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<p>4 Independence Day 27 Community Night</p> 	<p><b>JANUARY '24</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				<p>1 New Year's Day 2 School Resumes 12 Brownies and Board Games 15 M.L. King Day- No School 16 No School 18 Group &amp; 8th Grad Pics 29-Feb.2 Catholic Schools Week</p> <p>Other events this month: -Admirals Game Night</p>							
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## ENROLLMENT

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5110*

### Eligibility

All students who meet the eligibility criteria, and when there is space available, will be admitted into St. Thomas Aquinas Academy. Families seeking enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy will be registered, or placed in the appropriate grade waiting list(s), upon completion of all registration materials. Families enrolling through the Milwaukee Parental School Choice Program or the Wisconsin Parental School Choice Program are registered in accordance with the regulations established by the Department of Instruction. Families are encouraged to register during the February Priority Registration Period. A grade level must be stipulated at the time of enrollment, to ensure grade placement.

Students must be 4 years old on or before September 1 in the year he or she proposes to enter school to enter 4 year old kindergarten. Students must be 5 years old on or before September 1 in the year he or she proposes to enter school to enter 5 year old kindergarten.

### Equal Opportunity

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5110.1*

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy guided by the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Policy on admissions, “respects the dignity of the child and his/her right to an education in a Catholic school.” Neither race, nationality, nor other forms of discrimination will prevent a child from being accepted at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy.

### Enrollment To St. Thomas Aquinas Academy

All new families must meet with the principal. During the meeting, the new family will provide a completed registration form, birth certificate copy to be used for verification form, baptismal certificate (if applicable), IEP copy (if applicable), and immunization records.

Principal and/or school office staff will inquire as to whether the new student has a history of or is presently eligible for special education and related services available under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with a copy of the student's IEP. A student eligible for placement under IDEA should be enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy if a plan and resources are available to meet the student's special needs. (Archdiocese Policy 5111.2).

If a student has been expelled or is withdrawn from another school due to attendance, academic, or behavioral issues, St. Thomas Aquinas Academy has the right to deny admission.

In the admission of students, priority consideration is given to these criteria in the following order:

1. To all children currently enrolled.
2. To all children of families with siblings currently enrolled in school.
3. To children of our cluster parishes.
4. To children from other Catholic parishes.
5. To children of other religious/non-religious affiliations.

### Probation Period For New Students

All students are on probation during the first year of their attendance at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy. Any students being transferred from another school will undergo an academic and interview screening process before enrollment. Any students with a history of behavior or academic problems may be enrolled with a contract containing contingencies for performance. Failure to meet those contingencies at any time during the year may result in dismissal from St. Thomas Aquinas Academy or will not be permitted to re-enroll for the following school year. Students on probation may

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be asked to leave for issues regarding physical aggression, obscene language, or inappropriate behavior that violate the moral expectations of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy at any point during their probationary period. The decision of the principal and/or pastor designate is final.

## **Kindergarten Admission**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5111*

Children of any sex, race, nationality, culture, color, or religion will be admitted providing:

- Their age is appropriate for the requested class on or before September 1st.
- They are not in need of diaper changing.
- The required forms and fees, where appropriate, have been submitted.

## **First Grade Admission**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5111*

In compliance with Wisconsin state law, no child may be admitted to the first grade unless he/she is six years old on or before September 1st. A child must also have completed a 5-year-old kindergarten program as a prerequisite to being admitted to first grade. An exception would include a child who moves into Wisconsin from a state, country, or territory in which completion of kindergarten is not a prerequisite to entering first grade or if the child was exempted from the requirement to complete kindergarten in the state, country, or territory from which the child moved.

## **Other Admissions**

Administrative discretion is used in admitting older students. The principal has the right to grant admission and determine grade level placement throughout the grades. If a child has needs that cannot be met by the resources available to the school, the principal may deny admission or recommend a different grade or a school placement better equipped to meet the student's needs.

## **Students From Other Schools**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy gives priority to the previous year school's recommendations regarding retention and/or advancement to the next grade level. All new students will be assessed to determine grade readiness. School staff will work with parents to make informed decisions concerning the educational experience of each child.

## **Students With Exceptional Educational Needs**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6164.3*

Catholic school instruction, and retention of students with disabilities or special needs shall be determined by the administrator in consultation with the school's Learning Support Team. A student accommodation plan (Form 6164.3) will be completed in order to document the reasonable accommodations the school will provide to a student with special learning needs.

Parents must provide current, accurate information regarding the student's needs to assist the school in determining whether reasonable accommodations are possible. Proper documentation should be provided by parents to support the student's need for accommodations.

Those students who may require specialized academic instruction, modification of curriculum, or modification of assessments may complete the Child Find Process for the identification and intervention of their special needs. A child with exceptional educational needs that cannot be met through reasonable accommodations should be referred to the public school to determine whether the child is eligible for services.

The final decision for admission, instruction, and retention rests with the principal. Administrators will give careful consideration to the admission of students with special needs, but are not required to admit, re-enroll, or continue the enrollment of students whose needs cannot be met with reasonable accommodations.

Catholic schools/parishes in the Archdiocese welcome children who have special needs and may be able to make reasonable accommodations for students with special needs in some circumstances. Whenever a student seeks enrollment into the Catholic school, the school shall inquire as to whether the student has a history of or is presently eligible for a special education and related services available under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). A student eligible for placement under IDEA should be enrolled in a program and resources are available to meet the student's special needs.

*(Archdiocesan Policy 6164.3 rev. 7-2014)*

The regular school program and curriculum at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy includes opportunities for students with diverse learning and behavioral needs. Various factors contribute to these opportunities. The following services are available in the school program:

- Small group lessons
- Title I Services
- Best Practice Approach in all subject areas
- School Guidance Counselor
- Frequent communication between home and school
- Differentiated Instruction

### **Custody**

*According to Milwaukee Archdiocese Policy 5124.2*

Parents or guardians who maintain primary physical placement of a child must submit a copy of the court decree to the school office upon receiving such an order or upon admission. When the court has issued an order affecting the placement of a child pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 767.24 (or similar statute in another state) copies of the student progress report (report cards) should be issued to both parents or guardians in conformity with Wisconsin Statute 118.125(2) (a) unless one parent or guardian has been denied periods of physical placement with the child by the court under Wisconsin Statute 767.24(4). In this case, no student information will be provided to the parent or guardian who has been denied periods of physical placement, following Wisconsin Statute 118.125(2) (m).

### **Student Records**

*According to Milwaukee Archdiocese Policy 5125*

The student's parents or legal guardian have the right to inspect the student's records in the presence of the principal or a delegate. Authorized persons shall submit a written request to view records. An adult student and/or parents/guardians of minor students may have full access to, and the right to challenge the accuracy of, the data collected. If parents/guardians disagree, they may add a written statement of disagreement to the file. No one but school personnel, adult students, and parents/guardians of minors should have access to student data without a subpoena or written permission of the parents.

When a transfer or dismissal occurs, official transcripts, including behavior records, shall be mailed to the receiving school or delivered by a school official. They are never given to students or parents for delivery to the school.

### **TUITION**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 3240*

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is established and subsidized by the members of Immaculate Conception, Nativity of the Lord, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Augustine, St. Paul and St. Veronica parishes - known as the "cluster" parishes - to assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility to raise their children in the Catholic faith. While parish membership is not a

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requirement for the tuition rates, St. Thomas Aquinas Academy encourages that a family is an active and participating member of one of the six cluster parishes.

## **Tuition Payment Options**

Tuition rates are set by the school and approved by Seton Catholic Schools, the Board of Directors and/or Parish Advisory groups. Rates are communicated in February as enrollment commences for the new academic school year. Families may choose to pay tuition in full by August 1st or use a monthly payment plan through the school's tuition management system. School office teams will support families through the enrollment process.

### **Tuition Rates for the 2023-24 school year:**

- 1st child: \$2900.00
- 2nd child: \$2500.00
- 3rd child: \$2200.00
- 4th child: \$2000.00
- 5th child: \$1900.00

Except for Choice participants, all tuition being paid in full or through installment payments are handled through FACTS. For more information about tuition payment, contact our Dean of Operations, Stephanie Traska, via email at: [traskas@staamke.org](mailto:traskas@staamke.org).

Payments such as Extended Care & Athletics fees, can be paid through FACTS or in person in the school office as well.

The school makes every effort to provide an affordable quality, Catholic education centered to our students. The school cannot fulfill our mission or provide fundamental school operations unless the obligations of every student are met in a timely manner. If parents find themselves in financial difficulty and are concerned that prompt payment of tuition may be an issue, it is important to speak to the school principal in a timely manner to discuss whether alternate payment arrangements might be made until the financial situation improves. The school has the authority to deny admission to the school if balances are not paid in full prior to the start of a new school year. Additionally, delinquent accounts may be turned over to a collection agency.

## **Milwaukee Archdiocese Guidelines For Non-Payment**

According to Milwaukee Archdiocese Policy 3240.1

- Tuition installments are to be paid by the due dates, and as required by the Agreement digitally signed via FACTS.
- If parents meet a financial crisis that causes late payment, they are to discuss the problem with school administration.
- No student shall be terminated during the first semester for non-payment of tuition. However, enrollment for that student may be terminated for non-payment during the second semester when the parent has failed to demonstrate sufficient good faith in attempting to meet these obligations.
- Any student dismissed due to non-payment will be allowed to complete all academic work in progress before termination of enrollment.
- Non-payment of a prior year's tuition may result in non-admission for the following school year.
- Parents or guardians must be contacted in writing when tuition is in arrears.
- Personal contracts must be made to parents who, after six weeks, have failed to meet the initial request for payment.
- Parents must be informed of the actions to be taken by the school if payment is not made.
- Financial obligations shall be reviewed at the end of each semester.
- School administrators or designees shall meet with parents to make decisions regarding payment of unmet tuition and fees.

## **Financial Assistance With Tuition and Parish Assistance**

Several of the cluster parishes offer scholarships or other forms of tuition assistance for families of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy students. For more information, please contact your parish office.

## **Tax Deduction For Tuition Expenses**

According to Milwaukee Archdiocese Policy 3240

Tuition expenses paid by a parent/guardian for a dependent child at a private K-12 school are eligible for a tax deduction. A person may claim the deduction for payments made toward a pupil's tuition and mandatory book fees up to the amount allowed under current law. If the child receives a scholarship or financial assistance from the parish/school, the taxpayer can only claim the expenses they have actually paid. Tuition does not include amounts paid with a voucher or any amounts paid out as a separate charge such as supplies, registration, extra-curricular fees, meals, etc...

## **St. Gerard Scholarship**

The St. Gerard Fund was established in 1997 with the proceeds from the sale of the St. Gerard property and the closing of the parish. The parishioners of St. Gerard established the fund to provide grade school scholarships for Catholic school students in a defined area surrounding the St. Gerard facility.

The scholarships will be awarded based primarily on three criteria:

- Volunteerism in the parish, school community, on behalf of the student or immediate family;
- Demonstrated academic achievement or demonstrated effort by the student; and
- Special financial needs of the student's family.

Each year, the St. Gerard Scholarship Fund awards \$800 to selected students in grades 3 through 8 and \$1000 to 9th grade students who will be enrolled as a freshman at a Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Applications are accepted during the spring, so watch for announcements at that time. Students receiving Choice funds are not eligible for the St. Gerard scholarships.

## **WISCONSIN PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAMS**

According to Milwaukee Archdiocese Policy 5110

All Seton Catholic Schools are a participant of the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program and the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. Returning families are required to reapply each year.

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy participates in both the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) and Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP). These programs allow students to attend any participating private school located in the city at no charge if certain eligibility criteria (income and residency) are met. For details, visit the Choice homepage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/choice.html> or contact Amanda Lee via email; [leea@staamke.org](mailto:leea@staamke.org).

## **Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP):**

The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (Choice) allows students from families who reside in the City of Milwaukee to attend any participating private school located in the city at no charge if certain eligibility criteria are met. The Milwaukee Choice Application Process opens from the 1-20th of each month with the exception of December and January. MPCP applications must be submitted online on a monthly basis, as seen below.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>MPCP</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>February 1-20</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>March 1-20</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>April 1-20</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 1-22</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>June 1-20</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>July 1-20</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>August 1-21</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>September 1-14</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>October 1-20*</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>November 1-20*</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>December 1 - January 8*</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>*2nd semester participation only</b></p>
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**Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP):**

The Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WI Choice) allows students from families who reside outside the city of Milwaukee to attend any participating private school at no charge if certain eligibility criteria are met. WPCP applications must be submitted online between February 1st and April 20th.

**WPCP**  
**Open Application Period**  
**February 1 - April 20**

The state notifies families of acceptance or waitlist status via email during the summer. Families that qualify and are accepted must confirm a student’s enrollment and complete the necessary school enrollment paperwork within 30 days (can be a different amount of time) of receiving notice of acceptance. The student’s seat will be considered to be declined if enrollment is not confirmed during this timeframe.

**Choice Application Appeal Process:**

The school’s choice administrator and/or designees review all Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) and Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) applications and determine eligibility. Residency, income (if applicable), and age requirements for applicants entering K4, K5, and 1, and the prior year attendance requirement if the student is applying for the WPCPm are the only considerations for eligibility.

Determinations as to whether or not an application is eligible is done within the DPI mandated timeline. Ineligible applicants will be notified of their ineligibility by U.S. mail.

A parent or guardian may appeal an ineligible MPCP or WPCP application directly with the school. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the school office within five days of receiving written notice of ineligibility. All appeals will be reviewed by the choice administrator. A determination of the appeal will be made in a timely manner and the parent/guardian will be notified of the final decision by U.S. mail.

**Waiting Lists**

If there are more applicants than seats available for a grade, St Thomas Aquinas Academy will establish a waiting list. The school will inform families of their waitlist status and position on the waitlist. The school will notify families if seats become available and families must confirm or decline enrollment. Families are responsible for having up-to-date contact information at the school office.



Per state guidelines, MPCP and WPCP students are given the following preferences if a waitlist list is needed:

1. Returning choice students (from your school)
2. Siblings of the returning choice students
3. Continuing choice students (were choice at a different school)
4. Siblings of the continuing choice students
5. Siblings of new choice students

Per state guidelines, SNSP student preferences are given to returning SNSP students and to their siblings.

### **Choice Programs Religious Instruction And Activities Opt-Out**

Any student that participates in the MPCP, WPCP, or SNSP may opt out of religious instruction and activities, provided that the parent submits a written request to the student's teacher or principal. If a student is opted out of a religion course the student will be required to take an alternative non-religious course during that class period.

While the student may opt out of direct religious instruction, please be aware that faith is a central part of St Thomas Aquinas Academy's education model. Catholic values and teachings are included in many other courses and in daily activities, such as prayer. We will accommodate the religious opt out as best we can, however, Catholicism has a strong presence in our school.

## **COMMUNICATION**

To assure the best possible educational experience for all students, it is very important that parents, teachers, and the school leadership maintain open and ongoing communication. Good communication creates an atmosphere in which success and achievement can be fostered and recognized, and difficulties resolved. Good communication also helps to minimize inefficiency and misunderstandings.

### **PowerSchool/BrightArrow**

PowerSchool is a school management system. Our parents have access to attendance records and grade progress reports from teachers and email communication.

### **ClassDojo**

ClassDojo is a school communication platform. Teachers will share photos, videos, and messages. Parents can communicate with teachers through this platform as well. Day-to-day information will be posted to ClassDojo as the information becomes available. ClassDojo is available as an APP for your phone.

### **Weekly Newsletters**

Weekly newsletters will be sent out at the end of each week. These will be sent out through BrightArrow & ClassDojo.

### **Blurbs In The Parish Bulletins**

Updates about St. Thomas Aquinas Academy will be put into the parish bulletins.

### **School Website: [www.thomasaquinasacademy.com](http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com)**

The school website provides basic information to parents and the greater community, such as:

- Calendars for school activities.

- Policy statements (ex: dress code, internet use, attendance).
- School news on individual student achievements or group achievements.
- Information on the school learning activities.
- Information on school extra-curricular activities (ex: clubs and athletic program).
- Staff and faculty contact information.

**School Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/StThomasAquinasAcademyMKE>

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy’s Facebook page markets to and communicates with potential and attending families and the community showcasing what St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is all about.

**Conferences**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5124.1*

**Fall Parent Teacher Conferences**

- November 8, 2023 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. **or** November 9, 2023 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Winter Parent Teacher Conferences**

- February 21, 2024 4:00 p.m. -7:00 p.m. **or** February 22, 2024 1:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

**Change of Address and Emergency Information**

An emergency form is given to parents at the beginning of each school year and should be returned the first week of school. This form includes the home address and each parent’s home and business phone number, as well as the names of individuals the school should contact in the event parents cannot be reached. Any change in this information should be promptly reported to the school.

**Consent For Photo, Video, and Audio Use**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 1112.2*

From time to time, school staff take pictures or videos of students in their learning environments. The photographs and videos can be used in a variety of publications to document programs. The images may appear in, but not limited to, staff newsletters, community newsletters, media releases, and the website. The school keeps a record of students who do not have permission to be photographed. All students including new enrollees receive the photo consent form in their registration packets. Parents/Guardians who wish to change their child’s record should contact the office for a copy of the photo release form.

**Distribution Of Flyers, Letters, Ads, Etc...**

Please consult the school office for the correct procedure before sending any communication to school families or children. No one may distribute any flyers, letters, or other written materials without the prior consent and approval of the school office and the principal. Digital copies of flyers, information to be included in the mailer, or ads need to be shared to the office email ([schoolinfo@staamke.org](mailto:schoolinfo@staamke.org)) NO LATER THAN 8:00 am Monday of the week it is to be published.

**Parties Outside Of School**

When celebration and fun are scheduled outside of school hours, we request that invitations to parties be distributed away from the school grounds when just **some** of the students in the class will be invited. In other words please invite all of the students when handing out invites in school. This avoids hurt feelings on the part of those not invited.

## Classroom Communication

Classroom information will be sent home through the classrooms on the last day of the current school week via ClassDojo or newsletter, which may change based on the events of the week.

## Classroom Visits

Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit the school. Classroom visitations must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance of the visit for consideration of teacher lesson planning. All visitors must sign in at the main office upon entering the building and must wear the visitor's pass in a visible location during their visit.

## Emergency School Closing

### ***Snow Days, Heat Index Days, and Early Closure***

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6114.5*

In the event that schools are closed for the day due to weather conditions, every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians through the school based system (i.e. Bright Arrow). Please ensure that all contact information remains up to date throughout the school year to avoid missing important communications. Parents/guardians are encouraged to listen to local radio and television stations for weather related announcements. Closing school due to severe weather conditions is coordinated with the Milwaukee Public Schools. Each Seton Catholic School will also call in their closing following the announcement from MPS. In the event of multiple inclement weather days in a year (greater than two), we will ask our students to take chromebooks home in order to access remote learning to ensure that instructional hours are met and the school year will not have to be extended. Seton Catholic Schools will report to the following stations:

- WTMJ Channel 4 television; [www.wtmj4.com](http://www.wtmj4.com)
- WISN Channel 12 television; [www.wisn.com](http://www.wisn.com)
- FOX Channel 6 television; [www.fox6now.com](http://www.fox6now.com)

In the event of an emergency, school closing, or early dismissal (school closing prior to 3:15pm) due to some unforeseen circumstances, such as snowstorms, fire, break in the water pipe, etc..., every attempt will be made to notify every parent. If the school is unable to reach a parent or emergency contact person, a member of the staff will stay with the student(s) in the school or church until someone can pick them up.

In the case of an emergency school closing, all other extracurricular activities associated with the school will automatically be canceled. When the parish is closed for weather or days of obligation, the gym is closed and all activities are canceled.

## Voicing Concerns

The student's teacher is the first point of contact for parents who have questions or concerns about their child's academic progress, behavior, attitude, or any other school-related matter. If you feel the matter is still not resolved through discussions with the teacher, the next point of contact is the school principal, followed by the pastor designate.

Parents may contact a teacher or the principal:

- **By ClassDojo.** On the ClassDojo APP you'll see a "Messages" tab where you can select a teacher, then view and compose messages.
- **By email.** Use the link at [www.thomasaquinasacademy.com](http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com) to find your teacher's email address.
- **By phone.** When the principal or a teacher is unavailable for a phone call, it will be returned as soon as schedules permit, but within 24 hours.
- **In person.** Please pre-arrange a before or after school conference at a time that is mutually agreeable with a

teacher and/or principal.

- **By personal note.** Ordinarily, a response to a personal note will be sent home within 24 to 48 hours it is received.

## **Grievance Procedures For Parents**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 1312(a)*

The student's teacher is the first point of contact for parents who have questions or concerns about their child's academic progress, behavior, attitude, or other school-related matters. If you feel that the matter is still not resolved through discussions with the teacher, the next point of contact is the school principal, followed by the pastor designate.

In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, a parental grievance occurs when there is a disagreement between the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student enrolled in our schools or parish religious education programs and an employee (e.g. Principal, Teacher, DRE, Youth Minister, Catechist) of the parish/school. Before any formal grievance can be initiated the parent(s) or guardian(s) must meet with the employee with whom there is an issue to see if reconciliation or meeting of the minds can occur, consistent with the philosophy of the Archdiocese. If resolution occurs, there is no need to proceed. Any grievance not raised in a timely manner (generally not to exceed ten days) shall be considered waived.

### **Step 1**

If there is no resolution, the parent(s)/guardian(s) can initiate the formal grievance process by providing a letter to the employee's supervisor no later than ten (10) working days after the informal meeting noted above. The letter must contain the following:

- The date/time/place of the informal meeting.
- The name and position of the employee with whom the disagreement exists.
- Factual information and background regarding the disagreement.
- Specific recommendations for resolution of the issue.

After receipt of the letter, the supervisor will provide the employee five (5) workdays to respond and then schedule a meeting of all parties within ten (10) days to work through conciliation toward resolution. Should resolution occur, the process is concluded.

If resolution does not occur and the potential concern involves secondary schools, please go to Step 3. If resolution does not occur and the potential concern involves elementary schools or parish programs, proceed to Step 2.

### **Step 2**

If resolution does not occur in the informal meeting or in Step 1 and the concern involves elementary schools or parish programs, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will provide the pastor designate with a copy of the letter noted in Step 1 within five (5) working days of the completion of Step 1.

The pastor designate will immediately call on the employee for his/her response and attempt to resolve the situation in one of the following manners:

1. The pastor designate will convene the parties in an attempt to reach mutual agreement. (Disputes in which the pastor is the immediate supervisor begin here.)
2. The pastor designate may contact the Archdiocese Office for Schools, Child, and Youth Ministry for assistance in resolving the matter. If agreement is reached, the process is concluded.
3. The pastor designate may direct the local grievance committee to proceed with a review of all details and submit a recommendation to him. See Step 3.

### **Step 3**

If there is no resolution through Step 2, issues of concern will be heard by the local grievance committee. The local committee of three to five members will hear all sides of the dispute no later than thirty (30) days after the parent(s)/guardian(s) forwards a copy of the letter noted in Step 1 to the committee. The committee, appointed by the pastor (principal, or president in a secondary school) and drawn from a pool of candidates who possess qualifications that would allow them to discern impartially the issues at hand, will render a decision to all parties. If there is consensus of all parties, the process is concluded. If resolution does not occur a final Step 4 may be initiated.

**Step 4**

Should resolution not occur through Steps 1, 2, and 3, the parent(s)/guardian(s) can submit within ten (10) working days, a written appeal to the Archdiocese. Should an appeal not occur within the time period, the issue is considered closed.

The request for a hearing with the grievance committee shall be made through the Superintendent’s Office. It shall contain the statements of the parties concerned. The Delegate for parishes will convene the grievance committee and chair its proceedings.

Upon receipt of the written statement, the grievance committee will set up a hearing, at a mutually convenient time and place, for discussion of the concern with all parties involved.

The findings of the grievance committee will be communicated to all parties involved. Upon such communication the work of the grievance committee will be closed.

**ATTENDANCE**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5112, 5113*

**School Hours**

**Grades 4K-8: 8:00am-3:15pm**

- **7:40am - Students can enter the building for breakfast.**
- **7:55am - First bell; students enter the building.**
- **8:00am - Second bell; students are to be in their classrooms. Any student not in class by this time is considered tardy.**

**ATTENDANCE**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, in accordance with state law, requires that all students between six and eighteen years of age (and those students enrolled in 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten) attend school regularly during the full period and hours, religious holidays excepted, that the school in which the child is enrolled is in session until the end of the school term, quarter or semester of the school year in which the student becomes 18 years of age, unless they have an acceptable excuse, meet attendance exceptions outlined in state law, or have graduated from high school.

**Absences**

Attendance is the first step in ensuring academic achievement. In order for students to reach their God-given potential, they must be at school, an active participant in the classroom and make their strongest effort at school each and every day. St. Thomas Aquinas Academy requires regular attendance. Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their children are in school. Please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illnesses or hospitalization. Schools enrolled in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee are required to maintain an attendance rate of at least 95%.

## Absence Types and Definitions

Students are expected to attend school daily during the scheduled school hours from 8:00am-3:15pm.

**Present:** Students are considered present when they are in school for greater than 50% of the school day which is 3.25 hours or 11:15am.

**Absent:** Students are considered absent when they are not present for greater than 50% of the school day. (Students will be marked absent half day if they arrive at school after 11:15am and attend until the end of the day; students will be marked absent half day if they miss 3.25 hours of the school day).

- Excused absences include illness, family emergency, medical appointments, legal appointments, funeral or religious services, and documented technical issues.
- Unexcused absences include no notification from parents, slept in, and traffic.

**Tardy:** Students are tardy beginning at 8:00am.

## Attendance Support Plans

Schools and families will collaboratively develop Attendance Support Plans for students that reach 15 absences (excused or unexcused).

## Reporting Absences

Parents must communicate with the school office regarding their child's attendance based on the following:

- Call the school office before 8:00am, if their child will not be present and state reason for absence (see above for what constitutes an excused/unexcused absence).
- A verbal communication is required for any absences, stating the reason by the parent/guardian. You may leave a message at 414-744-1214 #1.
- If a student is absent without an excuse and/or phone call from the parent/guardian a phone call will be made by the school.
- Call the school office if their child will be leaving early or coming in late and state the reason.
- Check in with the office when picking up a child early to sign the child out.

## Missing Work Due To Absence

- Arrangements should be made for the child to make up work missed during his/her absence. Parents assume responsibility if a pupil falls behind in academic achievement due to extended absence for trips, illness, etc.
- For every school day missed, the student will have one school day to make up schoolwork. After that time, the student will receive an incomplete for any work not completed. Special circumstances due to extended illness or a death in the family will be handled on an individual basis.
- Homework will NOT be given early to students who will be leaving for a vacation that is taken during in-school time.
- If a parent wishes to pick up a child's homework during an absence, the parent should make arrangements with the teacher(s) before 9:00 a.m. for pick-up at the end of the school day.

## Extracurricular Activities And Absences

- A student who is absent from school is NOT allowed to participate in after school or evening activities.
- If students go home sick, they are not to return nor participate in extracurricular activities in the evening.
- The principal reserves the right to refuse after school activity for classroom misconduct or absenteeism.

**All Absences – “Excused” and “Unexcused” – Are Considered Absences:** Any day your child does not attend school is considered an absence.

### **Absences For Family Vacation**

Parents/guardians are asked to schedule family vacations when school is not in session. Parents/guardians must schedule a meeting with school administration for approval and academic plan, all other attendance policies are in effect.

Homework will **not** be given early to students who will be leaving for a vacation that is taken during in-school time. The student may be required to complete missed work on a timely basis, usually allowing 1 make-up day for each day of classes missed.

### **Early Dismissal For Health Appointments**

Parents/guardians are asked to schedule medical appointments outside of school time. In the case when a student has a medical appointment during school, s/he should not be absent for the entire school day. A parent/guardian must contact the school office for any student requiring early dismissal in order to keep a health appointment. The school office will communicate this with the classroom teacher.

- A parent/guardian collecting a child early must meet the child in the school office and sign the logbook. Children are not allowed to leave school early unaccompanied.
- If a child is to leave school with someone other than a parent, the parent is to notify the office. The person picking up the child must then come to the office and supply some form of identification before the child is allowed to leave the building. The person must also sign the child out in the logbook.
- A parent/guardian returning the child to school after an appointment must accompany the child to the office and sign the logbook. It is not acceptable to just drop off your child outside the building.

### **Suspensions Are Considered Absences**

If students are absent from school due to suspension, these days will be considered absences.

### **Consequences For EXCUSED Absences**

- **Five Absences in a Year:** Parent/Guardian will receive a call from a school counselor or administrator.
- **Ten Absences in a Year:** Parent/Guardian will be notified by a letter about the seriousness of the issue.
- **Fifteen Absences in a Year:** Parent/Guardian will be called to the school to meet with the school counselor, administrators, and the teacher(s) to discuss the absences and develop an attendance plan.
- **Twenty-five Absences in a Year:** The attendance plan will be revisited. At this point, the student will be considered truant and is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade level. School administration may file a written complaint with a relevant court or child services agency alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family has service needs.

### **Consequences For UNEXCUSED Absences:**

- **One Unexcused Absence:** A phone call home from school.
- **Three Unexcused Absences:** A phone call from a school counselor or school administrator.
- **Five Unexcused Absences:**
  - A letter is sent to parents notifying them of the number of unexcused absences.
  - School Counselor/Administration contacts parents to discuss nature both the nature of the unexcused absences and offer support or help
  - If unexcused absences continue, school counselor and/or administration schedules in-person or Zoom meeting and develops an attendance plan with the parents

- **Ten Unexcused Absences:**
  - A letter is sent to parents notifying them of the number of unexcused absences.
  - School Counselor and/or administration schedules a mandatory meeting with parents to discuss the nature of unexcused absences with intent to help and support; a formal plan is developed. The satisfactory completion of said plan of action may be used as criteria for enrollment of the student in the school for the succeeding school year.
  - School reserves the right to unenroll a student who is not present for 7 consecutive days of the school year and no contact has been made with parent and/or guardian. This is documented through phone calls, emails, and certified letters. If a school implements this policy, a certified letter is sent to the parent/guardian notifying their child has been unenrolled.
- **Fifteen Unexcused Absences:**
  - Parents/Guardian will be called to the school to meet with the school counselor, administrators, and the teacher(s) to discuss the absences and develop an attendance plan.

## Tardiness/Late Arrival

Getting to school on time is key to your child's success – at school and in life. Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their children are in school on time. Students who are late often miss essential math and reading instruction, disrupt the learning of other children, and risk falling behind. We want to teach our students the importance of being on time.

## Definition Of Tardiness:

Students arriving after 8:00 am are marked tardy. If there are habitual office calls for tardies the family must meet with the Principal.

Students who arrive late-regardless of the reason-should report to the school office for a pass before going to class. A parent should accompany the student to the office, send a note, or phone the office to acknowledge the late arrival. If a student arrives late due to a health appointment and brings a note from the doctor's office, it is considered an excused tardy. A tardy is marked if a student is not in the classroom when the bell rings at 8:00am. Time of arrival will be marked in PowerSchool. Tardiness will be reflected on the student's permanent record. Any student arriving after or leaving before 11:15am will be assessed a half-day absence.

## Consequences For Tardiness:

- **Five Tardies in a Trimester:** Parent/Guardian will be called by a school counselor or administrator about the seriousness of the issue.
- **Ten Tardies in a Trimester:** Parent/Guardian will be notified by a letter to meet with a school counselor or a school administrator to discuss the seriousness of the issue.
- **Fifteen Tardies in a Trimester:** School administration, counselor, parent, and the student will develop an attendance support plan outlining steps that will be taken to improve the child's promptness to school.
- **Twenty-five Tardies in a Trimester:** The attendance plan will be revisited. At this point, the student will be considered truant and is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade level. School administration may file a written complaint with a relevant court or child services agency alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family has service needs.

## Arrival And Departure



For the safety of the students, the school issues specific procedures for dropping off and picking up children at school. These procedures address traffic flow and parking in the school parking lot and surrounding streets. Procedures may be revised from time to time, in response to safety issues that may arise. All parents and students are expected to follow these procedures as communicated by the school.

At arrival, any student dropped off prior to 7:40am needs to be enrolled and attend extended care.

All students will be dismissed from the parking lot side of the school only. All siblings in a family will be dismissed with the youngest child.

- All students must be dropped off and picked up from the back parking lot.
- **There is no stopping/parking on Norwich Avenue before or after school.**
- There is no parking in the main parking lot at any time.
- If you want to accompany your child on the playground, you may park on the small lot, south of the driveway and cross at the crosswalk. All students crossing the driveway must be accompanied by an adult, both before and after school.
- The entrance and exit driveways are for cars only; please use the church walkway or the side drive west of the school if you are walking to and from the parking lot.
- The parking lot is one-way, entering off Whitnall and exiting onto Austin.
- Do not enter the lot from Austin either with a car or on foot.
- When dropping off your child, please form a single line in the right lane and pull up as far as possible before letting your child out of the car. You can exit using the left lane.
- When picking up your child, please follow the same procedure as in the morning, pulling up as far as possible, forming a single line in the right lane. Once your child has entered the car, you can then exit using the left lane.
- When in the car line during drop off and pick-up, parents MAY NOT exit their vehicle to let their children in and out of the car. If your child needs assistance getting in or out of the vehicle, you must park in the small lot and accompany your child to their line.
- Due to safety concerns, when in the car line during drop off and pick-up, students MAY NOT exit the vehicle on the driver's side.
- Please pull forward as the cars in front of you exit.
- Parents may not leave a car unattended while in the drop off/pick up lane.

### **Non-Motorized Transportation**

Students who ride bicycles, scooters, skateboards, or rollerblades to or from school must follow these safety rules:

- Bikes and scooters must be walked anywhere on school or parish property.
- Bikes and scooters must be locked up at the racks provided.
- Skateboards and rollerblades must be carried anywhere on school or parish property.
- No riding is allowed during recess.
- The school takes no responsibility for any stolen personal property of students or parents.
- All rules stated above for arrival and departure also apply here, as applicable.

### **Student Walkers/Bus Riders**

Students who walk home or take a city bus from school must have a signed permission slip on file in the school office. Please complete a Student Walker form. At dismissal, once students and siblings are outside, students must leave the premises.

### **Inclement Weather**

Students should be suitably dressed for inclement weather, as they will be going outdoors for a short period each day, weather permitting. When there is rain or severe cold weather, children will stay inside for recess. The decision for indoor recess will be at the discretion of the principal.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Student Code Of Conduct

In order to provide a safe and productive school environment, certain rules and regulations have been developed for all students. At St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, we expect students to show respect and courtesy toward other students and all school staff. Students should conduct themselves in a respectful, orderly way that does not interfere with learning or safety (their own or anyone else’s). The code of conduct applies anywhere on school property, while attending school-sponsored events, and while going to and from school. Incentives and consequences are established in our Discipline Rubric and utilized in all areas of the student experience.

**We hold ourselves to high standards using our core values:**

<b>SERVICE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We fully participate in Mass.</li> <li>● We are prayerful and respectful in Church.</li> <li>● We participate in service to our classrooms and community.</li> <li>● We use our gifts and talents to help our friends and others in need.</li> <li>● We share equipment at recess.</li> <li>● We show compassion and happiness.</li> <li>● We do monthly service projects.</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSFORMATION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We focus on living our faith everyday.</li> <li>● We meet high expectations and set high goals for ourselves.</li> <li>● We help keep our classroom organized.</li> <li>● We actively participate in group learning.</li> <li>● We strive to become independent learners.</li> <li>● We have a growth mindset.</li> <li>● We use appropriate voice levels.</li> <li>● We help each other remain focused.</li> <li>● We use respectful responses to teacher directions.</li> </ul>
<b>ALL IN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We follow through on our values.</li> <li>● We are focused on our success.</li> <li>● We praise each other’s work.</li> <li>● We respect each other’s opinions and voices.</li> <li>● We complete our classwork on time and with quality.</li> <li>● We are prepared for class.</li> <li>● We respect the speaker in the room by listening and tracking.</li> <li>● We fully participate in all class activities.</li> <li>● We follow the directions the first time.</li> </ul>

- We remain on task and engaged at all times.
- We use active listening ears.
- We take ownership and responsibility for our learning.

**JOY**

- We have a desire to learn.
- We give high fives or fist bumps.
- We openly praise God.
- We celebrate success.
- We use positive language.
- We laugh together.
- We show appreciation and support for everyone.
- We take risks.
- We practice physical and verbal self-control.
- We build each other up.
- We use self talk.
- We help make each class a joyful experience.
- We show positive sportsmanship.

**COMMUNITY**

- We foster a sense of family.
- We have buddies.
- We eat together.
- We accept people for who they are.
- We are inclusive of everyone.
- We keep our hands, feet, and bodies to ourselves and respect each other’s space.
- We treat school property with respect.
- We respect our school appropriately in the community.
- We present ourselves in a neat and tidy fashion.

**JUSTICE**

- We peer mediate.
- We offer constructive feedback.
- We include our world and community into our conversation and actions.
- We protect each other from bullying.
- We take responsibility for our actions.
- We use our technology appropriately.
- We care about our peers and teachers.
- We are honest and tell the truth.
- We play fair.

**Seton School Culture Plan**

School culture is more important than ever. The return to in-school education from COVID and the social-emotional adjustments needed by students has highlighted the need for a strong school culture. The Seton family of schools and our 12 individual schools are ready and poised to rise to the challenge of building and strengthening our school culture. Our blueprint for Seton school culture starts with our Catholic Faith and Seton Vision.



Level 2, 3, and 4	Serious disrespect, not following consequences, repeated misbehaviors, and other serious infractions.	School Office by leaders/Culture Team
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\**Student Support Plans* to successfully support, implement and improve student academics, behavior, and needs. These plans include the SIP (Student Intervention Plan) and the Restorative Student Behavior Plan, as well as individual student plans..

\**School RAP* – detailed routines and procedures that keeps staff and students informed and clear of expectations in frequent and common school routines like school arrival and dismissal, breakfast and lunch, hallway and recess routines and procedures.

\**School Joy Calendar and Celebrations* with daily, weekly and monthly celebrations and events for students, staff and families. These positive experiences will develop belief and belonging in the school.

\**School Culture Teams* with school leaders, counselors, and staff to deal with Level 2, 3, and 4 infractions. School Culture Teams will plan Joy calendars, support students, communicate with families, and create action plans.

\**Student reflection areas* with prayer corners, “cool down” zones, and reflection space to keep students in classrooms and back on academic and behavioral track.

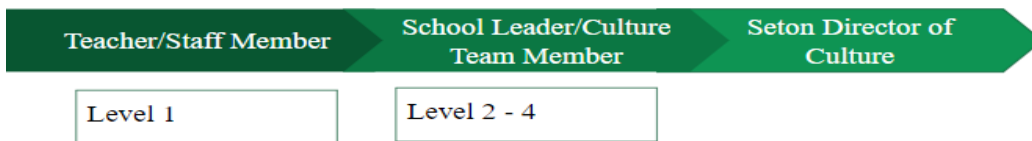
\**A Seton Catholic School “Commitment to Excellence”* agreement signed by school staff, students and families with expectations and responsibilities by each group.

\**School staff training, professional development, practice and coaching* to successfully implement and improve the Seton culture plan.

What happens if the parents/guardians are not happy with the results or want more of a voice in the process of the Seton Culture Plan?

As with all school-related issues, the first parent/guardian contact should go directly to the school representative involved. For example, Level 1 is the teacher/staff and level 2-4 is the school leader or Culture Team member. If there is dissatisfaction with the Culture results, contact the school leader. Finally, Seton has assigned Paul Hohl as Director of School Culture to support the process as well.

Flow Chart on who to consult on the Response to Behavior process or other School Culture issues.



Seton School Culture planning is based on our Family of Schools Catholic Identity and Seton Shared Values. Our Catholic Identity and Shared Values guide us in all relationships with students and families.

Our Seton Culture Plan is aligned with our Shared Values below focusing on Community, Joy, Transformation, Service, All In & Justice.

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5131.1*

*De la Política del Arquidiócesis de Milwaukee 5131.5*

It is imperative to maintain an educational environment that encourages optimum human growth and development. Respect for the dignity of each person is essential to Catholic tradition. It is vital that each school and religious education program maintain an environment free of any form of harassment, bullying, or intimidation.

Bullying and harassment may be defined as a single incident or a pattern of behavior wherein the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment.

Bullying and harassment behaviors are prohibited in all school and parish buildings, property, and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased, or used by the parish/school. This includes public transportation regularly used by students to go to and from school. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school and parish supervision.

Bullying and harassment encompass a broad range of physical or verbal behavior which can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Physical assaults, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior.
- Verbal threats or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks.
- Indirect threats, spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, and social exclusion.
- Cyber bullying or the sending of insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or by use of the internet.

All staff members and parish/school officials who observe or become aware of bullying are required to report these acts to the administration. Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct to the staff or administration.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously. A clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report will be made by the recipient of the report.

There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the administration shall take disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate.

## **Reporting Procedure For Bullying And Harassment**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5131.1*

Any person who has been subjected to harassment should contact any adult on the school or parish staff. The person who has been notified of the incident must immediately report this information to the principal, pastor, or appropriate supervisor. An investigation shall be conducted immediately. If the allegation is confirmed, appropriate action will be taken. Appropriate action could include, but is not limited to:

- Written documentation of the incident
- Disciplinary sanction(s)
- Peer mediation
- Professional counseling
- Referral to outside agencies
- Probation/Suspension/Expulsion

To the extent a complaint of harassment involves sexual misconduct or the apparent infliction of physical or emotional damage, the appropriate civil authorities will be notified pursuant to Wis. Stat. 48.981. According to archdiocesan protocol, any case involving sexual misconduct also must be reported to the Coordinator of Safeguarding All of God's Family.

## **Bullying Prevention Policy**

Students at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy will follow specific procedures to prevent bullying.

- Treat others respectfully.
- Refuse to bully others.
- Take a stand and refuse to let individuals be bullied.
- Refrain from observing, laughing, or joining in a situation when another student is being bullied.
- Make an effort to include everyone in play, especially those who are frequently left out of daily activities.
- Act responsibly and report any episodes of bullying to an adult.

Parents will conduct themselves in the following manner to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying:

- Be alert and sensitive to bullying occurrences and communicate accordingly with the school faculty and staff.
- Collaborate with school faculty and staff members to resolve student conflicts before such occurrences escalate into bullying.
- Maintain an open-minded attitude when reports of bullying involve their own children and take accusations seriously.
- Support investigations of bullying incidents.
- Avoid gossip and model Christian behavior.
- Work diligently with their children to reinforce the Bullying Prevention Policy.

Faculty and staff will enact the following measures to prevent bullying and help create a safe environment for children:

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground.
- Watch for signs of bullying and put an end to this type of behavior.
- Respond in a prompt, sensitive, and discreet manner to reports of bullying.
- Realize the serious nature of bullying, and respect the parents' concerns.
- Investigate and record in writing all incidents regarding bullying.
- Assign and implement consequences for bullying.
- Provide follow-up and closure for students and parents.

The consequences of bullying will be grade-appropriate and may differ based on whether the bullying is verbal or physical.

- Bullying behavior will be addressed immediately. Bullying complaints may be presented verbally or in written form. A copy of the student report on bullying is available in the school office upon request.
- Following procedure, school staff members will gather information, review the situation, and determine the necessary consequences.
- Disciplinary actions may include: verbal reprimand, notification and/or meeting with parents, detention, potential suspension from school and/or athletic activities, possible expulsion from school, and/or involvement of the police.

## **Damages**

Our students are expected to care for all school property respectfully and properly. They will be held responsible for deliberate or careless damage to school property or equipment.

## **Drugs & Alcohol**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5144.12*

Providing a safe school environment, and at the same time promoting an atmosphere of health and wellness, is critical to the philosophy and overall mission of Catholic schools. As part of a pastoral response to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free learning environment, an administrator reserves the right to breathalyze or conduct drug testing of anyone who in the opinion of the administration exhibits behaviors consistent with the use of alcohol or illegal drugs. School personnel reserve the legal right to inspect personal belongings if illegal substances are reported or if students exhibit erratics or impaired behaviors or are believed to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

The possession, use, or sale of drugs is considered a very serious matter. Drugs include tobacco products, alcohol, all controlled substances prohibited by law, any mind-altering substance, or any prescription or over-the-counter drug except those for which permission to use in school has been granted. Students who are found with drugs, alcohol, any mind-altering substance, or any controlled substance during the school day or at any school-related activity will be subject to strict disciplinary action that could include expulsion. Counseling may be required as a condition of these students remaining at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy following a first violation. The first incident of distribution, sale, or inducing another student to use drugs/alcohol may be grounds for expulsion.

An authorized employee, agent, or law enforcement officer, as defined in s. 102.475 (8) ©, authorized by the school may require a pupil to provide one or more samples of his or her breath for the purpose of determining the presence of alcohol in the pupil's breath whenever an authorized employee, agent, or officer has reasonable suspicion that the pupil is under the influence of alcohol on school premises. The authorized employee, agent, or law officer may use a breath-screening device approved by the Department of Transportation for the purpose of determining the presence of alcohol in the pupil's breath. Refusal to submit to the breath-screening test results in immediate suspension. The results of the breath-screening device, or the fact that a pupil refused to submit to a breathalyzer test, shall be made available for use in any hearing or proceeding regarding the discipline, suspension, or expulsion of a student due to alcohol use.

## **Gang Activity**

Gangs typically represent standards and values that are contrary to our Christian faith. Students who demonstrate gang activity by way of physical appearance, behavior, etc...will be subject to a conference with their parents or guardians. Further offenses may lead to a suspension and/or consideration for expulsion.

## **Gambling**

Participating in games of chance for the purpose of exchanging money and other things of value are prohibited. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences, possibly including suspension or expulsion depending upon the seriousness of the infraction.

## **Gender Identity Policy**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 4470*

All required school documentation (e.g., registration/application form, official records/transcripts, official school communications, other forms, etc.) that requires the designation of a student's sex will reflect the student's biological sex. Students will be addressed using the pronouns associated with their biological sex and may not designate a "preferred pronoun".

Students will be required to use the bathroom and locker room which matches their biological sex. In extraordinary circumstances, the school may make an individual-use bathroom available to a student.



Students may not take “puberty blockers,” even if self-administered, on parish or school property, with the purpose of a potential or actual “gender assignment”.

## **Smoking**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5140.4*

All Catholic schools shall be 100% tobacco free and smoke free in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 101.123(2)(a). The use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia by students, staff, and visitors are prohibited within school facilities, vehicles, grounds, and at all school sponsored events. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences, possibly including suspension or expulsion depending upon the seriousness of the infraction.

## **Vandalism**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5131.5*

Vandalism against parish or school property caused by students must be dealt with appropriately by the administration.

The administration is directed to:

- Identify the student(s) involved.
- Call together persons, including the parents, needed to study the causes.
- Decide upon disciplinary action and/or assessment of costs against the student’s parents.
- Take any constructive actions needed to prevent future vandalism.

## **Weapons-Free Zone**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6114.6*

All schools will be maintained as weapon-free zones in protection of the safety of students, staff, and visitors and in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes.

It is a felony for any person to knowingly possess a weapon, concealed or otherwise, on school grounds. Firearms, dangerous weapons, or look-alike weapons are prohibited from school property, school vehicles, or at any school related events. This prohibition does not apply to law enforcement officers discharging their official duties or military personnel who are armed in the line of duty.

Any person in violation of this policy shall be immediately reported to the police. A student or employee violating this policy shall be subject to further disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination of employment. The principal shall notify the parents/guardians of any student who is in possession of a weapon and advise them of pending disciplinary action.

Schools shall publish this weapons policy in all school handbooks. It is recommended that a sign be posted on school property to provide appropriate notice of this ban on weapons.

It is strongly recommended that parishes without schools prohibit weapons in buildings used for child and youth programs.

## **Classroom Discipline Procedures**

Each teacher will set the discipline policy within his or her classroom. Rules will be posted in the classroom and sent home, stating consequences for actions as well as rewards for good conduct. Please contact your child’s teacher with

any questions about his or her own classroom disciplinary procedures. Teachers will communicate positive interactions and behavior through email, notes, and/or Class Dojo.

## **Search And Seizure**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5145.2*

Schools reserve the right to search anything brought onto parish/school property. Lockers, desks, textbooks, and other materials or supplies loaned by the parish/school to students remain the property of the parish/school, and may be opened by personnel for cleaning, maintenance, or in the case of emergencies. When prohibited items are found in the course of routine cleaning, maintenance, or in the case of an emergency, they will be confiscated, and a report will be made to the school administrator who will determine whether further investigation is warranted. The school administrator shall have the right to access any content, including text messages, photos, or address books on cell phones or other electronic devices confiscated from students. Illegal or contraband materials found during a search shall be turned over to law enforcement officials. Officers of the law, appearing with duly processed search warrants, will be accorded the right to inspect as per the court's order.

## **Police Questioning And Apprehension**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5145*

Law enforcement officers may not remove a student from a parish/school building for questioning while the student is properly in attendance without permission of the student's parent, regardless of the student's age. A law enforcement officer has the right to question a student, even without a warrant. The school administrator is not required to notify the parents before allowing a pupil to be questioned by law enforcement.

A law enforcement officer may remove a child when possessing a warrant for the student's arrest or an order signed by the judge of the children's court.

Regardless of parental permission, the school administrator should not attempt to interfere with the police investigation.

## **Probation, Suspension, And Expulsion**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5144*

Whenever a student's conduct is such that it demonstrates a repeated refusal to obey parish/school rules, endangers the property, health, or safety of others, or consistently disrupts the learning environment, action may be taken to restrict his/her privileges and rights of program attendance.

The school reserves the right to contact law enforcement if a student's conduct is a potential criminal act. If a student is found to have committed a criminal act, the school may impose disciplinary action in addition to any court-imposed consequences.

Probation, suspension, and/or expulsion procedures may be exercised in response to serious misconduct by a student, including but not limited to the following behaviors:

- Possession or use of weapons, "look alike" weapons, or any object deemed potentially harmful to others.
- Possessing, using, purchasing, selling, or distributing illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol • Possession or use of tobacco products, tobacco-related devices, imitation tobacco products, lighters, or electronic cigarettes.
- Vandalism.
- Fighting, physical or verbal harassment, assaults, or behavior intended to cause harm or fear.
- Bullying, cyber bullying, or any aggressive behavior that includes threats, intimidation, social exclusion and isolation, extortion, and the use of a computer or telecommunication to send embarrassing, slanderous, threatening, or intimidation messages.

- Hazing or hazing-type initiations.
- Any severe or inappropriate conduct on school premises or at school related activities that endanger the life or safety of another.
- A pattern of behavior (e.g., neglect of duties, truancy, or opposition to authority) that shows persistent resistance to making the changes which would enable the student to prosper from the instruction available.

The actions and procedures for probation, suspension, and expulsion must be published in the school handbooks.

## **Probation**

A student may be placed on probation if in the judgment of the administration he/she has experienced chronic behavioral problems and/or is new to the school. During the probation time, no serious misconduct will be tolerated, and the student is expected to show positive behaviors 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 the school.

All students new to a school are considered on probation for a minimum of one semester.

## **Suspension**

Suspension is considered a temporary removal from the classroom/school for serious misconduct or repeated occurrences of less serious infractions. Factors that must be considered in a decision to suspend include issues such as any previous disciplinary action, the age of the student, family and personal circumstances, recognized disability, the behavior in question, and its impact on others.

Suspensions from attendance at classes or school as determined by the school administrator must include:

- An investigation by school officials prior to any suspension.
- Notice verbally or in writing to the student and parent/guardian listing the reasons for the suspension and offering a meeting with school officials within a reasonable period of time.
- An opportunity for the student to attend a meeting with a school administrator which provides, at minimum, a recitation of the infraction, and if the student denies the charges, a summary of evidence; an opportunity for the student to tell his/her side of the story, to present new evidence, and to question the reasons for the intended suspension. Parents may attend the meeting at their request or if the administrator requests their presence.
- Notification to the parent prior to sending a student home from school.
- Notification of the conditions of the suspension, including removal from school activities or events while suspended.

A maximum of five days of suspension can be imposed unless a written notice of an expulsion hearing is scheduled. Such notice shall allow not more than a total of fifteen consecutive school days to be served in suspension until the expulsion hearing is held. Such a suspension is for investigative purposes. Suspended students remain the responsibility of the school. The final decision regarding suspension rests with the principal/administrator.

## **In School Suspension (ISS)**

At the discretion of administration students may receive an in-school suspension for repeated level one and level two infractions. An In-School Suspension (ISS) is a disciplinary action step aimed for behavior management allowing students to remain in a learning environment while removed from the rest of their classmates. The duration of an ISS may vary, ranging from hours to a maximum of 2 days.

The final decision regarding any suspensions rests with the principal/administrator.

## **Expulsion**

As a definition, expulsion is considered a termination of enrollment, permanently or for an extended period of time. Expulsion shall be considered as a rarity and used only as a very last measure.

Expulsion results from repeated refusal to obey school rules or from conduct which endangers property, health, or safety of others and is deemed to be in the best interest of the school. An extremely serious single offense may also be cause for expulsion.

Students asked not to return the following year for behavior reasons are considered to be expelled.

The Seton Catholic Schools Chief Academic Officer/designee is to be informed before any action leading to expulsion is taken.

### **Expulsion Procedures**

Expulsion can take place only after an investigation by school officials and an expulsion hearing has been held. Parents/legal guardians shall be notified in writing at least five days before the hearing is to take place; this notification period can be waived by mutual consent of the parents and the school if an expedited hearing date is advisable.

- The Expulsion Hearing Committee is composed of 3-5 people. The committee composition should be such as to ensure objectivity. Members from various sources within the parish/network/school may include current or former parish trustees or pastoral council members; parents of former students; or at-large parishioners. The administrator may allow the student to choose a faculty person to serve on the committee. Current members of the School Advisory Commission (parish school), School Board of Directors (separately incorporated school or network of schools) or standing committees of either may not serve on an expulsion committee.
- An expulsion hearing is not a legal procedure; therefore, neither party may have an attorney present during the hearing.
- For confidentiality reasons, it is recommended that attendance at the hearing should be limited to the student and his/her parents/guardians. Child advocates, friends, or other family members should not be allowed to attend the hearing.
- At the elementary level, the pastor is present for the entire hearing itself and during the deliberations of the hearing committee. At a secondary level, the principal is present for the entire hearing itself and during the deliberations of the hearing committee. In a network, the Chief Academic Officer, or equivalent, is present for the entire hearing itself and during the deliberations of the hearing committee. If there is no Chief Academic Officer, the president is present for the entire hearing itself and during the deliberations of the hearing committee.
- The school officials (e.g., elementary school principal, high school principal (network school) high school dean of students, or vice principal (stand-alone high school)) receive a specific and limited amount of time to present the chronology of events that led up to the initiation of the expulsion process, along with the supportive documentation and rationale as to why the expulsion is being sought.
- The student who is the subject of the hearing and his/her parents are given equal time to present their side of the story and reasons as to why expulsion is not warranted.
- Committee members can ask clarifying questions at the end of each presentation time. Representatives of the two sides are not to interrupt the other during their respective presentations.
- A brief amount of time (5-7 minutes) is given to both sides for questions, responses, and final summative comments. Any last questions from the hearing committee can occur at this time also.
- The hearing has ended, and the school representatives and the student/parents leave. The hearing committee weighs the facts and issues that were presented and gives a recommendation as to what it believes is appropriate disciplinary action; this recommendation should be briefly summarized in writing.
- The pastor/network CAO or equivalent/high school principal (stand-alone high school) can accept the recommendation totally, in part, or reject it altogether. The pastor at the elementary level, CAO or equivalent at

the network level, or school principal at the high school level has the final responsibility for the decision to expel or not.

- The family of the student is informed of the final decision within 24 hours. A formal letter is sent by certified mail detailing the final action and signed by the pastor and principal no later than the day after the hearing. If the decision to expel is upheld, a date and time by which the expulsion becomes official are also indicated in the letter. The parent is given the right to still withdraw the student from school before the deadline; this withdrawal must be done through a written notice signed by the parent(s). The letter must include notification of the right to appeal the decision. A student who is withdrawn during this phase is considered expelled.

## **Appeals Process**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5144*

The student or his/her parent or legal guardian may within five (5) school days following the notification of the expulsion appeal the decision to the pastor/network/school president in writing with rationale for appeal. The pastor/network/school president will review the facts and investigate that correct procedures were followed as defined by Archdiocesan and school policy. If procedures were not followed, the pastor/network/school will refer the issue back to the school administrator with a recommendation about which step of the procedure needs to be further processed. Once a review has taken place and the matter is decided at a local level, there is no additional appeal of the decision at the archdiocesan level.

The School Advisory Commission (parish school), School Board of Directors or Board of Trustees (separately incorporated school or network of schools) is not involved in the expulsion proceedings and is not a source of appeal.

## **DRESS CODE**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5132*

It is the policy of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy to have a dress code that reflects an attitude of respect. The way we dress reflects our respect for ourselves, for our school community and for the educational goals of our school. Cooperation in wearing a uniform encourages responsibility and self-discipline on the part of the student. All students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed for their learning environment.

Uniform clothing is available at Sunrise Clothiers, The Uniform Place, Target, Kohl's, and online at [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com). In addition, the school may arrange a resale of uniforms at the end of the school year so families have an opportunity to buy and sell used uniform clothing.

Interpretation and implementation of any part of this school uniform/dress code policy will be at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the teachers. Examples of adjustments to these days may include themes of the day (e.g., Brewers Day, Patriotic Day, etc...) On these special days, all other dress code guidelines will still apply.

Parents are responsible for ensuring the uniform policy is followed so teachers do not need to take class time to enforce the policy. Parents will be notified when their child does not meet the guidelines or is out of uniform, and if necessary, will be called to bring appropriate clothes for the student to wear. Dress code violations may result in loss of "non-uniform day" privileges and/or conference with parents and further disciplinary action.

**General Dress Requirements**

**Grooming**

Shirts must be worn tucked in, they should be an appropriate size. Students are expected to be clean and well-groomed with natural hair color and styles, and anything worn that is unsafe or distracting to the learning environment is not permitted. Anything distracting or unsafe to the educational program is not allowed and is subject to administrative discretion.

<b>Dress Code</b> Dress code is required except on special “dress up” or “dress down” days.		
	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>
<b>Shorts/Skort (girls)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permitted on non-Mass days in August, September, May, &amp; June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> <li>Twill/Dress</li> <li>Mid-thigh or longer</li> <li>No Cargo shorts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> <li>Twill/Dress</li> <li>Mid-thigh or longer</li> <li>No Cargo shorts</li> </ul>
<b>Pants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pants have one zipper, two front pockets, and two back pockets</li> <li>Pant cuffs must cover any footwear worn</li> <li>No painter’s, cargo, and/or skinny pants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> </ul>
<b>Polo Shirts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long or short sleeved shirts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunter Green/White/Gray</li> <li>Plain, short sleeved white T-shirts may be worn under uniform shirts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunter Green/White/Gray</li> <li>Plain, short sleeved white T-shirts may be worn under uniform shirts</li> </ul>
<b>Skirts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> <li>Mid-thigh or longer</li> <li>Shorts can be worn underneath if not visible</li> </ul>	
<b>Polo Dresses/Jumpers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki/Navy</li> <li>Mid-thigh or longer</li> <li>Shorts can be worn underneath if not visible</li> <li>Collared uniform shirt underneath (jumpers)</li> </ul>	
<b>Sweaters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunter Green/White/Gray/Navy</li> <li>Cardigan or pullover with no hood</li> <li>Collared uniform shirt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunter Green/White/Gray/Navy</li> <li>Cardigan or pullover with no hood</li> <li>Collared uniform shirt</li> </ul>

	underneath	underneath
<b>Sweatshirts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hunter Green/White/Gray</li> <li>● Uniform shirt underneath</li> <li>● Only school logo hoodies will be permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hunter Green/White/Gray</li> <li>● Uniform shirt underneath</li> <li>● Only school logo hoodies will be permitted.</li> </ul>
<b>Footwear</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Shoes must be appropriate for the school setting and not pose any safety issues</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dress or athletic in good condition</li> <li>● Closed toe</li> <li>● Closed back</li> <li>● Shoe laces must be tied</li> <li>● Heels shorter than 1"</li> <li>● Winter-bring outdoor boots</li> <li>● Footwear must fit appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dress or athletic in good condition</li> <li>● Closed toe</li> <li>● Closed back</li> <li>● Shoe laces must be tied</li> <li>● Heels shorter than 1"</li> <li>● Winter-bring outdoor boots</li> <li>● Footwear must fit appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Socks/Tights/Leggings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniform colored socks preferred and worn at all times</li> <li>● White, gray, black, or navy blue socks</li> <li>● Navy, gray, hunter green or white leggings or tights underneath jumper or skirt</li> <li>● No pattern leggings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniform colored socks preferred and worn at all times</li> <li>● White, gray, black, or navy blue socks</li> </ul>
<b>Jewelry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One or two pair of earrings (smaller than a dime) permitted</li> <li>● Bracelets/necklaces allowed but limited to one or two and no dangling</li> <li>● Wrist watch</li> <li>● No gauges; fashion glasses</li> <li>● No other piercing or tattoos allowed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One pair of earrings (smaller than a dime) permitted</li> <li>● Bracelets/necklaces allowed but limited to one or two and no dangling</li> <li>● Wrist watch</li> <li>● No gauges; fashion glasses</li> <li>● No other piercing or tattoos allowed</li> </ul>
<b>Hair styles &amp; Makeup</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Natural-looking hair colors and styles</li> <li>● No makeup may be worn except as follows: 6th-8th grade girls may wear light mascara &amp; skin tone acne medication or concealer</li> <li>● No false fingernails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Natural-looking hair colors and styles</li> </ul>

<b>Non-Permissible Dress</b>	
<b>The following are <u>not</u> permitted in our dress code policy and dress code for <u>boys</u> and <u>girls</u>.</b>	
<b>Bottoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rolled at waist</li> <li>● Not Shorter Than Mid-thigh</li> <li>● Denim/Jeans**</li> <li>● Cargo Pants**</li> <li>● Knit/sweatpants</li> <li>● Spandex pants</li> <li>● Nylon athletic shorts or pants**</li> <li>● Extra pockets or zippers</li> <li>● Low rise</li> <li>● Decorative Trim (i.e. studs, chains, etc...)</li> <li>● Decorative tears/slits</li> <li>● Baggy/Oversized</li> <li>● Too tight</li> <li>● Fringed</li> <li>● No holes or rips</li> <li>● Insignias or logos</li> <li>● See through fabrics</li> <li>● Camouflage (all colors/styles)</li> <li>● Pajama pants</li> </ul>
<b>Tops</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insignias or logos</li> <li>● See through fabrics</li> <li>● Hoods**</li> <li>● Spaghetti straps</li> <li>● Halter tops</li> <li>● Tank-tops</li> <li>● Bare midriffs</li> <li>● Ads/gestures/language/phrases/messages that are offensive and/or inappropriate (as determined by the principal)</li> </ul>
<b>Shoes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Open back/Clogs</li> <li>● Flip flops</li> <li>● Jellies</li> <li>● Wheelies</li> <li>● Croc style shoes</li> <li>● Open toes**</li> <li>● Platforms</li> <li>● Un-tied/unstrapped/unfastened</li> </ul>
<b>Socks/Tights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Non-uniform colored tights or socks**</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Body piercings other than ears</li> <li>● Tattoos/body art (temporary, henna, permanent, etc...)</li> <li>● Large chain necklaces and bracelets</li> <li>● Dangling, hooped, or large (bigger than a dime) earrings</li> <li>● Extreme styles and colors for hair and makeup</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decoration, design shavings, phrases, words for hair (including beads and string-wrapping)</li> <li>● Fake nails</li> <li>● Sweat bands</li> <li>● Rubber bands</li> <li>● Hats (Decorative/non-“winter weather” hats)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hats not intended for winter weather <b>may not</b> be worn in the building</li> <li>○ Cold weather hats worn on school campus must face straight forward or backwards</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**\*\*Items marked with \*\* are only permissible on Spirit and Dress-down days.**

Spirit Days		
Dress Code Guideline Apply With The Following Exceptions		
	GIRLS	BOYS
Pants and shorts (shorts must be mid-thigh or longer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniforms may be worn</li> <li>● Cargo pants</li> <li>● Jeans</li> <li>● Capris</li> <li>● Loose athletic pants or shorts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniforms may be worn</li> <li>● Cargo pants</li> <li>● Jeans</li> <li>● Loose athletic pants or shorts</li> </ul>
<b>STAA Spirit Wear Tops</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>No team jerseys or uniforms should be worn</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School and athletic: STAA T-shirts (short or long sleeved), sweatshirts, hoodies, and team shirts</li> <li>● Hunter green, or gray white shirts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School and athletic: STAA T-shirts (short or long sleeved), sweatshirts, hoodies, and team shirts</li> <li>● Hunter green, or gray white shirts</li> </ul>

Dress Down Days		
Dress Code Guidelines Apply With The Following Exceptions:		
	GIRLS	BOYS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spirit Wear guidelines apply</li> <li>● Colors <i>are not</i> restricted to school colors</li> <li>● Also, see exceptions marked with ** in the dress code section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spirit Wear guidelines apply</li> <li>● Colors <i>are not</i> restricted to school colors</li> <li>● Also, see exceptions marked with ** in the dress code section</li> </ul>

Dress Up Days
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Dress Code Guidelines Apply With The Following Exceptions:		
	GIRLS	BOYS
<b>Bottoms and Tops</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniforms may be worn</li> <li>● <b>Dress up</b> attire if students are not in uniform:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dress pants</li> <li>○ Skirts/dresses; hem should be even to or longer than the finger tips-all around; no spaghetti straps</li> <li>○ Blouses and shirts; no spaghetti straps</li> <li>○ Sweaters/Cardigans</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The following are <b>not</b> considered “dress up”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Blue jeans, cargo, sweat/wind pants, T-shirts, sweatshirts, and all other clothing items not permitted in the dress code policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uniforms may be worn.</li> <li>● Dress up attire if students are not in uniform:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dress pants</li> <li>○ Collared shirts</li> <li>○ Sweaters/Cardigans</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The following are <b>not</b> considered “dress up”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Blue jeans, cargo, sweat/wind pants, T-shirts, sweatshirts, and all other clothing items not permitted in the dress code policy.</li> </ul>

**Outdoor Wear**

- Parents are responsible for making sure their children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions, including hats and mittens.
- Grades K4-3: Students in grades K4 to 3 must wear boots and bring a pair of shoes to change into when there is snow on the ground.
- Grades 4-8: Students must wear boots or have an extra pair of shoes to change into when there is snow on the ground.

**Out of Uniform Days**

On occasion, students will be allowed out-of-uniform days. These are called Spirit Wear Days and Generous Dress Down Days.

**Spirit Wear Days**

Students may wear blue jeans (no colored denim, no rips/holes) or jogging/athletic pants with official St. Thomas Aquinas Academy Spirit Wear, or hunter green, gray, or white shirts if they do not own spirit wear. (We have at least one Spirit Wear Day per month.) In August, September, May, and June blue jean or athletic shorts may be worn. Short length rules still apply.

**How to purchase Spirit Wear**-Spirit wear is offered throughout the school year during spirit wear campaigns.

**Generous Dress Down Day**

Students may wear blue denim jeans (no colored denim and no rips/holes) and a top of their choice (no sleeveless or strapless) for a donation of \$1 or more. The Student Council chooses several charities to give back to each year for Generous Dress Down Day. Leggings and athletic pants are allowed. Shirts must be appropriate for a Catholic school

setting. This will be at the discretion of the school administrator. Students with questionable attire will be required to call home and a different set of clothing will need to be brought to school.

### **Lost And Found**

If students misplace school supplies or personal items, they are asked to check the “lost and found” in the office. Items that have been turned in and not claimed are kept for an entire quarter before they are donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society or another needy program.

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **Trimesters for 2023-2024 School Year Are As Follows:**

School Trimester Schedule	<u>Begins</u>	<u>Ends</u>
Trimester 1	August 28, 2023	November 17, 2023
Trimester 2	November 18, 2023	March 1, 2024
Trimester 3	March 3, 2024	June 11, 2024

To address changing student needs, we have developed a comprehensive educational approach based on best practices from high-performing urban and suburban schools in the region and around the country. Students continue to learn from standards approved by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and we are shifting instructional practices to ensure high-levels of student engagement.

### **Seton Catholic Schools Curriculum**

#### ***Math***

Seton Catholic school students have 90 minutes of math each day. Each math lesson has a whole group, small group, independent work, and a digital learning component. Students in 5K-5 use Zearn as the core math curriculum resource. Middle school students use Engage NY and Zearn.

#### ***ELA***

Seton Catholic school students have 90 minutes of ELA each day. Each ELA lesson has a whole group, small group, and a digital learning component. The ELA lessons use authentic text. Students in 4K-2 grade also have a Foundational Reading Block based on the science of reading.

#### ***Science***

Science instruction at Seton Catholic schools includes hands-on lab and demonstrations, reading and analyzing text, and developing an understanding of scientific concepts. Amplify Science is used in grades 3-8.

#### ***Social Studies***

Social Studies instruction at Seton Catholic schools is based on primary sources and integrates Catholic School Teachings. Students at Seton Catholic school become responsible citizens and understand, participate in, and make informed decisions about their world. Achievement First Social Studies curriculum is used in grades 4-8.

### ***Religion and Mass***

Students at Seton Catholic schools have daily access to Religion instruction and prayer. Students attend Mass and prayer services regularly. In addition to the core religion instruction students participate in grade level service projects, Theology of the Body, and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Safeguarding curriculum. Our Sunday Visitor is used in grades 5K-8 grade. Younger grades implement Pflaum. Mass takes place on Wednesdays at 8:15am. All families are invited!!

### ***Supplemental Technology Programs***

Effective schools also supplement instruction with the best computer-based programs on the market. This combination of whole group instruction, small group instruction, independent work and computer-based programs accelerate learning. Zearn (5K-8) are the supplemental technology programs in Math. iReady (5K-2), Accelerated Reader (3-8) and Lexia Learning (3-8) are used for ELA.

### ***Physical Education, Art, And Music***

In P.E., students receive a holistic approach, which looks at the body and its connection with the mind and spirit. In Music, students learn to understand and appreciate music as a gift. They learn that music is an expression of their spiritual nature, and as prayer it leads us closer to God. In Art, students develop an appreciation for the beauty of their surroundings and learn to express themselves creatively through various forms of media.

### ***Title I Program***

Small groups of students are sent to the Title 1 Teacher for support in the areas of Reading and/or Math. Students are chosen through review of group testing results, screening, and teacher referrals. Before students can be included for Title 1 services, their parents need to give written permission.

### ***Social Emotional Learning***

Our school places a high priority on social emotional learning through the following platforms:

- Provide high quality counseling services to Seton students.
- Support counseling instruction (Mind Up, Zones of Regulation, Seven Habits of Effective Students, Restorative Justice, mindfulness, wellness).
- Provide equitable counseling curriculum and experience in local schools and across Seton schools.
- Build a student – counselor/counselor designate/teacher relationship in counseling classes with SEL expression, student interaction, regular contact, and social-emotional support.

### ***Additional Counseling school-based services include:***

1. Student 1:1 clients
2. Student & Family interventions
3. CPS referrals / emergency or concerning situations
4. Small group or grade level sessions, topic related

### ***School Services***

1. SEL check-ins with students during school and assist teachers on what to look for with student SEL concerns.
2. Contact students and families that “fall through the engagement cracks” with teachers or school including attendance.

**Resources**

1. Student Services [website](https://sites.google.com/stromanschool.com/school-counseling-website/community-resources?authuser=0)  
<https://sites.google.com/stromanschool.com/school-counseling-website/community-resources?authuser=0>
2. Seton partnerships, DPI and community resources

**School Day General Schedule:**

All Seton Catholic Schools will have the following school day hours for the 2023-2024 school year. The hours are:

- 6:00 a.m. Morning Care Begins (school based)
- 7:40 a.m. Breakfast Begins
- 7:55 a.m. Breakfast Ends
- 8:00 a.m. Morning Message/Assembly/Students marked tardy
- 8:15 a.m. Instructional Day begins
- 11:15 a.m. Students arriving after this time are counted ½ day absent
- 3:15 p.m. Dismissal Begins
- 3:30 p.m. Dismissal Ends/Extended care Begins
- 6:00 p.m. Extended Care Ends (school based)

**4K & 5K Example Schedules (Early Childhood)**

Literacy (ELA)	90 minutes per day
Foundational Reading	45 minutes per day
Math	90 minutes per day
AM Recess	15 minutes per day
Religion	30 minutes per day
Lunch	25 minutes per day
Lunch Recess	15 minutes per day
Social Studies/Science. Theme Activities	30 minutes per day
Specials (Art, Music, Phy Ed)	20 minutes per day
Intentional Play	30 minutes per day
Rest Time	30 minutes per day
Mass	Weekly

**1st & 2nd Grade Example Schedules**

Literacy (ELA)	90 minutes per day
Foundational Reading	65 minutes per day
Math	90 minutes per day
AM Recess	15 minutes per day
Religion	30 minutes per day
Lunch	25 minutes per day
Lunch Recess	15 minutes per day
Social Studies/Science	45 minutes per day
Specials (Art, Music, Phy Ed)	45 minutes per day
Mass	Weekly

### 3rd Grades Example Schedule

Literacy (ELA)	90 minutes per day
Independent Reading	20 minutes per day
Math	90 minutes per day
AM Recess	15 minutes per day
Religion	30 minutes per day
Lunch	25 minutes per day
Lunch Recess	15 minutes per day
Social Studies	45 minutes per day
Science	45 minutes per day
Specials (Art, Music, Phy Ed)	45 minutes per day
Mass	Weekly

### 4th-8th Grade Example Schedules

Literacy (ELA)	90 minutes per day
Independent Reading	20 minutes per day
Math	90 minutes per day
Religion	45 minutes per day
Lunch	25 minutes per day
Lunch Recess	15 minutes per day
Social Studies	45 minutes per day
Science	45 minutes per day
Specials (Art, Music, Phy Ed)	45 minutes per day
Mass	Weekly

### Standards Based Grading

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5121*

Standards-based grading is based on the principle that grades should convey how well students have achieved standards. In other words, grades are not about what students earn; they are about what students learn.

The curriculum for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee adheres to appropriate, delineated standards that are aligned to ensure that every student successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on standards and rooted in Catholic values.

Effective grading practices are necessary for improved teaching and learning. Schools will adopt local grading policies that will support the following guiding principles:

- Assessment and grading are ongoing processes that guide continuous learning.
- Grading should be standards-based and reflect what students know and are able to do.
- Grading should be transparent and promote common understanding between students, parents, teachers, and schools.
- Grading should support a growth mindset.
- Grading should only reflect student achievement.

**4K and 5K use a narrative reporting tool that is sent home at semester (January and June)**

**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ACADEMY**

[www.thomasaquinasacademy.com](http://www.thomasaquinasacademy.com)

## Homework

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6154*

Homework refers to assignments that require individual work for reinforcement, enrichment, or completion of class-time work.

Homework is a responsibility of the student to be done on time (barring reasons such as sickness or vacation). If a student continues to abuse this responsibility, then he or she will be required to stay in to complete the work at recess and lunch.

One week prior to the end of each marking period, all missing work will be recorded as a zero. This will give students a fresh start at the beginning of each quarter.

Parents can also check on their child(ren)'s academic progress at any time through PowerSchool.

In case of absence due to a family trip, parents should notify the school office and staff at least one week in advance. In keeping with school policy, teachers will **not** give out homework early to students before a vacation, so students should be prepared to make up missed work upon their return.

## Field Trips

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 3541.1, 6153, 6153.1*

Field trips are intended to enhance the curriculum and enrich students' educational experience and link to a specific standard. With the approval of the principal, teachers may plan field trips for their classes during the course of the school year. When planning field trips, teachers will take into consideration cost, distance, and timing in relation to other school events.

The classroom teacher will send parents advance information about any planned field trips, along with a permission slip to sign and return to school. Teachers are given discretion to decide whether school uniforms are worn on a field trip. Legal responsibilities warrant that a child may not participate in a field trip unless a signed permission slip is returned to the school for that particular trip. A child who does not return a signed permission slip will have to stay in school with supervised study.

Ordinarily, field trip transportation is by school bus. Parents may not transport their children directly to or from the field trip location without first obtaining permission from a school official and providing a written release form.

## Chaperones

Parents are often recruited to assist as chaperones on field trips. Chaperones must complete Safeguarding All of God's Family training and have a criminal background check. Please note that the background check will have to be renewed every 5 years.

We ask that all chaperones follow these guidelines:

- Please arrive on time and check in at the school office.
- Smoking and alcohol consumption during the field trip is prohibited.
- Help the teacher to maintain order during the field trip.
- Please do not purchase gifts or food for students (especially small groups assigned only to you) without consulting the teacher.
- Please do not bring younger children along, since your focus must be on the safety and well-being of the school children.

## **Transportation For Field Trips**

The school shall provide transportation by bus to and from school sponsored events during the school day for those students required to attend any events, such as field trips, picnics, etc.

The school shall provide transportation for teams, clubs, and other groups required to participate in activities that take place outside the metropolitan area during non-school hours. In instances where activities take place in the city or the surrounding area, parents may provide transportation for their children.

Parents have the option of allowing a son/daughter to transport himself/herself to a scheduled event, or the parent may choose to transport his/her child. The school assumes no liability at any time for students driving other students to and from scheduled and unscheduled events.

Passengers must be belted and/or in booster seats as prescribed by law.

## **Assessments**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5120.1*

At Seton Catholic Schools assessments are used to determine progress towards mastery, growth, and areas for acceleration. Students in 5K-8th grade participate in the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) three times a year in Math and ELA. Students in 5K-8 grade will participate in diagnostic testing three times a year using Edulastic. Students in 3-8 participate annually in the WI Forward Assessment.

## **Promotion/Retention Guidelines**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5123*

Retention of a student may be done judiciously as a final option after considering the many factors affecting retention. When retention seems likely, parents are contacted several times during the year. There is no legal number of absences which, if exceeded, leads to automatic retention. Students shall not be considered for more than one (1) school year during the elementary school years. Final decisions on retention will rest with the Regional Directors, in consultation with school administration and Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

## **Special Needs Testing**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6164.3*

Parents/guardians, teachers, or principal may request testing through Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) IEP (Individualized Education Plan)-Team if serious learning/behavior difficulties are suspected.

Parents/guardians have a right to request an IEP Team evaluation through direct contact with MPS. Any initiation, by a teacher, of a request for an IEP Team evaluation, should be done only after notifying the Principal or Dean and parents of this request.

The school professional staff will recommend special needs testing only in the best interest of the student to identify learning needs. Parents/guardians are encouraged to cooperate.

## **Graduation**

The eighth grade graduation and reception will be held each year at St. Veronica's parish. This is the church physically connected to our school, where all students celebrate weekly Mass and are familiar. Its location makes the graduation practices and preparations convenient for all those involved. It is handicapped accessible, if needed, for the families of our graduates.



It is a tradition that the 7th grade parents work together to prepare individual graduate gift baskets in honor of the graduating class. It is also their responsibility to cover the finances for the baskets. The collected amount from each 7th grade family is generally \$20-25, depending on the class size.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Study of sacraments is done within the school classroom. Actual preparation for sacraments is done within the parish where the family belongs.

### **Christian Formation Policy**

Every child is expected to participate in ongoing Religious Education instruction. Grades 1 to 12, either through a Catholic School or a parish Religious Education Program. A broad religious education curriculum is achieved provided a student attends consecutive years of instruction.

To prepare for the celebration of the Sacraments of **First Reconciliation** (Confession), **First Eucharist** (Communion), or **Confirmation of Youth**.

- A family must be registered members of a Catholic parish.
- Be active and participate in Sunday Mass.
- Participate in adult and child Sacramental Preparation sessions provided by the parish of which they are registered members.

According to the Sacramental Guidelines of the Archdioceses, established since 1986, each parish must offer education for families and candidates to facilitate preparation of Sacraments. Please contact your Pastor or Director of Religious Education for any details you may wish to query.

### **Preparation for the Sacraments**

In short, the Sacramental Guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee are as follows:

#### ***FIRST RECONCILIATION (first offered in Grade 2)***

- As a child reaches the age of reason, generally around the age of 7, the opportunity can be extended to prepare for and receive First Reconciliation. However, no obligation to approach the Sacrament may be imposed on a child, other than that which binds all Catholics, namely a consciousness of personal serious sin (i.e. mortal sin).
- The parish where one is a registered member offers a process for parents to renew their understanding of the Sacrament and carry out their rights and responsibilities of guiding their own child. Parishes are recommended to offer three parent meetings in the course of the preparation period and no less than one to cover prescribed topics.

#### ***FIRST EURCHARIST (first offered in Grade 2)***

- It is readiness, rather than age, that is the crucial factor in determining when a child should receive Communion.
- Children commonly participate in ongoing catechesis for at least one year (either in a Catholic Day School or parish Religious Education Program) prior to entrance into a parish process for the celebration of the Sacrament. This together with the formation parents are providing in the home forms the foundation for the immediate catechesis for First Eucharist.
- Parent programs are to be offered by all parishes to assist parents to grow in their own understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist, as well as to enable them to catechize their children. To do this parishes are recommended to offer three parent meetings in the course of the preparation period and no less than one to cover prescribed topics.

- A child's celebration of First Communion is to take place at a weekend Liturgy in the parish church, which provides the context of the worshipping community. There should not be two separate celebrations of First Communion, one for children attending Catholic Day School and one for those who do not.
- Contact the Director of Religious Education of the parish where you are a registered member for information and schedules for Sacrament Preparation.

## **YOUTH CONFIRMATION**

Endorsed by the Archbishop at this time, the Sacrament of Confirmation is open to Candidates of age 16. Preparation of youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation is generally a three-year process:

- **Two years of remote preparation** can be accomplished through attendance at a Catholic High School or parish Youth Religious Education Program (i.e. freshman/sophomore years or sophomore/junior years).
- **One-year immediately preparation** (i.e. junior or senior year) for the celebration of the Sacrament is solely conducted through the parish where the family is a registered member and includes these components: Instruction; Retreat/Service Experience; Association with a Sponsor; Interview; and Request for Confirmation to the Bishop (Letter of Intent).
- If you have further questions or want to know about how Confirmation is handled in your parish, call your parish's Director of Religious Education or Youth Minister.

## **Religious Activity Opt Out**

A parent or guardian of a student that attends a Seton Catholic School through the MPCP or WPCP may request that their student opt out of direct religious instruction or religious activity and alternative coursework will be provided. Religious opt out requests must be submitted in writing to the principal.

## **Safe Environment Education**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6141.12*

Safe Environment Education shall be a part of the curriculum in all elementary and secondary schools and parish religious education programs. All schools and parish religious education programs are required to use the Circle of Grace Safe Environment Curriculum. The curriculum is required to be taught to each grade level each year.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

At St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, we offer students access to technology devices and to the Internet. All students must obtain permission from parents or guardians in order to gain Internet access. At the beginning of each school year, we require a parent's or guardian's signature on an Acceptable Use Policy form in order to grant permission for student use of the computers and the Internet. The policy further explains appropriate uses of technology devices and the Internet. Our students are not allowed to use the technology devices until this permission is given. Using technology devices is a privilege offered at the school and all users are expected to conduct their online activities in an ethical and legal fashion. Users should not view or transmit threatening, harassing, pornographic, and obscene material. In addition, users must be careful to make sure that they do not use or transmit copyrighted or trademarked materials without first obtaining appropriate permission with the assistance of school officials. The use of technology devices will be denied if it is abused.

Use of copyrighted or trademarked materials without appropriate permission may violate state or federal law and may also violate Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6161.2. Misuse of these resources may result in disciplinary action, including the suspension or revocation of these privileges.

## Acceptable Use Of Technology

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6162*

Each individual student accepts responsibility to act in a moral and ethical manner when using the computer system and internet. General parish/school rules for behavior and communication apply.

- Network storage areas and parish/school issued or personal devices may be treated like school lockers and desks.
- Administrators have the right to review email, files, device content, and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.
- They may also request access to these types of documents maintained on third-party servers being used for educational purposes. Students should not expect that files will always be private.

The following are not permitted:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language.
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others.
- Tampering with or damaging computers, computer systems, or networks.
- Violating copyright laws and plagiarism.
- Using another's password.
- Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files.
- Wasting limited resources.
- Employing the network for personal financial or commercial gain.
- Circumventing security measures on parish/school or remote computers or networks.
- Disclosing, using, or disseminating personal identifiable information regarding minors without authorization.

All student users of the parish/school computer system and telecommunications are required to read the rules for acceptable behavior, understand the rules, and agree to comply with the rules. Any person wishing to use the parish/school computer system is required to sign the Archdiocese Student Acceptable Use Form before being permitted access.

Violations may result in a loss of access to computer technology, as well as disciplinary, legal, and/or monetary consequences. The decision of the principal regarding inappropriate use of the computer system is final. Mandatory reporting guidelines apply to all use of the parish/school computer system.

## Chromebooks

Parents will be required to sign out their child's chromebook for the year. Upon signing out your child's chromebook, a care and policy document will accompany the chromebook. Chromebooks are property of Seton Catholic Schools or MPS and therefore must be returned in the same condition in which they were received. Families may be charged a fee for lost or damaged chromebooks.

## Movie Policy

Films and videos shown during the school day will have an educational value and genuinely fit into the lesson plan. Teachers will be aware of the ratings established by the Motion Picture industry. The movie must be previewed by a staff member.

Students in K4-3<sup>rd</sup> grade will be allowed to view movies with a rating of 'G.' Students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade will be allowed to view movies with a rating of 'G' or 'PG.' Parents may request that their child not view a particular movie. Parents must sign a permission slip for their child(ren) to view a movie with a rating of 'PG-13' or higher rating.

Movies with no educational value may be shown for parties or earned rewards.

## Electronic Devices

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6162*

A personal electronic communication device means any device that a student is in possession of which electronically communicates, sends, receives, stores, reproduces, or displays voice and/or text communication or data. These include, but are not limited to cellular phones, pagers, smart phones, wearable devices, Wi-Fi enabled or broadband access devices, laptops, tablets, personal digital assistants, portable gaming devices, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound video, or still images, text, or other information.

It is the user's responsibility to:

- View internet sites that are allowed at the parish/school.
- Respect the privacy rights of others.
- Receive explicit consent to capture, record, or transmit the words (i.e., audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff, or other person during any school/religious education/youth ministry activity.
- Make sure no unauthorized copyrighted materials enter the network.
- Ensure that the use of the device does not disrupt the learning environment.

Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices includes but is not limited to:

- Possessing, viewing, sending, or sharing video or audio information having sexual, violent, or threatening content on parish/school grounds, at parish/school events, or on school buses shall be prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.
- Any files known to carry harmful malware.
- Use of device at any time in any parish/school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, shower facilities, restrooms, and any area where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The administration has the authority to determine other specific locations and situations where possession of a personal electronic device is prohibited.

The student user of a personal electronic device shall accept sole responsibility for its preservation and care. Student users understand:

- The parish/school is not responsible for content already existing on student owned devices, this would include music, lyrics, movies, pictures, games, etc...
- The parish/school will not be held liable for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.
- The administration may confiscate and search personal electronic devices when there is reasonable suspicion that such devices are being used in violation of the law and/or parish/school rules.

## Cell Phones

Cell phones have become an important way for parents to keep in touch with their children to assure their safety. However, they have also become a distraction for our students during the school day. Please keep in mind, in the case of an emergency, cancellation of an after school activity, or to schedule pick up students are allowed to use the phone in the school office. This reduces the need for most students to bring their cellphones to school. **However, if you choose to allow your child/children to bring a cell phone to school the following rules will apply:**

- A cell phone permission slip must be signed and on file in the school office.
- The cell phone must remain off and in the school office in a secured location during school hours.
- Once returned at the end of the day, phones must remain in a student's backpack until they are off school grounds.

- Any use of a cell phone during school hours will result in immediate confiscation of the phone. Smart watches and other electronic devices will not be allowed in school or on school grounds. Possession and use of these devices during school hours will result in confiscation. **The confiscated phone/device will only be returned to a student's parent/guardian after a conference with the principal.**
- Inappropriate or repeated violation of these guidelines will result in further disciplinary actions.

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is not responsible for the loss or damage of any phone or electronic equipment.

The rules above also apply to other communication devices that make a sound, vibrate, display a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the processor (i.e. an iPad or Smart Watch).

If a staff member finds a student using an electronic device (including but not limited to iPad, tablet, game system, Smart Watch, etc...) it will be confiscated immediately and must be picked up by the parents at their next convenience.

### **Guidelines For Use Of Social Media**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6162*

Each user of the parish/school computer system has a conditional right to access the social media environment to facilitate educational and personal growth in technology and collaboration. While staff are allowed access to public social media outlets (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc...) for parish/school related activities, students will not be granted access to these sites from parish/school owned computers without approval from an administrator or designees as there is no way to filter the content available on these sites.

### **Generative AI (ChatGPT) For School Work**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is committed to providing students with a rigorous and engaging educational experience that incorporates technological advances. This includes tools that help students explore budding career pathways. We are constantly reviewing all websites, chatbots and other technologies to determine their value to student learning. We want to protect academic honesty, while a risk/benefit assessment is conducted on Generative AI (ChatGPT).

Generative AI (ChatGPT) ethical uses:

- **Concept Explanation:** Can simplify complex concepts.
- **Resource Creation:** Can create flash cards, revision activities, and analytical tools.
- **Ideas Generation:** Can stimulate creative thinking and ideas as a starting point.
- **Feedback & Evaluation:** Can provide instant feedback on work to improve quality before submission.
- **Brainstorming:** Create ideas or topics for work to provide different suggestions or perspectives.
- **Revision:** Create activities to help with better understanding and recall.
- **Presentation Skills:** Can provide suggestions to improve presentation skills.
- **Citation & Formatting:** Can provide correct referencing and in-text citation advice.
- **Locate Sources:** Can be used to find sources to help with research; similar to using Wikipedia or Google.

Unethical/Misuses of Generative AI (ChatGPT) will result in disciplinary action, possibly including suspension or expulsion depending upon the seriousness of the infraction. Examples of unethical/misuses of Generative AI (ChatGPT) include, but are not limited to:

- **Plagiarism:** Using AI-generated content verbatim without proper citation or presenting AI-generated work as your own is plagiarism. This would be the same if you took a definition from a Google search.
- **Assignment Outsourcing:** Using AI to create assignments, essays, or projects without any personal input or understanding undermines the learning process and is considered academic dishonesty. This is the same as a tutor or parent creating your work and you claiming it as your own.

- **Misrepresentation Abilities:** Using generative AI to complete tasks that are beyond your understanding and presenting the results as your own. This is the same as copying someone’s assessment or paragraph and tweaking it to make it look different.
- **Improper Reference Checking:** Asking to source references and not checking the validity of the information and relevance. Example: Claiming this is where you sourced information, but you only used ChatGPT.

## General Consent Form For Child Photo, Video, And Audio Use

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 1112*

Photos or videos of students may be used on parish/network/school websites, social media, and print materials under the following guidelines:

- Identified photographs of students may be published with written and dated permission forms from parents.
- No publication of student’s addresses, phone numbers or other personal information is permitted.
- Group photos are permitted without permission as long as the caption identifies the activity or class, not the individual students in the photo.
- Care needs to be taken to ensure that any digital content, including but not limited to, video, audio and social media posts, does not release individual, identifiable information about minors without parental consent.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy and Seton Catholic Schools have adopted and implemented a safety plan that responds to hazards, mitigating emergencies, and ensuring the protection of building occupants. This plan is intended to communicate staff roles and responsibilities, facilitate coordination with local law enforcement, and establish the framework for an effective emergency management system. Components of that plan include the items outlined below.

### Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5140.11*

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy and Seton Catholic Schools are in compliance with AHERA and the state governor’s office. The Management Plan Location and Availability Form are located in the School Office.

### Safety Drills

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6114.1*

Seton Catholic Schools will conduct safety drills/exercises throughout the year on Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown. A uniform, planned, and practiced response to any incident is the foundation of a safe school. Seton Catholic Schools will meet all required safety drills as indicated by the Department of Public Instruction. The following drills will occur during the year.

1. Fire Drills shall be conducted monthly.
2. Tornado Drill shall be conducted 1 time in the spring.
3. School Violence Drills per WI Act 143 shall be conducted 3 times a year/once per Trimester. The last drill will involve law enforcement for observation.

**Lock Down:** Seton Catholic Schools utilize and practice the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) K12 from the [I Love U Guys Foundation](#) and is based on the response to any given situation not on individual scenarios. The SRP utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in protocol.

**Hold (In Classroom or Area)**-There are situations that require students and staff to remain in their classrooms or stay out of access areas. For example, an altercation in the hallway may require keeping students out of the halls until it is resolved. A medical issue may require only one area to be cleared, with halls still open in case outside medical assistance is required.

**Secure**-The Secure action is called when there is threat or hazard outside of the school building. Whether it’s due to

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violence or criminal activity in the immediate neighborhood, or a dangerous animal on the playground, Secure uses the security of the physical facility to act as protection.

**Lockdown**-A Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building. From parental custody disputes to intruders to an active assailant, Lockdown uses classroom and school security actions to protect students and staff from the threat.

**Evacuate**-Evacuate is called when there is a need to move people from one location to another for safety reasons.

- On-site evacuation is conducted usually because of a mechanical failure that would disrupt the school day, such as a power outage. If it can be resolved quickly, the school may have to plan for early dismissal.
- An off-site evacuation may be necessary when it's no longer safe to stay in the building such as a gas leak or bomb threat.
- If there has been a violent event at the school, an off-site evacuation will almost always be necessary.

**Shelter**-Shelter is called when specific protective actions are needed based on a threat or hazard. Training will include response to threats such as tornadoes.

Prior to a lockdown drill parent/guardians will be notified at least 1 week in advance of the drill. If the drill needs to be rescheduled, a new notice will be sent out. If your child is uncomfortable participating in the drill please notify the school principal.

**Other**-Resources for Families: Please find links to the Parent Handout or SRP here: [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

## **Emergency Communication**

If there is any type of emergency during the school day, the safety of the students is our highest priority. Our staff has been trained in how to handle emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, if children are to be dismissed from the school early, every effort will be made to contact the student's parent, guardian, or designated emergency contact person. In the event of a school-wide emergency, parents are asked to be on standby and await instructions from the school regarding when and where to pick up children.

## **Emergency Notification System**

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the schools have made preparations to respond effectively to such situations.

Should we have a major disaster during school hours, your student(s) will be cared for at this school. Our School has a detailed emergency operation plan which has been formulated to respond to a major catastrophe.

Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency.

1. Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
2. In the event of a serious emergency, students will be kept at their schools until they are picked up by an identified, responsible adult who has been identified as such on the school emergency card which is required to be filled out by parents at the beginning of every school year. Please be sure you consider the following criteria when you authorize another person to pick up your child at school:
  - He/she is 18 years of age or older.
  - He/she is usually home during the day.
  - He/she could walk to school, if necessary.
  - He/she is known to your child.
  - He/she is both aware and able to assume this responsibility.

3. In addition, information will be sent to families via phone, email, and text utilizing the school's Bright Arrow/Class Dojo

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communication system. Please be sure to always have your most up to date contact information on file with the School Office.

4. Impress upon your children the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency

Students will be released only to parents and persons identified on the School Emergency Card. During an extreme emergency, students will be taken to 357 East Howard Avenue (Bay View Montessori School). Parents should become familiar with the School Emergency Crisis Plan and be patient and understanding with the student release process

When the dangerous incident has subsided, students and parents will be notified.

## **Mandatory Reporting Of Child Abuse and Neglect**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5140.1*

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee requires all adults, employees, or volunteers to comply with reporting responsibilities for any suspected abuse or neglect of minors, whether or not designated as a mandatory reporter under Wisconsin law. Every instance of suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported no matter when it happened or where it happened. An expanded policy with definitions with reporting requirements can be found in the Archdiocese Parish & School Policy manual.

## **Mandatory Reporting Of School Violence**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5140.12*

Wisconsin Act 143 requires reporting of school violence threats by certain individuals, including teachers, school administrators, school counselors, other school employees, physicians, and other medical and mental health professionals. Specifically, an identified individual must report if the person believes in good faith, based on a threat made by an individual seen in the course of professional duties regarding violence in or targeted at a school, that there is a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of a student, school employee, or the public. These individuals must immediately inform a law enforcement agency of the facts and circumstances contributing to the belief that there is a serious and imminent threat. The full list of individuals required to report threats of school violence can be found in Wis. Stat. § 48.981 (2) (a) and is the same list of individuals required to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

## **Suicide Prevention And Awareness**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6164*

When any school staff has reason to believe, either by virtue of direct knowledge or a report from another person, that a student is in any danger of harming him/herself through an attempted suicide, or has attempted suicide, that person is to report this situation to the school administrator and the student's parents, even if the student denies suicidal ideation. If the student's life is in imminent danger, emergency personnel (911) will be summoned to transport the student to the nearest hospital emergency room.

If there are repeated calls to parents with concerns of suicidality and the parents are not responding, this will be considered medical neglect and will be reported to Child Protective Services.

## **School Wellness Policy**

**SETON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND PARTICIPATING NETWORK SCHOOLS**

Nutrition and physical activity are known to influence a child's development, potential for learning, overall sense of well-being, and risk of illness through adulthood. Students who practice good nutrition and engage in daily physical

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activity attend school with bodies and minds ready to take advantage of the learning environment. Nutrition education will be integrated into classroom subject areas. Students will be offered opportunities to participate in physical activities in addition to physical education.

The Network is committed to serving healthy meals to our students. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, model healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All meals shall be accessible to all students and meet or exceed current nutrient requirements established under the [Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010](#).

All food and beverages sold outside of the school meal programs shall meet the [USDA Smart Snack standards](#). The network encourages foods offered on school campuses to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards, including those provided at celebrations, parties and classroom snacks. Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to only those foods and beverages that meet USDA Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools rule.

Students will be offered opportunities to provide feedback (informal or formal) to inform menu development. The monthly menu will be provided to students, families, teachers and administrators. Seasonal fruits, vegetables or recipes will be highlighted on the menu.

Various stakeholders will be given the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and updating of the Network's Wellness Plan. The network's Senior Leadership Team shall review and has authority to approve, reject, and modify the content of the Network Wellness Plan, including any recommendations for future changes to the Plan. The Network shall maintain, implement, and inform the school community and general public about a local school wellness policy that meets the requirements of federal law.

The COO shall implement and ensure compliance with the policy by leading the review, update and evaluation of the policy no less than once every three years. The assessment will include the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy and how the policy compares to a model policy, as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Nothing in this policy or in the Wellness Plan shall prohibit Network schools from undertaking additional school-level wellness initiatives, provided that such initiatives (1) do not either conflict with the formal Wellness Plan or unilaterally supplant or replace portions of the Plan; and (2) have otherwise been properly authorized within the Network. However, the administration and staff at individual schools must coordinate their student wellness initiatives with the formal Wellness Plan for the benefit of documenting such efforts and sharing ideas across the entire Network.

### **School Nutrition Education and Guidelines**

Our goal is to influence students' eating behaviors. Nutrition influences a child's development, health, well-being, and potential learning. To afford the students the opportunity to participate fully in the educational process, students must attend school with minds and bodies ready to take advantage of their learning environment. This nutrition policy encourages all members of the school community to create an environment that supports lifelong healthy eating habits. Decisions made in all school programming need to reflect and encourage positive nutrition messages and healthy food choices.

The policy of our school is to:

- Ensure that all students have access to healthy food choices during school and at school functions.
- Provide a pleasant eating environment for students and staff.
- Allow a minimum of 20 minutes for students to eat lunch and socialize in the designated area. ]
- Classroom activities will incorporate appropriate lessons in nutrition through Family Life and Health/Physical Education units.

- Students will receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy food choices and eating behaviors for a lifetime.

## Nutrition Standards For Food/Beverages At School

Our goal will be to set policies and standards that recognize the need for healthy choices during lunch. We will work on maximizing nutritional value, decrease sodium, fat, and sugar content in foods and beverages provided for children, and monitor portion size.

- The first place for this education will be in the lunchroom. Our policies for hot lunches will emphasize and foster healthy food choices. We will provide a pleasant eating environment for students and staff. Students will be allowed frequent drink breaks and/or choice of using a water bottle during the day in their classroom.
- When using food as a part of class or student incentive programs, staff, and students will be encouraged to utilize healthy, nutritious food choice.
- When curricular-based food experiences are planned, staff and students are encouraged to seek out good nutrition choices whenever appropriate.
- We will reduce student access to foods of minimal nutritional value and ensure the integrity of the school lunch program by prohibiting food and beverage sales that are in direct conflict with the lunch program.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables will be offered regularly. Portion sizes will be accurate for the age of the child. We will cut back on fried food and fat content, and our desserts will incorporate fruit to help decrease the sugar content.
- During school hours, students will not be allowed to drink soda or other sugary drinks. Parents will also be asked not to include soda in cold lunches. For special occasions, soda during the school day may be allowed only with the principal's advance approval.
- During school hours, students will not be allowed to have fast food, such as McDonalds. Parents will also be asked not to bring or deliver fast food to school.
- We will set guidelines that are sensible for foods served at parties and events, keeping in mind the need for policies for peanut and other allergies present in the school. Some students at our school have a dangerous allergy to peanuts, and for this reason, we are a Peanut Aware environment. We ask all families to consider this in preparing lunches. In allergic student's grade levels we will request that snacks and class treats be totally peanut-product-free. For other grades, if a peanut product is sent, the student(s) should be instructed to wash up carefully after eating to avoid contaminating any surface.

## Treat Policy

Many students enjoy sharing a special treat with their classmates on their birthdays. Children can bring in **one treat** to share with their classmates. Treats are to be given to every student in the classroom/homeroom and not to students in other classrooms/homerooms. Treats can be brought to school by the student. If treats are brought later in the day, parents must drop off treats in the school office. The office will deliver the treats to the classroom. If a child brings more than one treat to share with his/her class, he/she will be asked to choose only **one treat** to share. The other will be sent home. **All birthday treats will be handed out during the afternoon.** The specific time will be determined by the classroom/homeroom teacher.

Birthday treats should be something that is quickly and easily passed out and eaten. They must be individual servings. Birthday cakes or pizza will not be allowed. If a cake or pizza is brought in, it will not be shared with the class and will be sent home with the child at the end of the day.

The following is a suggested list of treats. **Please choose only one treat.**

- Cupcakes
- Cookies
- Donuts

- Individual bags of chips
- String cheese
- Fruit snacks
- Little Debbie or Hostess individually wrapped snack cakes
- Brownies-cut and ready to be served
- Individual pieces of fruit such as apples, pears or bananas
- Pudding cups (spoons must also be supplied)
- Jello cups (spoons must also be supplied)
- Juice box
- Apple sauce (spoons must also be supplied)
- Gogurt or other individual serving yogurt product (spoons must also be supplied)
- Rice Krispie treats individually packaged or cut and ready to be served

**If you are unsure if a treat will be acceptable, please contact your child's teacher.**

## **Parties In School**

At times, teachers may schedule a party to celebrate a holiday or an earned reward. Parents may be asked to supply treats for the class and students may be asked to provide their own drinks. If a student wishes to celebrate his/her birthday with the class, he/she must bring a treat for all classmates. Examples of appropriate treats can be found in the Treat Policy.

## **Snacks In The Classroom, Grades K-8**

### **Expectations:**

Please note that snacks in the classroom are a privilege, therefore, adhering to the following procedures and expectations regarding students having snacks in the classroom is imperative and nonnegotiable.

### **Snacks:**

- Will be healthy (Will follow USDA standard as stated in the Smart Snacks in School Policy); No chips, cookies, candies, etc... \*\*Please note that this does not pertain to project related food items used for instruction (Gingerbread house, holiday parties, graphing, etc...) [USDA Smart Snack standards](#)
- Will NOT be shared! Students eat what they brought.
- It is the responsibility of the student to bring any accessories needed to eat their snack (students will not be making trips to the lunchroom to get spoons/forks).
- Will be cleaned up thoroughly at that point in time.
- Will be day by day brought by the student to school.
- Will NOT be brought back from the lunchroom.
- Will remain in the students' backpack and/or desk until snack time (middle school exceptions with the changing of classes will be made).

### **Snack Times:**

- Will be ONE time a day. Students will not be snacking at random times throughout the day.
- Will be scheduled (transition times either morning or afternoon, most likely when a class has its longest stretch of time between breakfast and lunch or lunch and the end of the day).
- Will be 10-15 minutes.

### **Teachers:**

- Will be responsible for the monitoring of healthy snacks. If necessary, communication will be sent home to parents reminding them of healthy snacks.
- Will be responsible for ensuring that students clean up all debris from consumption of snacks.

## Physical Activity

Our goal will be to provide physical activity opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, to maintain physical fitness, to ensure students' regular participation in physical activity, and to teach short-and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

- Our Extended Care program will also allow for physical activities after school for students participating in the Extended Care program.
- We will foster and communicate all available opportunities for community, private, and school-based physical activity, such as teams, events, camps, programs, etc...
- The Physical Education curriculum will emphasize lifelong fitness and wellness as a personal goal for each student.
- Students will be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess/free-time, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
- We will encourage parents and guardians to support their child's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

## Lunch Time

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy offers a hot lunch program as an option for all students and staff. The program is run by trained food service personnel. They prepare the meals fresh daily on-site following USDA nutritional standards. Nutritional meals are served, and healthy eating habits are encouraged. The Food Service Manager is also aware of the number of children with food allergies. These allergies are accommodated as much as possible, for example: serving egg/dairy free breads, and storing and serving lactose-free milk as provided by parents. We are also inspected regularly by the City of Milwaukee Health Department to ensure that all food and health codes are being followed.

Students must remain on school premises during the entire school day, including the lunch period. Students have the option of eating hot lunch or bringing a cold lunch from home. Students bringing a cold lunch have the opportunity to receive milk any day that hot lunch is offered. We also offer students the opportunity to receive a cold bag lunch and/or milk when a class has a field trip scheduled.

All students are expected to follow meal-time etiquette and abide by the following lunchroom rules:

- Enter and leave the cafeteria in an orderly fashion. No running.
- Follow directions.
- Remain seated at their table until dismissed to return trays and throw away garbage.
- Finish meals and dispose of garbage properly.
- Clean floor and table area before leaving.
- Talk with an "inside voice."
- Respect all lunchroom personnel.
- Finish eating before going outside for recess.
- Clean up tables and floor areas and, if applicable, push chairs under the table before leaving.
- Do not play or throw food.
- Get permission to use the restrooms.
- Obey bathroom rules.

## Soda & Fast Food Policy

Students are not allowed to drink soda or eat fast food during school hours, including lunch time. This applies to lunches brought from home and during field trips as well. For special occasions, exceptions may be allowed only with the principal's advanced approval.

## Playground/Recess

Recess, during normal school hours, is supervised by adults. Frisbees, hardballs, and any other equipment or toys that might cause injury to self or others are not permitted on the playground and should not be brought to school. Students who ride bikes, scooters, skateboards, or rollerblades to and from school may not use those items during school hours, including recess.

Students will be responsible for the care and return of any school property used during recess. Students will also be responsible for their personal play property. The school is not responsible for any personal play property lost or damaged.

## Health

### Sick Policy

Each year school children have an average of five to seven common infections such as colds, COVID-19 infection, and intestinal upset. For the protection of your child and his/her classmates, please keep your child at home when ill and please notify the school (414-744-1214). The following symptoms may mean that an illness is contagious:

- Fever, diarrhea, vomiting within the last 24 hours. Children need to be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Thick mucus or pus draining from eyes.
- Sore throat, especially if combined with fever or swollen neck glands.
- Rashes with fever or rashes of unknown origin.
- Upper respiratory infection and/or severe cold, especially if accompanied with green or yellow nasal discharge and/or ear pain. Coughs spread germs, and a cough that keeps a child up at night means they will be too tired to learn the next day.
- Unusual fatigue, paleness, loss of appetite, confusion, and irritability.

The school cannot be responsible for determining a child's illness. Except for basic first aid, school personnel are not authorized to provide medical treatment. If children come to school, they are presumed to be well and are expected to participate fully in all school activities, both indoors and outdoors (unless the student has a doctor's order for restricted activities).

Please assist us in keeping our students healthy and safe by:

- Providing written instructions from a physician if your child's activities need to be curtailed due to special medical considerations.
- In the event of an extended absence, please notify the school office of the expected date of return.
- If your child has been under the care of a doctor, please provide a note from the doctor stating that he/she is allowed to return to school and any activity restrictions.
- **Following return to school from the absences**, a note or phone call stating the reason for the absence should be provided to the school office by the parent/guardian. Please state or identify the reason for the absence. If you do not send a note or call regarding your child's absence, the child will be marked as having an unexcused absence.

If a child becomes ill at school, they will be allowed to rest for a short period of time in the office. If they are unable to return to class, parents/guardians or an emergency contact listed (only the event a parent/guardian is unavailable) will be notified and ask to pick the child up and take them home to rest and recover.

The parent or emergency contact **MUST** come into school to pick up the child and sign the logbook in the office. Under no circumstances will an ill student be allowed to leave school without first contacting the office, nor will the student be sent out to the parents/contacts waiting outside.

Students are not expected to do assignments while home sick. Upon returning to school, students should make arrangements with their teachers to complete missed assignments. After an absence, school work must be completed promptly. For every school day missed, the student will have one school day to make up school work (see *Attendance*.) If a parent wishes to pick homework during an absence, the parent should make arrangements with the school office before 9:00 am to pick up the work at the end of the school day.

Students that are absent or leave school early for more than a half of the school day will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on the same day.

To return to school after illness your child must:

- Be without vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours without the use of medications, and be able to keep down food and water.
- Be without an uncontrolled or a persistent cough.
- Have an oral temperature less than 100.4 degrees without the use of medication.
- Feel well enough to take part in a regular school day.

The school is committed to reinforce good health and hygiene protocols including cleaning and disinfecting schools on a regularly scheduled intervals, providing proper ventilation and airflow throughout schools, reinforcing proper hand washing and cough etiquette practices. Hand sanitizer will be available for students and staff.

## **Accident Procedures**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141*

Only the principal or his/her designee (teacher in charge, administrative assistant) will be responsible for evaluating an injury and taking appropriate action. When other adults have the initial contact with the student, the principal or his/her designee must also examine the injury, determine treatment to be given by the school, and decide whether a parent should be contacted. The role of the teachers and supervisors is: providing emergency treatment in the case of a life-threatening situation, acting to prevent further injury, making sure the student gets safely to the school office, providing pertinent information about how the injury occurred, and assisting the student at the direction of the principal or his/her designee-i.e., getting a Band-Aid or an ice pack, etc...All parent contacts to report injuries will be made by the principal or his/her designees. When necessary an accident/incident report form will be filled out. Accident reports are to be kept on file in the school office. The principal, if present, will take responsibility for dealing with serious injuries. In his/her absence, the teacher in charge or designee will assume this role, unless any delay might result in further injury or death.

## **First Aid**

School personnel may administer first aid when injuries are minor. When a child shows symptoms of being ill or has a significant injury, a parent or other adult designated on the emergency card will be called and asked to assume responsibility for the child. No ill child will be sent home unless accompanied by a parent or someone designated by the parent.

In the case of a life threatening emergency, we will contact the paramedics and/or ambulance and transport the child to the hospital if needed. Parents, guardians, or if unavailable the contact person named on the emergency card will be contacted immediately. It is extremely important to keep the information on your child's emergency card current.

## **Concussion Management Plan**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141.1*

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy recognizes that a concussion is a serious injury to the brain resulting from a force or jolt applied directly or indirectly to the head producing a set of signs and symptoms reflecting the brain's dysfunction. St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is committed to safe practice and the education of parents, student-athletes, coaches, teachers and staff about the nature and risks of concussions and procedures to detect and treat these brain injuries prior to safe return to play, recess, fitness and/or physical education classes.

If a student/athlete exhibits or reports any sign or symptom of a concussion, he/she will be removed from practice, play or class. Parents will be notified immediately. Parents must obtain a proper medical evaluation by a licensed healthcare professional with training in concussion evaluation. The clearance to play, participate in recess, fitness and physical education classes is a medical decision. The licensed health care professional who evaluates the student/athlete is the only individual to provide clearance. The licensed health care professional may not be a parent or guardian of the athlete/student. St. Thomas Aquinas Academy will not allow the student/athlete to participate in a practice, game, recess, fitness or physical education classes while experiencing any lingering or persisting symptoms of a concussion, no matter how slight.

## **Communicable Diseases**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141.2*

Any student suspected of having chicken pox, whooping cough, pink eye, impetigo, or another communicable (highly contagious) disease/illness will be sent home immediately for care. Please notify the school office when your child has a communicable disease, including chicken pox and scarlet fever. Contagious diseases must be reported to local health departments. A written release is required before a child is allowed to return to school. Please contact your local health department for policies and regulations regarding this release.

## **Excusing Students From Physical Education Classes**

On occasion, a parent may find it necessary to request a child's non-participation in physical education for a time. A student may be excused from physical education when he/she has a written doctor's excuse explaining the reason for non-participation in the class, and the length of time the student will not be participating. The excuse should be addressed to the physical education teacher and given to the homeroom teacher to forward.

## **Head Lice**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is dedicated to the health and safety of all students. Parents of any student with head lice or nit infestation will be called and the student will be sent home for treatment. The student will be readmitted to school once the treatment has concluded.

Students may return to school when they are free of live lice. Students returning after being sent home will be checked by school personnel. If live lice are found, the child will be sent home.

## **Students With Food Allergies**

Some students in attendance at our schools have a dangerous allergy to certain foods such as peanuts, chocolate, etc... For this reason the schools' environment must be as free as possible from the allergy-producing food products. In these grade levels, all families need to consider such allergies in preparing lunches, treats, and snacks. The school will establish allergy-free zones in the lunchroom and other instructional areas where appropriate. Students with food allergies may have allergic reactions that vary from localized, mild, to systemic, life-threatening reactions. Therefore, students with food allergies must have on file at the school an allergy action plan and healthcare accommodations plan in accordance with the school's medication policy.

## Health Examinations and Immunization

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141.31*

1. Each child that enters Kindergarten must have a health examination as specified by the Milwaukee Health Department. The form for this examination will be given at the time of registration.
2. Students entering Kindergarten and Grade 6 must have a Booster MMR vaccination before entering school in the fall.
3. It is the duty of the parent to see that the child has been properly immunized when the child entered school. A form from the Milwaukee Health Department will list the proper immunizations needed.
4. Hepatitis B (HEP B) vaccine is required for students entering day care centers, kindergarten, or 7th grade. The grade requirement will advance 2 grades each year. For example, during the 1998-1999 school year, HEP B vaccine will be required for students entering grades K, 1, 7, and 8. The Student Immunization Rule (HSS 144) contains one of the following deadlines and waivers: Within 30 school days after admission, each student who does not file a waiver must submit written evidence of having received the first dose of HEP B vaccine.
5. In cases where the immunizations are not up-to-date, school offices will inform the parents. A list of non-compliant students will be reported to the state as required by the Department of Public Instruction.

## Medications For Students

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141.5*

### **Medications**

Two forms must be filled out in order for school personnel to administer prescription drugs.

1. The **Physician's Order for Medication Administration Form**-This form is available in the school office. When your child has an appointment with a physician and you expect a prescription will be given, please take this form with you. This form is necessary if prescription medications are to be given/taken at school. A new form is required every school year. Physician forms may be faxed to the school (the school's fax number appears on the top of the form or 414-744-8340) or scanned and emailed to [schoolinfo@staamke.org](mailto:schoolinfo@staamke.org).
2. The **Parent/Guardian Medical Consent Form**-This form authorizes school personnel to administer the prescription.

Both of these forms are required by Archdiocesan policy. Without these forms, parents will be responsible for administering the medication themselves during the school day.

It is the responsibility of the student, when age-appropriate, to come to the office to get the medication at the designated time. We will keep the medication refrigerated if needed. Students with asthma may carry an inhaler with them.

Medication should be sent to the office in its original container from the pharmacy, labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug and dosage, the time to be given, and the physician's name.

### **Inhalers**

Students may self-administer inhalers while at school only under the supervision of school personnel. A student who carries an inhaler on his or her person must have an Archdiocese of Milwaukee Release Form for Student Inhaler Use, completed and signed by the student's physician, parent, principal, and homeroom teacher. The parent should provide a second inhaler to be kept in the school office in case the child misplaces or loses the original inhaler.

The form states that the student understands the purpose of the inhaler and has been instructed in how to use it appropriately, including how often. The school is not responsible for safeguarding the student's inhaler.



See the policy 5141.5 in the [Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy Handbook](#) for policy and medication forms.

## Non-Prescription Drugs

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 5141.5*

Non-prescription drugs may be taken during the school day with permission from a parent. Non-prescription medication must be sent to school in the original manufacturer's packaging with a list of active ingredients and recommended therapeutic dosage. The **Parent/Guardian Medical Consent Form** for non-prescription medication must be filled out. If a student needs cough drops, the parent should send a dated note requesting that the students be allowed to use them. All pills and other types of medication must be brought to the office for safekeeping, along with a note from a parent stating the dosage and when the medication is to be given.

A parent/guardian medication authorization form: non-prescription medication

## Pets At School

Since St. Thomas Aquinas Academy's first concern is the health and well-being of our students, pets at school present at least 3 possible issues: injury, disease, and allergies. Therefore:

- Pets should not be brought to school or school sponsored activities (such as walks) nor should they be taken out of your vehicle at dismissal. We have seen even friendly animals that have never had a mean moment in their lives, be affected by the noise, commotion, and different environment of school and unexpectedly exhibit aggressive or protective behavior towards others. We would rather be safe than sorry. So, even though we would all love seeing that "cutest puppy ever", please do not bring them to school.
- If having an animal in the classroom would enhance the educational program, the following guidelines must be followed:
  - The animal needs to be contained in a safe (to them and to the students) environment.
  - The animal has to be known to be in good health (e.g. no salmonella, etc..)
  - The teacher must contact all classroom families to ensure that all of the students in that class, or classes that would visit the room are not allergic to the animal.

## EXTENDED CARE

The Extended Care Program is an extension of the overall school program. It is under the supervision of the School Principal and follows the policies of the school including-discipline, health, and safety protocol. Enrollment will be limited based on student to staff ratio and registration will be granted on a first come, first served basis.

Extended Care is located on the ground floor accessible from the main entrance, on Norwich. Please use the designated doorbell. For more information or to sign up for Extended Care, call Katie Janiszewski at 414-316-3186.

**Hours & Location:** The school offers before care starting at 6:00am and after care from 3:15-6:00pm. Additional hours may be offered during school days with noon dismissal. Prior registration may be required for these special hours/days. Reference the school calendar for these dates. Extended Care is not available when school is not in session.

**Fees:** Any registered student at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is eligible for the Extended Care Program but must register with the school office. All forms and payment in full need to be submitted prior to utilizing the program. Extended Care will be a PREPAID program per trimester (90 days/trimester). Billing occurs with our trimester schedule at a cost of:

1 student-\$200  
2 students-\$325  
3+ students-\$475

**Sign In & Sign Out:** Parents will sign their child(ren) into Extended Care in the morning and sign them out in the afternoon. The sign-in/sign-out sheet is available at Extended Care. Extended Care may only release your child to you, the custodial parent(s), or someone you designate. The person to whom your child is released (including yourself) should make sure the sign-out is recorded. If someone else other than the parents will be picking up your child, you must write a note, call 414-744-1214, or email at [schoolinfo@staamke.org](mailto:schoolinfo@staamke.org) to let us know who that person will be. The person may be asked for photo identification if they are unknown to Extended Care staff. Please make sure Extended Care staff is aware if your child is to go home with another child’s family.

**Snacks & Programming:** A snack and beverage will be provided. Snacks are eaten when they arrive. The children are then given the choice of different activities including, but not limited to: homework, games, and crafts.

**Behavior:** Students are expected to respect other students and the Extended Care staff and to use language appropriate in a Catholic setting. Behavior which is unsafe for others or self will not be allowed, nor will intentional destruction of equipment. To maintain order and safety of all the children, supervisors will use behavior modification techniques such as modeling, positive reinforcement, teacher time outs, and redirection. The Extended Care Program will follow the school’s discipline policy. Consistent failure to abide by the rules on the part of either the parent or child will result in dismissal from the program.

**Extended Care Rules Of Behavior**

All children are expected to behave in a respectful manner in accordance with Seton Catholic Schools’ and St. Thomas Aquinas Academy’s expectations and Discipline Framework. Any child that is disrespectful or disruptive repeatedly will be asked not to attend Extended Care. Cell phones can only be used with permission and only for calls to and from parents/guardians.

**Extended Care Expectations**

<b>Behavior expectations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children will show respect and kindness for each other and the teachers.</li> <li>2. Children will ask permission before leaving to go anywhere (office, bathroom, etc).</li> <li>3. Children will ask for help from an adult if needed to resolve a disagreement.</li> <li>4. Hitting, kicking, or yelling is never ok.</li> </ol>
<b>Snack</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will sit at their tables and wait to be called up.</li> <li>2. Students will finish their snack at their tables and clean up when they are done.</li> <li>3. Students will keep all food in the extended care area. No food is allowed in the gym.</li> </ol>
<b>Cell phones</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All phones go in the cell phone basket at the beginning of the day–see below.</li> <li>2. Phones can be picked up when parents arrive.</li> <li>3. Students who choose not to follow cell phone guidelines will not be allowed to bring a cell phone to school.</li> <li>4. Supervisors may use the phone in EC to call parents.</li> </ol>
<b>Voice levels</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indoor voices are at a 2 (table talk), a 1 (whisper), or a zero (silence).</li> <li>2. EC supervisors will remind students of appropriate voice levels when it gets too loud.</li> <li>3. Students who choose not to use appropriate voice levels will be asked to take a time out to reset.</li> </ol>
<b>Check in/out</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents sign children in and out on the sheet provided.</li> <li>2. Coaches sign kids out before practice. Any student staying for athletics reports to EC after school and stays in extended care until the coach signs them out. Students are not allowed</li> </ol>

	to be in the gym without their specific coach present.
<b>Toys and clean up</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students may play safely and respectfully with toys and are expected to clean up after themselves.</li> <li>2. Students at STAA share toys and include others in play time.</li> <li>3. Students will try to work out conflicts with each other first, then ask for help from the supervisor.</li> <li>4. Students may be asked to take a time out from playing with toys or move to another activity at any time.</li> </ol>

**Extended Care Cell Phone Collection**

1. All cell phones are collected at the beginning of the day.
2. The person collecting the phones will transfer the phones of the students staying for extended care into the extended care phone basket.
3. The collection baskets are divided and a sticky note is included in the basket so the collector knows whose phones to place in the extended care basket.
4. Students can pick up their cell phone when parents sign them out of extended care.

**\* Violation of these rules will result in a warning, communication with a parent and disciplinary action at the discretion of the St. Thomas Aquinas Academy staff and administration. \***

**Extended Care Billing Procedures**

Parents may view and pay their Extended Care invoices on FACTS. A late fee will be assessed if an invoice is not paid on time. It is the responsibility of the parents to check their invoice due dates and to contact the Dean of Operations should there be a situation that prevents the family from being able to pay their bill in full and/or on time.

Unpaid balances may result in denial of Extended Care services, following a two-week notice.

Students will NOT be accepted into the Extended Care program for the following school year until any unpaid balances are paid in full.

**COMMITTEES**

**School Advisory Commission**

The St. Thomas Aquinas Academy School Advisory Commission is an advisory body to the school principal. The purpose of the School Advisory Commission is to assist the school principal in:

- Ensuring the school thrives and remains viable for the future.
- Ensuring excellence in Catholic Culture, Academics, Whole Child Education, and the Stewardship of Resources
- Supporting the school in its efforts to collaborate with the parish.

**Parent Staff Association**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy Parent Staff Association bridges school and families together by organizing fun family events to promote a sense of community, reinforce our Catholic values, and serve as a resource of stewardship and communication to families by holding informative meetings throughout the year.

## **Athletics Committee**

Working with the Bayview Parochial Soccer League and Parkview Volleyball and Basketball Leagues, the Athletics Committee oversees scheduling of games and tournaments, hands out uniforms, recruits coaches and gym volunteers, operates a concession stand, maintains the integrity of the gym and sporting equipment, and coordinates fundraising, tournaments, and banquets.

## **Community Engagement/Marketing Committee**

The St. Thomas Aquinas Academy Marketing Committee provides assistance with promoting the school's interaction with the parishes and the greater community as well as assisting with student recruitment.

## **School-Related Associations Structure And Function**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 3570*

An "affiliated organization" is any group of parishioners/school parents or a group sponsored by parishioners/school parents that is participating in the mission of the parish/school, uses the name of the parish/school for identification, and is not organized separately from the parish/school. It is specifically sponsored by the parish/high school. All parish/school affiliated organizations are established in the parish/school bylaws or by separate action of the Pastoral Council/School Board. Affiliated organizations are accountable to the parish/school, usually through the Pastoral Council/School Board or one of its commissions/committees.

Organizations such as the Home and School Association, Athletic Association, Holy Name Society, Christian Women Society, Ski Club, Debate Club, Drama Club, etc., are usually established as affiliated organizations. Organizations that have their primary affiliation with another organization, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Knights of Columbus or St. Vincent de Paul, yet use the parish or school as a sponsor or for identification are not considered affiliated organizations. Any other group that is not sponsored or authorized by the Pastoral Council or School Board is not an affiliated organization (excerpt from policy).

A school may also want to include other organizations it is a member of, such as WCRIS, WRISA, School Choice Wisconsin, and the WIAA (High school only).

## **Fundraising**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 3281*

Fundraising activities of any kind must receive advance approval from the School Principal and/or Dean of Operations at least four (4) weeks in advance. Activities or events that may be considered fundraisers include but are not limited to soliciting donations, selling products (e.g. candy, bakery, videos/DVDs, discount cards, magazine subscriptions, etc...), providing services (e.g. washing cars, providing babysitting, tutoring, etc...) and hosting events (e.g. camps, clinics, dances, concerts, talent shows, etc...) in order to generate funds used to support the school, class, or student organization. No solicitation of contributions may be conducted in the name of the school or on campus without written advanced approval.

## **Fundraising For Field Trips**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 3282*

Certain Field trips will require fundraising activities to cover their costs. In these situations, all fundraising activities must have pre-approval from the pastor/parish director/president and the principal/religious education director. All funds raised must pass through the parish/school and must be used for costs associated with the field trip. No individual

student or family may receive a monetary benefit from the fundraising that is not equally applied to all students or families.

In the event that the Field trip is canceled for any reason, all funds raised are the parish/schools and may not be disbursed to individual students or families. The principal/religious education director is encouraged to consult with the students and families to determine a mutually agreeable use of the funds, but the decision of the principal/religious education director on the use of the funds is final.

See the policy 6153 in the [Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy Handbook](#) for additional information on field trips and fundraising.

## **Fundraising And Money Handling**

There is a policy in place, on file in the school office, for all fundraising and money handling, that is to be followed by all project coordinators, including Parent and Staff Association (PSA) and Athletics fundraisers, class projects and in-school fundraisers.

Only Seton Catholic Schools is authorized to sign vendor contracts on behalf of STAA, and only Seton Catholic Schools has authority to enter into a multiple year contract or exclusive service agreement with any fundraising vendor.

## **Accounting Of Funds**

**Expenses:** All expenses related to fundraising must be approved via the school's fundraising form before any purchases are made. Any expenses for the fundraiser will come out of the money raised from the corresponding fundraiser. The materials that will be approved will be those that the school is confident the profit of the fundraiser will cover. Expense details and reporting shall be maintained at the school level with coordination and support from the volunteer fundraising coordinator. High-level reporting will be maintained by the Seton accounting team. Additionally, schools and groups will need to report the cost of an item purchased for resale as this is an ineligible choice expense (e.g. concessions, trinkets, etc...)

**Purchasing:** Volunteer and student groups are required to adhere to Seton's purchasing and cash handling procedures that also align with Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP). It is preferred that purchases are completed directly by the school. In some instances, volunteers may request a reimbursement for pre-approved items only.

The laws of the state of Wisconsin forbid:

- A Choice school from requiring a parent to volunteer or raise funds as a condition of admission; furthermore, the school cannot impose any penalty on a parent or child for failure to participate in fundraising activity or volunteerism.
- Any sort of compensation (e.g. access to the school or school programs) to volunteers, assisting in the operation of bingo and/or other games of chance is prohibited.

Volunteer services that are mandated in order to receive a discount, avoid paying a penalty, or allowing a "buy out," pose the following issues:

- Viewed by the IRS as a form of compensation and thus may involve the issuance of a Form 1099 to those receiving a discount.
- Puts the parish/school at risk of paying Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT).
- Subjects the parish to risk for any accidents/claims that arise.

A worker is no longer considered to be a volunteer if he or she receives something of value in kind for his or her service. By definition, a volunteer is someone who gives services without any expressed or implied promise of remuneration.

## ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### Athletic Program

As part of the athletic program at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, we all have obligations to take an active role in our children's sports-related experiences. The Athletic Committee has published by-laws to guide and manage the program.

Key guidelines include:

- **Children's health is a priority.** Children in grades 5-8 who participate in sports need to have a completed physical exam form on file with the Athletic Director, reporting on an examination from no more than two years prior. Anyone without the proper form on file will not be allowed to participate in practices, league, and/or tournament games.
- **Academics come first at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy.** A student must be in good academic standing as defined by consistent progress toward proficiency in grade-level standards and satisfactory completion of class assignments. If a student falls below a 2 on the proficiency scale and/or has excessive missing assignments (reported by the classroom teacher), the student will be suspended from sports (practices and games) for 10 consecutive school days. During the suspension, the student will be monitored and required to complete missing assignments in order to become reinstated on his or her team. The school principal will inform the Athletic Director of required suspensions, and any reinstatement to the athletic program requires the principal's approval. Special circumstances may be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Extracurricular activities and absences.** A student who is absent from school is not allowed to participate in after school or evening activities. If students go home sick, they are not to return nor participate in extracurricular activities in the evening. The principal reserves the right to refuse after school activity for absenteeism.
- **Student athletes are representatives of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy.** Any student athlete who does not demonstrate proper behavior may be suspended from practices & games or removed from the team (See Response To Behavior Level 2-4). The Principal has final discretion in all dismissals from sports programs at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy.
- **Archdiocese regulations will be followed.** Archdiocese of Milwaukee regulation #3 states that "A student-athlete may compete concurrently in only one sport, in only one league, during the sport season. No dual participation in the same sport is permitted." Note: this regulation applies to grades 5-8 per regulation #10. In addition, students who do not attend St. Thomas Aquinas Academy but who regularly attend religious education classes at any of the cluster parishes may participate in the sports program, provided they meet all other requirements that apply to student athletes.
- **Archdiocesan Student-Athlete Sportsmanship Pledge.** Students involved in athletics must sign and abide by the Archdiocesan Student-Athlete Sportsmanship Pledge. This pledge form will be distributed to athletes by their coaches.
- **Extracurricular cost.** For each child participating in school-sponsored sports, each family will pay a one-time fee of \$75 per child per sport, with a maximum payment of \$250 per family per sport.
- **Gym service commitments for each family that participates in any sport.** This includes Fall or Spring co-ed soccer, volleyball, track and field, and basketball. A parent (or adult age 18 or older) from each family will be asked to fulfill gym service time during either the volleyball or basketball season and tournament games during the year. As shown in the following chart, the number of shifts varies based on the particular sport and the number of children in the family who are participating in that sport. After committing, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange a substitute if unable to show up at the scheduled time. The only exemptions from the gym service commitment are for head coaches and one assistant coach per team (one exemption for each sport coached), and for Athletic Committee members.

\*\*\*If a family has not met its volunteer obligations by the end of the school year in which their child(ren) has participated in organized sports, they will be charged a \$150 volunteer fee in FACTS. It is expected this fee will be paid prior to registering for future sports seasons.

GYM SERVICE COMMITMENT			
Shifts By Sports And Number Of Children Participating			
Sport	Shifts (1 Child)	Shifts (2 Children)	Shifts (3 Children)
Volleyball	2	4	6
Soccer	2	4	6
Basketball	2	4	6

See the policy 6145 in the [Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy Handbook](#) for additional information on school and parish based athletic information.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Our students at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy are encouraged to participate in the many opportunities offered for extracurricular activities. We do believe, however, that our academic program should be the most important consideration for students and parents alike. To ensure that the academic growth of our students is not interfered with by extracurricular activities, participation in the various activities comes with guidelines for participation. Please consult the Athletic Association Handbook as well as the various activity coordinators for the specific concerning participation.

Participation in extracurricular activities at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy is considered a privilege. Participation may be contingent upon successful completion of schoolwork, final determination of which is made at the discretion of the teacher, Principal, or other administrator. An administrator may bar a student from extracurricular activities for poor conduct or failing grades. Suspended students are barred from participation in activities on the days of suspension. Students completing their suspensions and are returned to class before the end of the school day, may participate in scheduled activities.

See the policy 6145 in the [Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy Handbook](#) for additional information on extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

## **VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS**

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 1250, 4140*

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff, school administrators shall regulate all visitors to their buildings and grounds. All visitors to the school shall report to the office when entering and must sign the visitor’s log and obtain a visitor’s badge before visiting classrooms and other parts of the building. This requirement does not apply when visitors are attending an athletic event or other public program in an area typically used for large group assembly, such as gymnasiums and auditoriums, or when parents are attending activities clearly for the purpose of parent involvement, such as an open house or parent-teacher conferences.

The school leader or designee has the discretion to request that a visitor leave the premises if he/she believes that the visitor's presence presents a danger to students, staff, or property or if that person’s presence is disruptive to the operation of school or program. Law enforcement shall be called if persons refuse to comply.

Students may not bring guests to school unless the student’s parent/legal guardian and authorized school representative have granted permission to do so.

A student is never released from the parish/school programs to anyone who is not clearly identified as his/her parent or an adult authorized in writing by the parent for this purpose.

## **Visitor And Volunteer Code Of Conduct**

It is the goal of St. Thomas Aquinas Academy to provide a positive educational setting for every student. An environment conducive to learning must be orderly and respectful. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is necessary to regulate the conduct of all persons on school property and at school functions.

All persons on school property or attending school functions shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. Disorderly conduct will not be tolerated.

Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Running in hallways.
- Making inappropriate and/or unreasonable noise.
- Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
- Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
- Entering any school premises or remaining in any school building without authorization after it is normally closed.
- Loitering on school premises.
- Failing to comply with the valid directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- Committing an act of violence upon a student, teacher, administrator or other school employee or other person, or attempting to do so.
- Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
- Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
- Threatening to use any weapon or to do any form of harm to another individual, by any other means.
- Intentionally, or with reckless indifference or disregard, damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator or other school employee or other person, including but not limited to, graffiti or arson.
- Intentionally, or with reckless indifference or disregard, damaging or destroying school property.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs not prescribed by a licensed health care worker.
- Engaging in any illegal activity.

Persons who do not conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner will be asked to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection or to arrest and prosecution at the discretion of the administrators and the police. Where warranted, they may be excluded from school property and/or functions in the future.

## **Visitor Procedure**

St. Thomas Aquinas Academy welcomes visitors to the school. All visitors are expected to follow the school policies and procedures.

- All visitors must report to the school office when arriving and be signed in by the office staff.
- All visitors are required to wear a Visitor Badge when in the building.
- Upon completion of the visit, the visitor must return to the office to be signed out and return the Visitor Badge.
- Visits may be prohibited at certain times such as the start and end of the school day, during standardized testing, or when other student assessments are being conducted.



- Visitors wishing to conference with teachers or administrators during the school day must make arrangements in advance.
- Visitors must not disturb instruction within the classrooms.
- No visitor will be allowed to go directly to a classroom to deliver or pick up students or to speak to teachers unless approval has been obtained by the administrator.
- School staff who observe visitors without proper identification are to immediately question the person and escort him/her to the office.
- Visitors must be healthy.

### Volunteer Program

Parents and interested individuals in the community should be encouraged to offer their services as volunteers in the parish and school programs. Volunteers are to work under the supervision and directions of a certified staff person.

The STAA Volunteer Program exists to provide families and interested individuals with the opportunity to offer their gifts and talents to support the children and the school. As Catholics, we are called to serve, whether it be the poor, our parish, our school, or others in our world. Our school's mission is to provide a high quality, Catholic education to children and so we ask that families and interested individuals serve with us to help fulfill that mission. A child's experience at school does not end in the classroom. We are dedicated to providing activities and programs that will engage and build a strong sense of community among the students and their families. We have developed a program with collaboration from school parents that provides an opportunity to fulfill a need to achieve our mission.

There are two ways to volunteer: directly volunteering with the students and students' activities, and non-direct volunteering, such as fundraising, bake sales and other activities. If you are directly volunteering with or around children, you will need to submit to a background check and to complete the Safeguarding all of God's Family class (see our website for information). For non-direct volunteering these qualifications are not necessary, but anyone who has not completed these requirements will not be able to participate in ANY activity where students or children are involved.

Some examples of volunteer opportunities: chaperone field trips, participate on a school committee, help a teacher classroom, assist with a fundraiser, participate in Parent Staff Association activities, or bake for a bake sale. If you are a parent with children in Athletics, you must fulfill your Athletic volunteer requirement of 2 shifts per sport your child is in.

The following list includes examples, but is subject to change depending on volunteer availability:

- Working as an *unpaid* library or classroom volunteer.
- Chaperoning field trips, dances or other school events. SEE (Safe Environment Education) training (noted below) is required before you may chaperone.
- Providing other approved forms of assistance in the school office or classroom.
- Participation on the School Advisory Committee.
- Participation in the Parent Staff Association.
- Participation on the Marketing Committee.
- Coordinating programs such as Box Tops for Education.
- Membership on the school's Athletic Committee.
- Coaching a school-sponsored athletic team.
- Other forms of volunteer service as approved by the school.
- Working at parish-run fundraisers, such as dinners, fish fries, dances, festivals, auctions, etc.

## Screening, Background Checks, & Training

*From Archdiocese of Milwaukee Policy 6153*

In order to comply with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth as applied in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, the following requirements must be met for all volunteers who have regular contact with children or youth prior to commencement of volunteer service:

- Be cleared through a state and national criminal background check.
- Obtain Safe Environment Certification
- Read and sign the Code of Ethical Standards for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee
- Must have knowledge of the following policies and procedures:
  - Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect (5140.1)
  - Mandatory Reporting of School Violence Threats (5140.12)
  - Suicide Prevention and Intervention-mandatory reporting responsibilities (6164.12 #4)
  - Be approved by a member of the professional staff
  - A criminal background check must be repeated every five (5) years.

A volunteer may be dismissed for violations of policies and procedures of the parish/school or for actions that harm the good name and reputation of the parish and/or school.

For more information or to register, go to [www.archmil.org/safeguarding](http://www.archmil.org/safeguarding).

## Non-Discrimination Statement USDA Nondiscrimination Statement Update

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

**Mail:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

**Fax:**

(202) 690-7442

**Email:**

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

**Seton Catholic Schools Culture Commitment to Excellence**

<u>PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMITMENT</u>	<u>STUDENT COMMITMENT</u>	<u>STAFF COMMITMENT</u>
<p>We/I fully commit to <b>St. Thomas Aquinas Academy</b> in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will make the school a safe and orderly environment by following the Family Handbook.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will ensure that my child arrives at school by 8:00 a.m. and attends school regularly. I have read the attendance/tardy policy in the family handbook and understand the school’s policy regarding tardiness and absences.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will ensure that my child wears the appropriate uniform daily, as explained in the uniform section of the handbook.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will communicate regularly with my child’s teachers regarding my child’s academic and behavioral performance and attend a minimum of <u>two</u> parent conferences, and any additional requested conferences.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will read the Family Newsletter each week to keep informed of updates/information from the school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will check my child’s homework nightly and ensure that assignments are turned in on time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I give permission for our/my child’s picture to be taken at school or school events and for it to appear in school booklets, brochures, videos, newspapers, or television.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will support my child in the School Culture Plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We/I will be a faith partner for my child.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understand the policies and expectations as stated in the handbook.</li> </ul> <p><b>PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p>I fully commit to <b>St. Thomas Aquinas Academy</b> in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will always work, think, and behave in alignment with Seton Catholic Schools shared values.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will do whatever it takes for me and my fellow students to learn. This includes completing nightly homework to the best of my ability, and participating in class both to share my thoughts and ask questions to help me better understand.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will always be open to feedback from my teachers. If I make a mistake, this means I will tell the truth to my teachers and accept responsibility for my actions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will always behave so as to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. This includes listening to my peers and being a positive influence in my classrooms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will wear my proper school uniform each day.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will do everything in my power to arrive at school on time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am responsible for my own behavior, and I will follow the teachers’ directions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understand the policies and expectations as stated in the handbook and understand that my actions, both positive and negative, relate directly to my ability to participate in school activities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will actively participate in weekly prayer services and/or Mass as my faith permits.</li> </ul> <p><b>STUDENT SIGNATURE</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p>I fully commit to <b>St. Thomas Aquinas Academy</b> in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will make my school a safe and orderly environment by enforcing the Family Handbook and by living/modeling the Seton shared values for my students.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will ensure that valuable school time is utilized thoughtfully and efficiently so that my school can provide our students with an education that is academically rigorous and that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Wisconsin State Standards.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will communicate regularly with parents regarding their child’s behavioral and academic performance through PowerSchool, report cards, parent conferences, contact via phone, email, or school communication platform, and I will always be welcoming to all parents.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will assign, collect, and evaluate assignments designed to support classroom instruction, teach responsibility for school work, and ensure that students are held accountable for finishing those assignments on a daily basis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will constantly monitor the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of our students, both academically and behaviorally and will celebrate their successes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I will actively participate in weekly prayer service and/or Mass as my faith permits.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understand the policies and expectations as stated in the handbook.</li> </ul> <p><b>STAFF SIGNATURE</b></p> <p>_____</p>