


St. Thomas More Catholic School

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Principal: Deacon Douglas Banks

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Dear Parents,

The purpose of this St. Thomas More Catholic School Handbook is to provide you with school policies, practices, schedules, phone book and the school calendar for the year.

As I welcome you to our parish school, I would like to share some thoughts with you about a responsibility you incur when you send your children here.

Catholic education is a ministry of the Church, and specifically of the parish community. The forms which education takes in St. Thomas More Parish can be found in the school and the religious education programs for children, youth, and adults. Our parish community provides these opportunities for Christian formation and Catholic education.

This ministry of education cannot take place effectively in a vacuum. Parental encouragement and participation is necessary for the wholesome development of a child. This encouragement and participation carries a parish dimension. The community that contributes in a variety of ways for the provision of Catholic education encourages parents to be active participants in the community of faith that provides generously for the needs of their children.

Active participation in the life of a parish can be observed in the following ways:

- + Registration as a member of the parish community.*
- + Participation in the sacramental and liturgical life of the parish.*
- + Participation in the life and activities of the parish community.*
- + Contribution of time and talent to the development and maintenance of parish facilities and programs.*
- + Participation in parish programs designed for personal growth and development.*
- + Sharing in the financial needs of the parish through regular contributions in accord with true family means.*

Our parish is privileged to share its educational ministry with you. Your participation and support in this ministry can only impact in a positive way the total spiritual and academic growth of your child. Let us work together for our children!

May God bless us all!

Deacon Douglas Banks, Principal

ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

As the family of God at St. Thomas More Parish, we are a Eucharistic Community of believers, called to live in faithfulness to the Gospel, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in unity with our Pope and our Bishop. Nourished by his Body and Blood, we seek to offer worship to God as Jesus taught us, to pray for and serve one another in love, and to live in faith and humility following the example of Mary.

The Gospel is our hope. In the spirit of our patron, St. Thomas More, we strive to educate ourselves, our children and our neighbors in its witness and its power. We seek its justice, while serving the needs of the weak and deprived, in the name of the Risen Lord.

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More Catholic School provides students with a Catholic atmosphere to know, love, and serve God.

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Each individual is created by God with a unique mind, heart, body, and spirit. St. Thomas More Catholic School, in partnership with the home, ministers to our children in developing his/her intellectual, spiritual, social, and physical potential.

Christ as the servant model guides us to know, love, and serve God. Through traditional education and the use of current technology, we emphasize the importance of acquiring foundational knowledge and critical thinking skills. We integrate citizenship and faith throughout the curriculum to develop responsible stewards who live Gospel values.

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

The St. Thomas More Catholic School learning expectations flow directly from the School Philosophy. We strive to assist each child in the development of his/her potential socially, intellectually, spiritually, and physically

SPIRITUALLY

- actively displays Christian values: compassion, justice, and respect for the dignity of life and human diversity
- demonstrates knowledge of the Catholic faith: creed, traditions, and rituals
- demonstrates knowledge of the Bible and possesses basic scriptural study skills
- knows how to pray using various forms and methods in order to build a personal relationship with God
- celebrates with the community of believers through Eucharist, common prayer, and participation in the Sacraments
- demonstrates the spirit of service by sharing their talents, gifts, and skills with the greater church community

SOCIALLY:

- has skills for making good individual choices and decisions inside and outside the classroom
- demonstrates conflict resolution skills
- participates in community service
- experiences the world in terms of people, places, cultures, and the fine arts
- practices responsible citizenship
- respects the unique gifts of self and others
- demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively

INTELLECTUALLY:

- applies logic, organization, and patterning to analyze information
- applies logic, organization, and patterning to solve problems
- uses the scientific method and draws logical conclusions
- uses research skills to develop questions
- uses research skills to answer questions
- uses written language for different purposes and audiences
- uses charts, graphs, and visual images for different purposes and audiences
- uses oral language for different purposes and audiences
- comprehends expository text
- comprehends narratives
- comprehends auditory information
- exhibits creativity in academic life
- exhibits creativity in the fine arts
- demonstrates technological skills for classroom and educational purposes
- exhibits strategies for effective learning: organization, neatness, and time management

PHYSICALLY:

- respects others physical space
- lives a healthy life style
- works toward developing his/her own physical skill
- participates in a variety of physical activities
- demonstrates positive sportsmanship
- respects his/her own unique physical attributes and recognizes those in others

ADMISSIONS

No student will be refused admission to St. Thomas More Catholic School because of GENUINE INABILITY to pay. The Principal and the Pastor must approve partial tuition assistance. Parents contract a moral, if not legal, obligation to pay their tuition and other school bills. If they consistently fail to do so, the school may apply the following sanctions:

- Refuse to re-admit to school at the end of the first semester, any student whose tuition is in arrears.
- Refuse to re-admit to school in September, any student whose past bills are not paid in full.
- Refuse the transfer of records to a new school until all fees are paid in full.

New families apply directly to the Principal for admission. Kindergarten is the entrance to the school program.

Preschool Enrollment:

Enrollment for this program and its classes is based on the following guidelines:

- Children previously enrolled in the 3-year old program for consideration into the 4-year old program.
- Siblings of children presently enrolled in the school
- Children of registered and active members of St. Thomas More Parish
- Children of Catholic parents who are active in a parish other than St. Thomas More Parish
- All other students

The Early Child Care Program is operated on an 'Open Enrollment' system. Families and their children may register their children at any time by paying a non-refundable application fee and filling out the necessary paperwork. This fee is applied to tuition charges. Should enrollment exceed capacity, children will be placed on a waiting list and admitted when openings occur based on the enrollment protocols above.

Kindergarten through 8th Grade Enrollment:

Kindergarten enrollment: Students who have siblings in Kindergarten thru 8th grade are given priority for enrollment into St. Thomas More Catholic School. Enrollment in Preschool does not guarantee entrance into Kindergarten. St. Thomas More Catholic School being a parish school must place active parishioners wanting enrollment in Kindergarten before Preschool graduates. Registration takes place in March. Parents may begin to pre-register their children for Kindergarten beginning on the first day of school of the preceding year. For example: I have a child I want to start kindergarten in the academic year 2020-2021. I would be permitted to pre-register that child on the first day of school in the academic year 2019-2020.

Students are enrolled to St. Thomas More Catholic School according to the following list of priorities:

- Siblings of children presently enrolled in the school
- Children of registered and active members of St. Thomas More Parish who are enrolled in the St. Thomas More Catholic School Preschool program
- Children of registered and active members of St. Thomas More Parish
- Non-Catholics who are enrolled in the St. Thomas More Catholic School Preschool program
- Children of Catholic parents who are active in a parish other than St. Thomas More Parish
- All other students

While we generally have room for in-school families who wish to send a Kindergartener for the following year, there are a few requirements to ensure that a spot is held for your child: 1) **write the child's name in the space provided on your family registration form** when registering for the year prior to when your kindergartener will be entering. For example, you want Susie to start kindergarten in the 2020 – 2021 school year. When completing your registration form for the 2019 – 2020 school year, be sure to put Susie's name and date of birth on the form where it reads: "Next year, I will be registering a child for the 2020 – 2021 school year." 2) acquire a **Pre-admittance Form** (either from our website or in the school office) and submit it to the school office with the required fee in the month of September prior to the school year your kindergartener will be starting school. If you are unsure if your child will be ready to begin school, it is better that we have their name. You will be required to make a final decision at registration time the following spring. **IMPORTANT: if we have no**

knowledge that you have an upcoming kindergartener by October 1st of the previous year, we cannot guarantee that there will be a spot for your child. Please do not assume that because we know your family, we know how old all of your children are!

All students are required to have a record of health, which includes an updated record of immunizations. If this matter is not in compliance, attendance must be refused and/or terminated.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS POLICY: Washington State Law requires that children must be five years of age by August 31st to enroll in kindergarten. Here are five primary components to help you know if your child is ready for kindergarten:

1. Physical well-being and social development
2. Social and emotional development
3. Approaches to learning
4. Language development
5. Cognition and general knowledge

On occasion we have parents who feel their child is ready to start kindergarten before their fifth birthday due to where their birthday falls. A request to admit a student before their 5th birthday requirement will be considered only if there are openings available. Students with the appropriate age requirement will be given priority over all other determining factors; this includes the in-school family criteria. Acceptance for those requesting early admittance will not be given until July 10th immediately prior to the school year requested. Should there be openings; the following requirements must be completed:

- You may request an early admittance for a student who is not five years of age by August 31st, but they must be five before October 1st.
- You have your child assessed by a qualified and recognized private source (the child's pediatrician is not sufficient)
- You submit written evaluations from the child's preschool teacher
- You bring your child in for a pre-evaluation to be conducted by our kindergarten teacher and monitored and observed by our Principal or our Vice Principal for Educare.

Upon submission of the required evaluations, a decision by the Principal and kindergarten teacher will be made by July 10th. The school reserves the right to refuse admission based upon our professional evaluation that the child is not ready for kindergarten.

St. Thomas More Catholic School strongly discourages early admittance. Developmental studies demonstrate that a later maturation date far outweighs an early entrance. Students being considered for early entrance should exhibit high academics skills and have strong social skills appropriate to a kindergarten community of learners.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: St. Thomas More Catholic School adheres to the Non-Discrimination Policy 5110.1 of the School Policies and Administrative Regulations, Catholic Board of Education, Diocese of Spokane, 1980.

St. Thomas More Catholic School will admit students of any race, color, sex, national, and ethnic origins to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities of St. Thomas More Catholic School.

St. Thomas More Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national, and ethnic origins in administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletic, and other school administered programs.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

ARRIVAL TIME FOR STUDENTS IS between 8:20 a.m. (when supervision begins) and 8:25 a.m. (when the school doors open).

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS in the afternoon is between 3:00 p.m. (when the school day ends) and 3:15 p.m. (when supervision ends).

Children who consistently **ARRIVE EARLY** or **LEAVE LATE** will be asked to participate in the Extended Care Program—regardless of grade level—unless a student has made specific arrangements with a teacher to arrive early or stay late for extra assistance.

STUDENTS SHOULD ALWAYS BE INSIDE THE “SAFETY SQUARE” BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL by the Main Entrance (south door). Safe behavior should be practiced respecting other students and the drivers of car pools. No game playing is allowed—this is a waiting area.

Supervision is necessary and required. Please, when you are picking up your children, once they are in your care they must remain with you and may not wander the property or play in any area of the school property that is not directly supervised by a staff person. This speaks specifically to playground areas where children will play while parents interact with each other or are doing volunteer work or meeting with a teacher. Students must remain in direct supervision of their own parents/guardians.

PARKING LOT

Basic Guidelines:

Pull in parking at a slight angle. **Pull all the way up to the white line.**

Small, low profile (meaning height) vehicles in the front row.

Large vans, large pick-ups ideally in the third row.

Children are dismissed at regular intervals to **cross only in the crosswalk** and are to **proceed behind the parked vehicles** in their row to their vehicle.

Please pick up your children in the southern, **monitored** parking lot, which has the security of the teachers and staff. *The school warns parents and carpool drivers that other areas are not monitored and safety is highly questionable.*

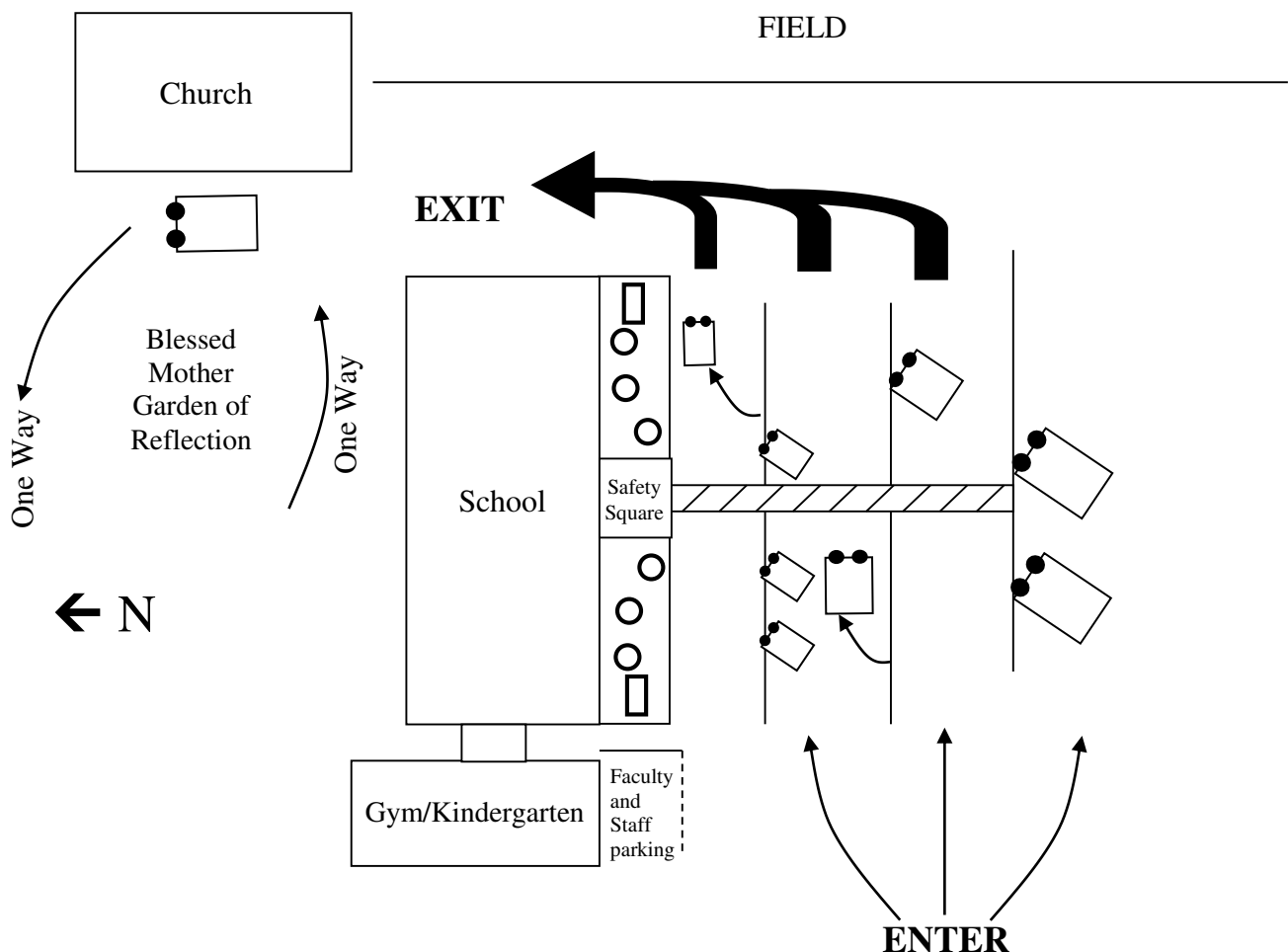
Please **pull forward into the exiting lane** (the lane in **front** of you) and exit to the east (your right) only.

Backing up or turning around is dangerous and therefore prohibited.

Please, if you are at school for a meeting or are going to be longer than 15 minutes, park in the lower parking lot. (to the west of the lunchroom)

If someone is picking up your child(ren) other than yourself, please notify the office and familiarize them with this procedure.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and it is for the safety of all the children. We realize there are days when more vehicles arrive than on others. We will try as hard as possible to get every car in and out safely, but there may be delays now and then. Please be patient. (Diagram is not to scale)



ATHLETIC PROGRAM

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS / EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

RATIONALE

Participating in an athletic/extra-curricular activity for St. Thomas More Catholic School is considered a privilege for every student. St. Thomas More Catholic School sponsors several activities each academic quarter for students and encourages all 3rd - 8th graders to participate.

Participation in the St. Thomas More Catholic School athletic/extra-curricular activities requires that students meet all eligibility requirements throughout the season and positively represent the school that supports their participation.

Activities include:	<i>Football, Tackle & Flag</i>	<i>Volleyball</i>	<i>Wrestling</i>
	<i>Boy's Basketball</i>	<i>Girl's Basketball</i>	
	<i>Baseball</i>	<i>Softball</i>	
	<i>Cross Country / Track & Field</i>	<i>Cheerleading (8th graders only)</i>	

1. S.T.M. ACADEMIC POLICY REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS / EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Athletic Program in Elementary Schools of the Spokane Diocese is directed by the Diocesan Athletic Council. Each student participating in the program is expected to adhere to the policies as outlined in the Diocesan Athletic Handbook. The Handbook can be found on the Diocesan website: www.dioceseofspokane.org.

Students of St. Thomas More Catholic School participating in any area of the extracurricular activity programs must meet teacher expectations and maintain passing grades in each academic subject. Teachers will notify the Athletic Director if a student is not meeting expectations or is academically unsuccessful. It then becomes the Athletic Director's responsibility to inform the respective coaches of the player's ineligibility until such time as the required expectations are met and/or academically successful grades are reported as passing. An exception may be granted only by a full review by Principal, Teacher, and Athletic Director.

2. STUDENT AND PARENT CONDUCT

All students participating in athletics representing St. Thomas More Catholic School must recognize that their sportsmanship, Christian actions, and language are reflective of St. Thomas More Catholic School and Community. Students/Parents displaying actions contrary to the highest sportsmanship, valued Christian actions, or acceptable language will be suspended from St. Thomas More athletics until a review by the Principal and Athletic Director is completed. Further participation guidelines will be set for each individual incident.

3. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

St. Thomas More furnishes all uniforms for boys and girls sports sponsored by the school, except for Cheerleading. Due to the nature of the activity, Cheerleaders are responsible for purchasing their own uniforms. The student-athlete is responsible for the proper care and maintenance of each uniform checked out to them during the sport season. Students are liable for the loss of equipment due to misuse and/or negligence.

All uniforms will be worn for games only.

4. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

State and Diocesan Policy requires that each student participating in the athletic program must have a valid physical examination. Physical exams are valid for a 2-year period. Proof of this physical, with a doctor's signature, must be on file with the Athletic Director.

5. OTHER FORMS

Each student-athlete must have an Athletic Participation Form as well as a Concussion Form on file with the Athletic Director. These forms must be submitted yearly.

6. ATTENDANCE

Students are encouraged to fully participate in the St. Thomas More Athletic program whenever possible.

Those students who indicate a desire to participate in an athletic sport and begin practices for that sport are responsible for their commitment to the program. Once a season begins, the team, coach, and school depend on each person to maintain their commitment to the sport. Should a student wish to terminate his/her affiliation with a sport, a conference will be held with the student, coach, parents, and Athletic Director for verification.

7. PARTICIPATION

All students participating in extra-curricular activities for St. Thomas More Catholic School are required to attend all scheduled practices, meetings, and games. If a student is unable to attend one of these, the coach or Athletic Director must be made aware of this prior to the scheduled event whenever possible. A student must be in attendance at school on the day of a game or practice to participate in that game or practice. If a student will be absent for an extended length of time, a week's notification for the coach is recommended.

The time demands for an extra-curricular activity at St. Thomas More are high. The "B" squads (5th & 6th grades) should anticipate 3 - 5 hours each week of practice, not including game or meeting times. The "A" squads (7th & 8th grades) should anticipate 5 - 10 hours each week of practice, not including game and meeting times.

THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM AND COACHES

One of the primary goals of the athletic program at St. Thomas More Catholic School is the development of the student, both in mind and body adhering to Christian principles in its entirety. The formation of healthy student attitudes is dependent upon the model displayed by the adults responsible for program direction and supervision. The ethics and sportsmanship of the players, coaches, and other associated participants with the game must be exemplary and beyond reproach. Everyone participating must conduct himself/herself so that he/she is a credit to the sport and to St. Thomas More Catholic School.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COACH

1. Prospective coaches will have to fill out the required forms and complete a Code of Conduct/VIRTUS training prior to coaching for St. Thomas More Catholic School. This includes a Washington State Patrol Background Check.
2. Coaches will comply with the meaning and the spirit of the playing rules. Purposely ignoring or willfully violating rules will not be tolerated.
3. Coaches will show respect for the decisions of the umpires/officials, the efforts of their opponents, and the efforts of their own team. They will conduct themselves so as to dignify the game.
4. Coaches will provide a consistent inspection of all equipment, with an emphasis on safety, and report to the Athletic Director any recommendations for corrective action.

5. Coaches will have a "TEAM PACKET" at every event where coaching takes place. A "TEAM PACKET" includes:
 - (a) The names of all members
 - (b) Emergency information for each member
 - (c) Accident Report Forms
 The Athletic Director will furnish the "TEAM PACKET".
6. All coaches must be First Aid/CPR certified.
7. Coaches will have a First Aid Kit at every event where coaching takes place. The Athletic Director will provide a First Aid Kit for each team.
8. Coaches will be aware of the physical condition of each participant in an activity that may affect their participation.
9. Coaches will establish and maintain discipline and control of his/her student athletes at every athletic event.
10. Coaches will provide opportunity for the participation of all players.

CHOICE OF COACHES

Prospective coaches for the Athletic Program at St. Thomas More Catholic School shall not be contacted and/or selected by the Athletic Director until the Athletic Director has consulted with the Principal. Because coaches are leaders and teachers of our young people, knowledge of the physical and mental development of children, as well as experience in athletics, will be given strong consideration in the selection process.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is required of all students per the school laws of the State of Washington. In addition, St. Thomas More Catholic School believes that 20 or more absences within a year is considered to be detrimental to academic achievement and may be grounds for non-passage to the next grade level.

Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule dental/medical appointments for their child outside regular school hours.

Voice Mail (Extension 316) will receive sick calls. Parents are asked to call in by 8:30 a.m. if their child is sick and will be missing school. If parents know **in advance** their children will not be in attendance, they should notify the teacher, and arrange for make-up work. If there is no message left or call made to the school office and your child is not in school, the school will call to verify that the child is absent with permission.

A long-term family trip would necessitate a conference with the teacher and/or Principal.

At St. Thomas More Catholic School we see continuous school attendance as an important part of a child's development. It is expected that each student will attend school at scheduled times, except for illness or family emergency.

For **EXCUSED ABSENCES** (3 days or less), a student will be given a minimum of 2 days to make up schoolwork.

For **EXTENDED ABSENCES** (4 or more days), the student is required to meet with the teacher immediately upon their return to school to develop a "*contract*" with the teacher for satisfaction of the missed work. Parents & students are responsible for insuring that all "*contract*" assignments are completed on time, and are handed in within one week.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES will necessitate a call to the home for an explanation.

CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE must have a note signed by a parent, guardian, or doctor explaining the reason for the absence. It is understood that teachers will continue to present new materials while students are absent. Ultimately the parents/students are responsible for the level of understanding that students have of the subjects covered during an absence.

There is a direct correlation between prompt and regular attendance in school and academic success.

TARDINESS:

Students shall be considered tardy for class if they are not in the classroom by 8:35 am. Disciplinary measures for tardiness is individually handled within the classroom. Should a student be consistently tardy, the issue may be turned over to the Vice Principal for Student Affairs. The school wishes to assist parents in the behavioral educational of their children. The principal and the parent will determined if a tardy issue would be improved through the use of detention. The primary goal is to educate children of the need for punctuality and discipline for developing a strong work ethic about promptness. The school will work with parents for improvement of excessive tardy. Ultimately, students who are continually tardy may suffer lower grades due to missing work that will not be accepted because of a student being tardy.

CAR POOLS

SEAT BELTS

- Kindergarteners are required to ride with their own parent or on the bus.
- Drivers of car pools may drive ONLY the number of children in their car as there are seat belts.
- Drivers, with the exception of parents, must be 25 years old or older.
- In leaving from the school for after-school activities, students will be permitted to be in a car pool ONLY where there is one seat belt per person.
- Seat belts are to be buckled BEFORE the children are taken anywhere.

INSURANCE

We recommend to parents that they be assured the drivers of their children have adequate insurance.

CHEERLEADING

ATTENDANCE

Cheerleaders are to attend all A-Squad football and basketball games. If a girl misses more than 3 games during the year for any reason except illness or attendance at her own sport, she is removed as a cheerleader. Absentee excuses should be given to the Coordinator.

The girl's first responsibility is to the sport that she may be involved in through the school. If her game conflicts with a cheerleading time, she should attend her game first.

COORDINATOR DUTIES

- Supervise practices.
- Attend games or delegate adult supervision.
- Check attendance of cheerleaders at games.
- Consult and inform the Principal and Athletic Director if there are any problems.

ELIGIBILITY

All 8th grade girls are eligible to be cheerleaders.

UNIFORM

Cheerleaders are responsible for their own uniforms. The Principal and Coordinator must approve the style before they are made or bought.

CLASS SIZE

Class size in kindergarten and first grade will be limited to 25 students. The class size can be extended to no more than 30 but at least one teacher aide will be assigned to assist the teacher in the classroom with direct student contact once the class is 26 or more. Second, third, and fourth grades will be generally limited to 28 students. Fifth through eighth grades will be limited to 30 students. Exceptions may occur in grades two through eight when multiple-child families are enrolling or for the acceptance of Exchange Students. In either case, when exceeding class size norms specific concern will be given to the make-up of the class, the number of children that a family is trying to enroll in the school, and the behavioral and academic abilities and needs of the student(s)enrolling and the student composition of the class.

CODE OF CONDUCT/VIRTUS

The Diocese of Spokane requires that all who volunteer in any of the diocesan schools or churches be required to do the following:

- ✓ Participate in a Code of Conduct/VIRTUS training workshop put on by the Diocese
- ✓ Renew, on a yearly basis via the internet, the Code of Conduct/VIRTUS training
- ✓ Have a Washington State Patrol Background Check

Below are the guidelines that all volunteers are required to follow as published by the Diocese of Spokane. The entire Code of Conduct/VIRTUS policy can be found at the diocesan website: www.dioceseofspokane.org.

DIOCESE OF SPOKANE CODE OF CONDUCT/VIRTUS

Revised 8/2/2005

The following Code of Conduct/VIRTUS applies to: Clergy, Seminarians, all employees of the Catholic Bishop of Spokane, Parishes, Schools, Catholic Charities, Institutions, CPC, Catholic Cemeteries of Spokane and Volunteers in church ministry, hereinafter referred to as church personnel. Those who act in the name of the church have special influence in the lives of the people to whom they minister. Because of the respect and even reverence with which many people seek help from the church's ministers, there is an imbalance of power and hence a vulnerability inherent in the ministerial relationship. In these circumstances there is likely an absence of meaningful consent to any sexual activity, even if the person is an adult. This imbalance of power makes any sexual activity always inappropriate. It is the responsibility of the church minister or staff member to maintain appropriate emotional and sexual boundaries with those whom they work and serve. As in other helping professions such as physicians and therapists, the special nature of the relationship between church personnel and the people they serve calls for a higher ethical standard of behavior. In such relationships the appropriateness or inappropriateness of behavior is judged not by the intent of the church person, but its impact upon the recipient. Church personnel of the Diocese of Spokane must at all times witness to the mission and gospel values by the excellent example of their lives, by practicing and adhering to the standards, policies and procedures articulated in their personnel policy and their own professional code of ethics.

TOUCHING

Touching must be age-appropriate and based on the need of the young person and not on the need of the adult. An adult must avoid physical contact when alone with a young person. Touches and embraces that are experienced or perceived as uncomfortable to the individual, adult or child, are forbidden. Adults should avoid any physical touching of minors that may reasonably be perceived as sexual in nature. Examples of behaviors with minors that can be misconstrued as sexual in nature, and thus are to be avoided, include but are not limited to:

- inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- kissing
- touching bottoms, chests, legs or genital areas
- spanking or slapping
- showing affection while in an isolated location
- wrestling or tickling
- piggy-back rides
- massages

It is important to remember that, when dealing with a child who inadvertently misplaces hands on a church person, the suggested way of dealing with this is to gently take the hands and remove from the inappropriate spot, kneel down to the child's level and continue the discussion at eye level. If a minor initiates physical contact, such as a hug, an appropriate, limited response is proper.

VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Examples of speech or actions which are inappropriate include but are not limited to:

- Compliments that relate to physique or body development
- Humiliation, ridicule, bullying, or degradation of another person
- Topics of discussion, vocabulary, recordings, films, games, computer software, internet sites or any other form of personal interaction or entertainment that could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents
- Sexually explicit or pornographic material
- The singling out of persons, especially children, for special personal attention or personal gifts.

TRANSPORTATION AND OUTINGS

When taking young people on field trips, conferences or tours, the following rules apply:

- One staff member or adult volunteer may never transport only one child unless the child is his/her own child.
- One person may transport a group of children. However, upon arrival two staff members or adult volunteers must accompany all children during all activities, events, and/or outings off parish, school or agency grounds. This policy assumes that the staff, children and volunteers participating in transportation or outings have fulfilled the Sexual Abuse Education Requirements as stated in Part VI of this policy.
- An adult shall always be accompanied by another adult, when sleeping in a hotel room or tent with children.
- Adults and children shall each sleep in their own bed.
- Use of one's own home as the center for carrying out youth work is prohibited.
- Priests must not provide overnight accommodation for individual minors including but not limited to, accommodations in any church-owned facility, private residence, hotel room or any place where there is no other adult supervision present. Immediate family is an exception to this mandate.

Persons under 21 may never be taken on personal trips or vacations without other adults or appropriate chaperons.

RELATIONSHIPS

It is the church person's responsibility to be cognizant of appropriate behaviors in relationships and to maintain integrity in all ministerial actions. Dual relationships are those in which the professional or ministerial purpose is intermingled with personal friendship. Please refer to the introductory paragraphs of this Code of Conduct/VIRTUS for reminders about the impact of "power" a church person has on individuals with whom he/she relates. Key points to be adhered to and/or aware of, in relationships are:

- sexual relationships with parishioners, counseling clients, students or collaborators in ministry, are forbidden
- Church personnel assume the full burden for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in all ministerial relationships.
- In situations where an inappropriate personal or physical attraction develops between a church person and an adult, client or young person, the church person is responsible to maintain clear, professional boundaries.
- It is unprofessional to suggest that the relationship between care givers and those who seek their help is a two way relationship in which the care giver also receives help from the interaction. It is the responsibility of church personnel to retain a ministerial/ professional relationship, not the client.
- The appearance or reality of concealing or asking individuals to conceal the fact and nature of a personal relationship is a violation of such boundaries.
- Church employees and volunteers, while not involved in ministerial activity must be accompanied by at least one other adult when hosting activities for children with whom they have become acquainted through their ministry.

- Employees and volunteers acting in their parental role should be aware of the critical importance of applying these guidelines in situations involving children other than their own.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

At youth events, the following are unacceptable:

- use, possession or distribution of illegal drugs (reason for immediate termination of employment)
- smoking
- alcoholic beverages
- smokeless tobacco

ENVIRONMENT

Church personnel cannot always avoid situations where they are alone with a minor, but if a one-on-one meeting with a minor is necessary, the following are recommended:

- avoid meeting in isolated environments
- schedule meetings at times when others are around
- use locations that create accountability
- limit the time of the session
- make appropriate referral(s)
- have another person present when at all feasible
- meet in as public a place as possible
- leave door ajar
- choose a room with a window in the door when available
- avoid all physical contact with the minor

Employees are prohibited to use work place computers or other means of communications inappropriately as is presented in the diocesan policy on the use of technology. No person may serve with minors or young adults if he or she has ever been convicted of any of the below listed criminal offenses, has ever received deferred adjudication for any such criminal offenses, or there is presently pending any criminal charges for such offenses until a determination of guilt or innocence is made. Criminal offenses include:

- A felony classified as an offense against a person or family. Offenses against a person include but are not limited to: murder, assault, sexual assault, and abandoning or endangering a child. Offenses against a family include but are not limited to: bigamy or incest.
- A felony classified as an offense against public order or indecency. Offenses against public order or indecency include but are not limited to: prostitution or the possession or promotion of child pornography.
- A felony violation within the last five years of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance included as a controlled substance in the Washington State Uniform Controlled Substances Act.

COMMUNICATION

SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

In order to facilitate good communication and trust among all of us, PLEASE, if you have a suggestion or complaint, take it immediately to the person who is involved, whether it is the teacher, Principal, or Pastor. Human beings tend to be much more receptive if they receive the information directly instead of ‘through the grapevine.’ If you do not receive satisfaction, then please present your "stand" to the next level of administration.

SYCAMORE

The School utilizes an SIS (Student Information System) called Sycamore. Sycamore is a secure password-access-only website that includes a wealth of information. Some of the things you will find here are: yearlong calendar, weekly NewsNotes and other important documents, family contact information, classroom homepages including current homework assignments, grades, financial information, and more. We also have a public website—www.thomasmorespokane.org—for non-registered individuals who might be looking for information about our school. You will be directed from time to time to utilize Sycamore, so you may want to keep your username and password in a convenient location. If you lose this information, just call the school office.

WEEKLY FAMILY COMMUNICATION

The weekly “NewsNotes” are available by logging into your family Sycamore account and clicking on the “Documents” tab, or by clicking the link in the email which you will receive weekly. NewsNotes are generally posted to Sycamore by 4:00pm on the first school day of each week.

In addition, a reminder email will be sent to notify parents of communication updates, billing notifications, hot lunch accounts and much more.

FAMILY DIRECTORY

A family directory with phone numbers and addresses is available on Sycamore. You must be a registered member of the school to access this information as it requires a username and password.

CONFERENCES

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

These are held for the parents of all students at the time of the 1st quarter report cards, with optional conferencing at the end of the 2nd quarter.

PRIVATE CONFERENCES

The Principal and/or teacher are available for a two, three, or four-way conference. Please show your courtesy by scheduling an appointment beforehand. "Drop-in conferences" are usually not productive.

STUDENT CONFIDENTIAL CONFERENCE

All students will be listened to when they request a confidential conference. Please ask the teacher or Principal regarding a convenient time for a meeting.

DISCIPLINARY CODE

RESPECT AND PROTECT BEHAVIORAL POLICY OF ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

By the act of registering at St. Thomas More Catholic School, a student and their parents/guardians understand and agree to pursue the educational objectives and practices as stated in this handbook and to observe the Respect and Protect Behavioral Policy of the school.

St. Thomas More Catholic School presupposes a cooperative effort by parent, child and school toward growth in personal wholeness. It is based on the fundamental Christian principles of respect for the Person of Jesus Christ in each individual as evidenced through the mutual respect of teachers, principal, students and parents. In addition, respect for each and every individual is not limited to actions and words at St. Thomas More School and its events but extends into the community at large. Students and parents are not only members of the school community but represent the school to the greater community of Spokane as well. Should actions by either parents or students be contrary to the basic beliefs of the school mission and philosophy and cause harm in the greater community, the full weight of the Respect and Protect Behavioral Policy applies. We are all called to a higher standard and strive to be a voice that proclaims the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The St. Thomas More School Mission Statement speaks directly to the expectations that we as a community have for our children to respect the individuality and dignity of the person. We strongly support and encourage our students to maintain and enhance a Christian attitude and behavior that respects all teachers and staff, volunteers and guests, and most importantly their fellow students.

St. Thomas More School takes a strong stand against all acts that devalue the worth and uniqueness of any member of the community. Any word, look, sign, or act that inflicts or threatens to inflict physical or emotional injury or discomfort upon another person's body, self-esteem, social acceptance, or possessions violates the St. Thomas More Catholic School's Mission and Philosophy and requires modification. To ensure that every member of the St. Thomas More Catholic School community is respected, protected and valued as a member of the body of Christ community members agree to:

- Create an atmosphere that encourages students to stand up for themselves and the rights and dignity of others.
- Work to ensure consistent, fair, and firm policies that allow for all students to learn in a safe and supportive environment.
- Practice the Christ-given model of first reconciling differences with those who harm you, if that fails to enlist the aid of another in that process, if that fails to enlist the aid of the community. In the St. Thomas More Catholic School community this teaching is reflected first in student to student or teacher conflict resolution, Secondly, by student, teacher, and parent in conflict resolution, and finally the student, parents, teacher, and the administration in conflict resolution.
- Provide ongoing education programs that will teach not only what and how harassment is defined but also how to improve self-assertiveness and social awareness.
- Speak and act respectfully and politely toward one another and keep physical contact, language, and gestures appropriate and consistent with our Christian beliefs.
- Treat the property of the school, the property of other students, and their own with respect and proper care.
- Create an environment that will educate and provide for the health and safety of its students, teachers, parents, and all community members.
- Make available mediums that will protect the privacy of community members while at the same time providing an avenue to communicate concerns and suggestions to the administration.

THE RESPECT AND PROTECT BEHAVIORAL POLICY

PART 1 – HOMEROOM TEACHER

The primary responsibility for implementation of the Respect and Protect Behavioral Policies lies with the homeroom teacher. Specialty teachers, other faculty, staff, and parent volunteers are to report behavioral issues or concerns to the homeroom teacher by means of Conduct Reminders. Each individual is created by God with a unique mind, heart, body, and spirit; the trust and confidentiality of the teacher-student relationship is the primary place where the student's needs should be met.

The teacher holds both the authority and the responsibility to implement the philosophy, mission, goals, objectives, and policies of St. Thomas More Catholic School. Classroom management is devised with the cooperation of the students and will correlate to the principles of self-discipline found in the Love and Logic Program which includes but is not limited to: decision-making, problem solving, choice, and flexibility.

In keeping with the above principles, when students are outside of their classrooms in specialty instruction, at school wide assemblies, or in areas such as, but not limited to, playground, sporting events, extra-curricular activities, bus, field trips, hallways, bathrooms, and/or the lunch room, Conduct Reminders are to serve as the primary medium for notifying the homeroom teacher of minor infractions.

Parents will receive a copy of the Conduct Reminder and are asked to sign it and have their child return it to the principal.

The school strongly advises that no further action or response is necessary by the parents. These are situations that we are empowering the child to solve and correct on their own in cooperation with their homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher will determine based on classroom behavior and/or previous or multiple issuances of Conduct Reminders whether or not classroom or School Wide sanctions should be applied. Should a student receive 3 or more Conduct Reminders within a 4-week period, a conference with the teacher and the Vice Principal for Student Affairs will be held to determine sanctions, if the classroom modification is not working to correct behavior.

Note: all of the above are for minor infractions that are best handled by the homeroom teacher and the student.

THE RESPECT AND PROTECT BEHAVIORAL POLICY

PART 2 – SERIOUS INFRACTIONS

The following are serious offenses which may subject a student to immediate intervention by the school administration.

- An attitude showing continual and deliberate disobedience of classroom and/or school procedures, regulations, or policies.
- Defiance, disrespect and lack of courtesy toward teachers, supervisors, or fellow students.
- Theft, destruction, or defacing of parish or personal property. School property is for the student's use, and he/she is expected to grow in the understanding that it is entitled to reasonable care. Carelessness on the part of any student that results in damage will be the responsibility of that student or his/her parents. All textbooks are to be covered and are to be carried in some kind of waterproof book bag. The total cost of replacement will be charged for any book that is lost or abused. The school is co-tenant of individual student classroom storage shelves and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.
- Use, misuse, possession, or distribution of drugs or controlled substances on school grounds.
- Plagiarism, cheating, or other unethical behavior.
- Possession of dangerous weapons or firearms on school property or at school sponsored events
- Repeated bullying, physical or sexual harassment, and intimidation.

THE RESPECT AND PROTECT BEHAVIORAL POLICY

PART 3 – SPECIFIC AREAS

The following (*I. Internet and Cybersafety; II. Substance Use and Misuse; III. Weapons*) are areas that require a more detailed description of the policy requirements due to their sensitive and legal nature.

I. Internet and Cybersafety

We have seen tremendous positives in learning with this medium for communication but we have also seen that without education both secularly and spiritually our students are lacking in proper skills to harness this medium in a way that respects and protects them and their fellow community members.

St. Thomas More Catholic School places a high priority on providing the school with Internet facilities and ICT devices/equipment which will benefit student learning outcomes, and for the effective operation of the school. However, St. Thomas More Catholic School recognizes that the presence in the learning environment of these technologies (some provided partly or wholly by the school and some privately owned by staff, students and other members of the school community), can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal, material and activities. The school has the dual responsibility to maximize the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time to minimize and manage the risks. St. Thomas More Catholic School thus acknowledges the need to have in place rigorous and effective school cybersafety practices.

IMPORTANT TERMS:

- a) *The abbreviation ‘ICT’ in this document refers to the term ‘Information and Communication Technologies’*
- b) *‘Cybersafety’ refers to the safe and responsible use of the Internet and ICT equipment/devices, including mobile phones*
- c) *‘St. Thomas More Catholic School ICT’ refers to the school’s computer network, Internet access facilities, computers, and other school ICT equipment/devices as outlined in (d) below*
- d) *The term ‘ICT equipment/devices’ used in this document, includes but is not limited to, computers (such as desktops, laptops, PDAs), storage devices (such as USB and flash memory devices, CDs, DVDs, floppy disks, iPods, MP3 players), cameras (such as video, digital, webcams), all types of mobile phones, video and audio players/receivers (such as portable CD and DVD players), gaming consoles, and any other similar technologies as they come into use.*
- e) *‘School community’ represents students, parents, school staff, administration, and guests who have been given permission for access and use.*

GUIDELINES FOR CYBERSAFETY PRACTICES

1. By enrolling in St. Thomas More Catholic School the School Community members agree to abide by this policy and the policies the school. This also applies to the use of privately-owned/leased ICT devices/equipment on the school property, or at/for any school-related activity, regardless of its location. This includes off-site access to the school network from school or privately-owned/leased equipment.
2. St. Thomas More Catholic School’s Cybersafety policies will cover all employees, all students and their families, and any other individuals authorized to make use of the school Internet facilities and ICT devices/equipment, such as teacher trainees, external tutors and providers, contractors, and other special visitors to the school.
3. Use of the Internet and the ICT devices/equipment by staff, students and other approved users at St. Thomas More Catholic School is to be limited to educational, professional development, and personal usage appropriate in the school environment.
4. St. Thomas More Catholic School has the right to monitor, access, and review all use. This includes personal emails sent and received on the schools computer/s and/or network facilities at all times.

5. St. Thomas More Catholic School has the right to audit at anytime any material on equipment that is owned or leased by the school. The school may also request permission to audit privately owned ICT devices/equipment used on the school property.
6. Issues relating to confidentiality, such as citing student or staff information, reasons for collecting data and the secure storage of personal details and information (including images) will be subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act 1993. Transmitting information proprietary to St. Thomas More Catholic School without prior authorization is prohibited. No information, which could be, construed as a statement of an official St. Thomas More position, policy, or attitude should be transmitted to third parties without written authorization of the administration.
7. The safety of children is of paramount concern. Any apparent breach of cyber safety will be taken seriously. The response to individual incidents will follow the procedures developed as part of the school's cyber safety practices. In serious incidents, advice will be sought from an appropriate source, the school administration, the pastor, the diocesan school office, diocesan legal representative, and local law enforcement as deemed necessary. Use of the St. Thomas More Catholic School ICT for any unlawful activities is strictly prohibited. If illegal material or activities are suspected, the matter may need to be reported to the relevant law enforcement agency.
8. <http://www.netsmartz.org> is an organization with programs for training educators, parents, and students in cybersafe practices. St. Thomas More Catholic School will use this organization's information and learning programs as a guide for educating staff, parents, and students.
9. Parents are vigorously encourage to access the many programs made available by <http://www.netsmartz.org> and use this information to initiate discussion with their children on cyber safety. Students are also encouraged to utilize this website.
10. Logging into any computer account or accessing, modifying, or depositing any files without the account owner's permission is computer trespass and is, therefore, illegal. Should you encounter an unattended workstation logged into someone else's account, politely log them out and report the incident to a teacher or administrator.
11. E-mail, social network sites, texting, blogs and any future technology that are used to harass, bully, or cause insult to another person are illegal and strictly prohibited. Students, Parents and employees who use any ICT to harass, send explicit messages or photos will be subject to school and/or local law disciplinary action. This includes off-site usage of these devices that bring harm to others within this community.
12. The school community has the opportunity to make use of the ICT at St. Thomas More Catholic School. Access to the St. Thomas More Catholic School ICT includes but is not limited to access of the Internet. The ICT allows the school community, through electronic connection, to reach out to many other people, share information, learn concepts, and carry out research. These are significant learning opportunities that help prepare the school community for the future.
13. Inappropriate use of the ICT may result in the student's loss of privilege to use the ICT and further disciplinary sanction. Access to St. Thomas More Catholic Schools' ICT is a privilege and not a right. Failure to conform to St. Thomas More Catholic School's policies and/or legal use of the ICT may result in revocation of account privileges and/or disciplinary action.
14. The school stresses the importance of using a password and keeping that information strictly confidential. This means users should not use another user's password or share his/her own with them. Your child is responsible for any activity occurring with his/her password. Training is given on how to best develop passwords that provide security not only for use at St. Thomas More Catholic School but for personal use with home communication devices as well.

15. Users are to understand that certain material found through use of the ICT can be offensive knowledge of offensive, demeaning, or pornographic information are to be reported to the proper authorities immediately.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is equipped with up to date firewall hardware and software and student and staff are taught cyber safety rules and procedures. This same information and training is available to parents and other community members. There are safeguards within our Internet Service Provider as well as our own network through firewalls to stop the majority of offensive material, but firewalls are not 100% foolproof. Therefore, please visit with your child(ren) about the acceptable and legal use of the ICT.

Under ordinary and normal circumstances, a user's computer files – including electronic mail – are considered private. However, this policy statement authorizes the school administration to examine the user's files (including e-mail messages) as necessary to perform their official duties or to investigate misuse of facilities.

Enrollment or employment at St. Thomas More Catholic School is an implicit agreement to adhere to the policies set forth in this document.

II. Substance Use and Misuse

In response to our shared concerns at a local and national level, the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. We believe that health education—specifically the use, misuse, or the illegal use of controlled substances—is a vital part of the personal and social education of every student, parent, and community member. We believe and support the following educational aims in reference to substance use and misuse.

The school provides for drug and alcohol education to enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes, and developing and practicing skills that will support healthy choices. The school co-operates with other agencies such as community police, social services, and health and drug agencies to provide drug education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between staff members who know the student(s) well, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the administration. The school will offer to work with the parents in providing support for the student(s) involved. Substance abuse, misuse, or sale when occurring on school grounds or at school sponsored activities will require Level 3 Sanctions. The circumstances involved will dictate the severity of the Level 3 Sanction as well as the need for local law enforcement involvement.

III. Weapons

In order to promote a safe learning environment, the Catholic schools in the diocese of Spokane prohibit the possession, use, or involvement of any weapon on school property or at a school activity. Any violation of this policy by a student constitutes grounds for suspension or expulsion.

Dangerous weapons as defined in RCW 9.41.250 and RCW 9.41.280 include: “Any instrument or weapon of the kind usually known as sling shot, sand club, or metal knuckles, or spring blade knife, or any knife the blade of which is automatically released by a spring mechanism or other mechanical device, or any knife having a blade which opens, or falls, or is ejected into position by the force of gravity, or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement: who shall furtively carry with intent to conceal any dagger, dirk, pistol, or other dangerous weapon: or who shall use any contrivance or device for suppressing the noise of any firearm” (RCW 9.41.250). “Any firearm: any device commonly known as ‘nun-chu-ka sticks’ consisting of two or more lengths of wood, metal, plastic, or similar substance connected with wire, rope, or other means: or any device commonly known as ‘throwing stars,’ which are multi-pointed, metal objects designed to embed upon impact from any aspect: or any air gun, including any air pistol or air rifle to propel a BB, pellet, or other projectile by discharge of compressed air, carbon dioxide, or other gas” (RCW 9.41.280).

THE RESPECT AND PROTECT BEHAVIORAL POLICY

PART 4 – GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Classroom and Administration Detention Level – classroom discipline, loss recess, time-out (L/L Term); Manual Work during recess time and detention. Repetitive up to three occurrences within a 3 week time frame is considered excessive. Excessive behavioral incidents at this level will be given to the VP for review and may result in further sanctions:

Level 1 – conference teacher, student, parent; contract-weekly review-exit policy; extended detention

Level 2 – conference teacher, student, parent, and VP SA; Probation

Disciplinary Probation is an official warning to a student and Parents / Guardians that a student has jeopardized his / her standing as a student at St. Thomas More School and must make significant changes to remain a student at this school. -Exit Policy; In-house suspension 1-3 days; Saturday workday

Level 3 – conference teacher, student, parent, and administration including Principal; suspension-exit policy; expulsion. Should suspension be the decision this will be for a minimum of 3 days and not more than 1-week, a new probationary contract will be devised and should the conditions be violated within the probation period immediate expulsion may be necessary. [Probationary period – minimally 8-weeks – maximum remainder of current academic year.]

SERIOUS HARASSMENT/BULLYING

Parents will be contacted immediately and may request an outside investigation be conducted into these instances. A student(s) involved may be removed from school until completion of the investigation. The investigation will be conducted by an individual with no connection to the school or parish community and will have knowledge and experience in conducting such investigations. The information will be presented to a three-person review council who make recommendations to the principal and the pastor as to any necessary action or level of sanction. The three-person review council is appointed by the principal and approved by the pastor.

PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO ICT POLICIES AND CYBERSAFETY

Infractions specific to use of personal ICT devices without school permission:

1. **First Offense:** Personal device is confiscated; a conduct reminder is issued, and may be collected at the end of the school day by the student.
2. **Second Offense:** Personal device is confiscated, and must be collected by a parent or guardian. Any future violations may result in Level 1 Sanctions.

INFRACTIONS SPECIFIC TO ELECTRONIC TEXT OR PICTURES IN ANY FORM

1. **First Offense: Level 1 Sanctions:** Suspension from network use for a specified period of time, required afterschool Cyber safety Education course.
2. **Second Offense: Level 2 Sanctions:** Suspension from network use until student has achieved a 90% passage on the post-course Cyber safety Education exam.
3. **Third offense: Level 3 Sanctions:** Offenses that harass, are threatening in nature and/or damage the dignity of another person either in text or visual form may be considered severe and require immediate Level 3 Sanctions

EMERGENCY REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL

A student may be removed immediately from classes and school activities by the administration provided that the administration has good reason to believe that the student's presence poses an immediate and continuing threat of disruption to the educational process. The removal from classes and/or school activities shall continue until the administration determines that the student may return.

APPEALS PROCESS/PROCEDURE

A student and their parent who objects to or denies the accusation and/or punishment of suspension/expulsion shall have the right to appeal and shall be granted a hearing.

- A. A student or parent must submit a formal appeal letter within forty-eight hours of the action taken. This formal notice must be submitted to the Principal. Failure to submit a formal appeal notice will denote acceptance of the findings.
- B. Upon receipt of the formal appeal notice, the Principal shall provide a copy to the Pastor for review, schedule a hearing that will include three School Advisory Council members, the Pastor and the Principal. The student, with parents, shall be allowed to present their defense, and to question materials presented against him/her.
- C. The Pastor will render a decision after consultation with the Review panel, citing reasons for affirmation or denial of the student's appeal request. The Pastor's decision shall be final.

DISMISSAL TIMES

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE DAYS:

The improvement of student learning requires a considerable amount of staff planning time. It also includes maintaining communication with parents. The Catholic schools in the diocese are allotted a certain number of in-service days for parent-teacher conferencing and staff development. Mandatory Conferences are held after the first quarter, and optional scheduled conferences for the second quarter.

EMERGENCIES

Parents will be notified if their child needs to be sent home due to an emergency, bad weather, illness, etc. If we are unable to contact either parent, the office will call one of the "Emergency Contacts" given us by the parents on the registration form. Please keep the office apprized of any necessary updates to this information.

PARENT PICK-UPS

Parents coming for students during school hours must identify themselves at the School Office before the child will be released. No pupil can be released to anyone else's custody, unless it is verified in writing.

APPOINTMENTS

Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school time, if at all possible.

LEAVING SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students will not be permitted to leave the school grounds without written parental permission, nor will they be permitted to leave for lunch at any location except their own home.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A crisis is an event, or series of events, expected or unexpected, that affects one or more persons and may or may not involve the entire school or community. A crisis may require the immediate response of the school crisis team and could require emergency response personnel. The response plan is designed to protect staff and students during an emergency. This plan entails practice drills similar in nature to the current fire drills that take place on a monthly basis.

1. There are four basic procedures that staff can utilize in the initial response to various incidents:
 - **Drop, Cover, and Hold** (earthquake, explosion, roof collapse, structural failure)
 - **Evacuation** (bomb threat, fire, hazardous material incident, gas leak)
 - **Shelter In Place** (air pollution alert, toxic exposure, severe weather)
 - **Hit The Deck**-drop flat to the ground (gunfire)

2. The Crisis Team Leader should be notified immediately of any crisis situation.
3. The Crisis Team Leader identifies the nature of the crisis, who/what is involved, and what immediate or emergency response is required.
4. The Crisis Team Leader activates the School Crisis Plan
5. If determined necessary by the Crisis Team Leader, Emergency Services may be contacted.

SCHOOL CLOSURES AND EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL

- If for some reason the school needs to close, parents will be notified utilizing several methods. You will receive an automated phone call, a text message, and an email. For this reason, it is extremely important that we have your current contact information. Information will also be posted on our public and private websites, as well as notification sent to local media. Occasionally, we will test the emergency notification system. During tests, we only utilize the text message and email methods.
- Only under extreme circumstances will children be dismissed from school early once school is in session. This scenario creates undue stress for parents to get off work and/or to arrange pickup and daycare.

EXTENDED CARE

Extended Care is a program offering before and after school care for our children. Morning care is 7:00 - 8:25 a.m., and after school care is from 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. with a possibility for arrangements until 6:00 p.m. Contact the Extended Care Supervisor for further information.

FIELD TRIPS

DRIVERS

Field trip drivers, with the exception of parents, must be 25 years of age or older. There are many documents that we need, required by the diocese, in order for a parent to be a volunteer driver. Please contact the school office for copies of these documents. These documents must be updated each school year.

PERMISSION SLIPS

It is Diocesan Policy that written permission slips be required for each field trip. A phone call to or from home will not give satisfactory permission. Permission slips are sent home with your child prior to any outing.

BEHAVIOR

Any student who manifests a lack of respect for safety rules at any time will be denied permission to go on the field trip.

SEAT BELTS AND AIR BAG SAFETY

There may NEVER be more children in a car than seat belts, and no child under the age of 12 should be allowed to sit in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger side air bag. Kindergarteners are required to ride with their own parent.

GROOMING

UNIFORM

Students are expected to be in *UNIFORM* at all times beginning the first day of school. The only exceptions are those “casual” dress days that are granted with permission of the Principal and only by the Principal.

MAKE-UP

MAKE-UP, including *MASCARA, EYE SHADOW, AND FINGERNAIL POLISH* is **not** permitted.

JEWELRY

Catholic devotional necklaces are permitted but jewelry, bracelets, earrings (with the exception of stud earrings) are not. Anything worn that presents a distraction or calls undue attention and is determined to interfere with the academic environment is not permitted and will be removed.

CLEANLINESS

All students are encouraged to take pride in how they dress by always being *NEAT, CLEAN, AND WELL-GROOMED*. Dress in general may not be distracting and must be clean and free of holes.

HOMEWORK

Homework is for the purpose of enrichment or reinforcement of previously taught concepts, as well as to encourage good study habits.

As a rule of thumb:

Students in grades 1, 2, 3, 4 should spend 1/2 hour on homework each evening.
Students in grades 5 & 6 should spend 1 hour on homework each evening.
Students in grades 7 & 8 should spend 1 1/2 hours on homework each evening.

If a student does not have written homework, he or she should be encouraged to use the time in reading activities.

We ask the cooperation of the parents in seeing that students are given adequate time and a conducive environment in which to do it.

Children should note the homework assigned before they leave school. They should look over the material and if they find that they do not understand it, they need to go to the teacher **BEFORE** they leave school that day.

Homework that is received on time will be given full credit.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

MINOR ACCIDENTS

These are treated (wash & cover) by the teacher, playground supervisor, or school secretary. Incidents involving bleeding will be treated by the designated First Aid team, which includes the Principal, Vice-Principal, Playground Supervisor, Athletic Director, and Secretary. Parents will be contacted if their child incurs a head injury.

MAJOR ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

The parents are notified immediately. Children are not sent home unless someone is available to care for them. This is why it is very important that you give us **2 alternate names and phone numbers** to call at registration time as emergency contacts.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Once children have returned to school after an illness, they are expected to participate in all play activities indoors and outdoors. Please do not ask us to keep your child indoors as we do not have supervision in the individual classrooms at recess time. A child who is not well enough to go outdoors should be kept at home. Health guidelines suggest that children should be kept home for the first two days of a cold. Also a child should not be in school if he has had a fever within the past 24 hours.

INSURANCE

"A STUDENT ACCIDENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN" is available to the students. Information regarding this optional plan will be included in the first NewsNotes of the school year.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USAGE POLICY AGREEMENT FOR ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

With your permission, your child has the opportunity to use the computers and/or access the Internet St. Thomas More Catholic School. Access to the Internet, which includes other information systems, will provide opportunities for students to communicate with students, colleges, and organizations from around the world. Internet is a system that links smaller computer networks, creating one that is large and more diverse. The Internet allows your child, through electronic connection, to reach out to many other people, share information, learn concepts, and carry out research. These are significant learning opportunities that help prepare students for the future.

Be aware, however, that with this opportunity comes responsibility. It is essential that you and your child read, discuss and understand the enclosed Acceptable Use Policy, school procedures, and other materials. When your child is provided access to the Internet, which includes a personal password, it is imperative that school procedures and rules are closely followed. Inappropriate use of this educational tool will result in the student's loss of privilege to use electronic information systems and the possibility of disciplinary action, if deemed appropriate. Parents/guardians/custodians, you are legally responsible for your child's actions!

Internet Access in Grades K through 2 is obtained through direct teacher observation and participation with the children as a whole. Grades 3 through 8 will access the Internet individually, in-groups, and in whole class opportunities. Both parents and students should sign the Internet Access Contract while **parents only** need to sign for students in Grades K through 2.

Please stress to your child the importance of using only his/her password and keeping that information strictly confidential. This means your student should not use another student's password nor share his/her own with them. Your child is responsible for any activity occurring with his/her password.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has established procedures/rules regulating the materials students may research on electronic information systems, but please be aware there are unacceptable and controversial materials/communications on the Internet that could be accessed by your child. Students are under direct supervision, but just as we are not always immediately cognizant of materials they bring to class, we cannot filter all material posted on Internet connected computers all over the world. Safeguards within our Internet Service Provider and within our own network are firewalls to stopping the majority of offensive material, but firewalls are not 100% foolproof. Therefore, please visit with your child(ren) about the use of the computers, the network, and the Internet before signing these documents.

If you decide to provide your child the opportunity to access electronic information systems, please sign the Acceptable Use Policy and return it as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact your child's teacher or the school office.

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER USE POLICY

I INTRODUCTION

STM data network has vast services, sites, and systems available on the network including the use of the World Wide Web Internet. Students and adults have the responsibility to other users to be as knowledgeable as possible and to have researched a subject before accessing the Internet sources. Use of the Internet is not to be considered a substitute for conducting one's own research, but as a valuable addition to a research base. We are pleased to bring technology access to our students in order to promote educational excellence at St. Thomas More Catholic School.

This policy is established to make users of the STM data network aware of their rights and responsibilities.

This policy is established to maximize the value of those resources to the STM community while permitting maximum freedom of use consistent with law, the school's mission statement and a productive environment

Violation of this policy can result in reprimand, loss of account privileges, and/or referral to school disciplinary action.

II DEFINITIONS

- “ThomasMore”- is the domain name of STM’s network
- Resource – is any computing device, system, subsystem, or software used in support of STM’s educational mission.
- Service – means a computer program that provides files or information to other computers or users.
- Internet – is the global computer network composed of millions of computers and thousands of networks.
- E-mail – personalized messages that you can send to any person or group in the world. Electronic mail.

III GENERAL USAGE STATEMENT

- Network and computing services at STM are provided primarily to support the mission of St. Thomas More Catholic School.
- Network users must have express written consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the school network, Internet usage, and material.
- There are no costs to the students for accessing the network or the Internet.
- Users may occasionally use the school computers and network for personal use, but no programs may be installed onto a workstation without the consent of the school.
- Employees, students, and other authorized users may post electronic documents and images for open access provided that those documents conform to this policy statement.
- Authorship rights must be respected. Internet resources must be cited using appropriate discipline standards and all copyrights must be honored.
- Playing of games and other non-essential activities must be approved by a teacher each and every time of use and only when a workstation is not in demand by another student, staff, or teacher.

Users of the network and Internet are expected to not only follow legal means of accessing and using appropriate information, but as members of St. Thomas More’s community, they are expected to apply a high level of morality when making choices of use and involvement.

IV UNACCEPTABLE USES

- You cannot use the STM network for any unlawful activities.
- Transmitting information proprietary to St. Thomas More Catholic School without prior authorization is prohibited.
- No information, which could be, construed as a statement of an official St. Thomas More position, policy, or attitude should be transmitted to third parties without written authorization of the Principal.
- Random e mailing and transmission of chain messages waste resources and are prohibited.
- The uses of St. Thomas More resources, including the Internet, for personal profit or political gain are prohibited.
- Use of invasive software is prohibited. Harassing, insulting or attacking others by electronic mail or via the internet is prohibited.
- Participation in software piracy is illegal and prohibited. Violating Copyright laws is also prohibited.
- Logging into any computer account or accessing, modifying, or depositing any files without the account owner's permission is computer trespass and is, therefore, illegal. Should you encounter an unattended workstation logged into someone else's account, politely log them out and report the incident to a teacher or administrator.
- References from files in your personal account to sites containing material prohibited by this policy are forbidden.
- Users shall not waste limited resources like print services, disk space, and computer equipment. Users shall not damage computers, computer systems, or the computer network.
- Sending e-mail from any account other than your own is prohibited.

V PRIVACY

Under ordinary and normal circumstances, a user's computer files – including electronic mail – are considered private. However, this policy statement authorizes computer system staff to examine the user's files (including e-mail messages) as necessary to perform their official duties or to investigate misuse of facilities. Still, user privacy is respected as much as possible and consistent with the law.

VI AGREEMENT

I understand that access to STM's network is a privilege and not a right. I acknowledge that failure to conform to this policy statement may result in revocation of my STM's network account(s) and/or Internet access. Furthermore, disciplinary action may be taken to the appropriate levels for violation(s) of these policies.

I understand the above stated conditions for having an account on the STM network and in accessing the Internet, and I agree to abide by these terms and conditions. I understand that certain material found on the Internet is offensive to some people and that I access the Internet of my own free will. Furthermore, I would like to request any account on the STM network.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN CONTRACT:

As the parent/guardian of (student name[s]) _____, I have read the *St. Thomas More Catholic School's Acceptable Use Policy*. I understand and consent to this access for educational purposes. I recognize that it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial material and I will not hold St. Thomas More Catholic School and its agents responsible for any use of the network.

THIS PORTION IS TO BE SIGNED BY PARENTS OF ALL STUDENTS AT ST. THOMAS MORE

Parent/Guardian Name: (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

STUDENT CONTRACT:

I have read and understand and agree to abide by St. Thomas More Catholic School's Acceptable Computer Use Policy. I further understand that any violation the regulations and procedures is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit a violation, my access privileges may be revoked, School disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

THIS PORTION IS TO BE SIGNED BY STUDENTS IN GRADES 3 – 8 ONLY

1. Student Name: (print) _____

Student Signature: _____

2. Student Name: (print) _____

Student Signature: _____

3. Student Name: (print) _____

Student Signature: _____

4. Student Name: (print) _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

LUNCH

SACK LUNCH

Children should bring a sack lunch each day. The child's name should be clearly marked on the sack or lunch pail. Children going home for lunch need a written permission for each time, unless they go home daily. In that case, one note at the beginning of the year will suffice.

HOT LUNCH

A hot lunch alternative is available for the students on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Prices and menu will be made available to you at the beginning of the year. The school has instituted a pre-pay Hot Lunch Account program. Information is forwarded to parents prior to the hot lunch program beginning.

MILK

White milk and chocolate milk are available every day and are to be paid for in advance. Please call the school office for the current price of milk.

MASSES AND OTHER LITURGIES

One day a week our students have the opportunity to participate in the Prayer of the Church, whether it is the celebration of the Eucharist, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Rosary, etc. These days are scheduled to celebrate feasts of Saints or a particular season of the Church year. These celebrations are noted on the Monthly Calendars, as well as on our web page. You are invited and encouraged to participate in these liturgies with your children. They are "deepening of faith and knowledge moments" for all of us.

MEDICATION

As of September 1995, St. Thomas More Catholic School will follow the Diocesan Policy and Regulations regarding medication in schools. This flows directly from Washington State Code.

In accord with this directive, St. Thomas More Catholic School will dispense prescription medication only after the appropriate form has been completed in the school office. The school secretary will document each time prescription medication is dispensed.

All prescription medication must be in a container labeled by a Physician, Dentist or Pharmacist and brought to school by the child's parent or guardian. The label shall include student's name, Physician or Dentist's name, name of medication, dosage, and time of day to be taken.

Very frequently, our students come to us with a request for Tylenol or other pain reliever. The office is not allowed to dispense this medication by law without a doctor's written consent. If your child suffers often from headaches that require medication, you must consult with your doctor. **No non-prescription medicine will be given by phone request.**

If your child needs non-prescription medication for a limited time, you may complete the appropriate form from the office, and send the medication in its original container. The school secretary will dispense per your doctor's directions.

Thank you for your cooperation with these regulations, which exist for the safety and protection of your child.

MOVIES

Movies shown at St. Thomas More Catholic School will be instructional in nature or central to the subject area. They will reflect the values taught in a Catholic School. Teachers will observe the recommended rating standards with responsible accountability.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

There is a supervisor on the playground as well as 2 parent volunteers during lunch recess. If you have volunteered to work lunch recess duty, you do so in lieu of a fee. The following are guidelines for the parent volunteers. Please be familiar with these before your assigned week. A schedule of playground supervision will be made available, as well as written on the monthly calendar.

- Please be on the playground no later than 11:35a and plan to stay until 12:45p. Upon arrival, please check in with the playground supervisor.
- If for any reason you cannot make your assigned week, find a sub and call the school office to notify them of the change.
- Never leave the playground during duty without notifying the playground supervisor.
- If a child is injured and ANY blood is present, that child MUST be cared for by a designated First Aid Team member (Principal, Vice-Principal, Playground Supervisor, Athletic Director, and Secretary). For your own protection, NO parent volunteer may treat a wound where blood is present.
- In case of serious injury (possible broken bone, loss of consciousness, etc.) **DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD**, stay with the child, and send someone to find the playground supervisor. She/He will be able to contact the proper authorities.
- Students are not allowed to go into the school building at any time during recess.

PROGRESS REPORTS

You will be asked to view and verify your student's Progress Report approximately every 3 weeks. Progress Reports for grades 4 and up are available on Sycamore. Parent Verification Forms will be sent home and return signatures are required within two days of being sent home.

You can view homework on Sycamore. If you have any questions about how to find this information, please call the school.

REPORT CARDS

Quarterly report cards are created on Sycamore at the end of each term. The first quarterly report card will be given to the parents at the Parent-Teacher Conference. Report cards for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters are available on Sycamore under your student's documents. You will be notified via email when these documents are posted. Parents are encouraged to discuss these reports with their children and to work cooperatively with teachers in their efforts to help students reach their potential. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents will be given access to the academic records and the information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent is denied access to such information.

If a child is to be retained, parents will be contacted for a conference and a discussion will take place to determine what is best for the child.

The Grading Scales can be found on the next page.

School Grading Scales

The grading scale for grades 4-8 is:

- A = 94%-100%
- B = 86% - 93%
- C = 76% - 85%
- D = 70% - 75%
- F = 69% and below

The grading scale for grades K-3 is:

- E = Exceeding grade level expectations
- M = Meeting grade level expectations
- W = Working toward grade level expectations
- N = Not meeting grade level expectations

SCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULE

- 7:30 a.m. Parish Mass (optional)
- 8:25 a.m. School doors open.
- 8:30 a.m. Students must be in classroom or marked tardy.
- 8:35 a.m. Classes begin
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch Breakgrades K - 4
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch Breakgrades 5 - 8
- 12:15 p.m. Classes resumegrades K - 4
- 12:45 p.m. Classes resumegrades 5 - 8
- 3:00 p.m. Dismissal for all grades

If it becomes necessary to deviate from this schedule, you will be notified.

TUITION POLICY

Tuition is a major source of income for St. Thomas More Catholic School, along with the Parish subsidy. Since the School operates on a very small budget, receipt of tuition payments is essential. Tuition statements are sent according to the plan you agreed upon. *New families* entering St. Thomas More Catholic School (the kindergarten through 8th grade program only) must make their first tuition payment in the month of July prior to the academic year when their child(ren) will be starting. This payment is **non-refundable** should families withdraw their students from the school. New families are then able to choose from the two tuition payment plans that start in July: 4-payment plan or the 11-payment plan. The following list shows the tuition payment plans available for other than new families: 1 payment due on September 5; 2 payments due on September 5 and February 5; 4 payments due on July 5, October 5, January 5, and April 5; and 11 payments due July 5 through June 5, with the option of not paying in July (except for new families), January, or June.

If you are unable to pay by the 5th of the month, or if you have any questions regarding tuition, please call the bookkeeper, at school (466-3811, x201) or if circumstances necessitate financial concerns, please call the Principal at school (466-3811 x315)

The total tuition cost to parents is far below the actual cost to School and Parish. We therefore feel it is important for you to be aware that **ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH** is providing a large commitment for school support. Therefore, we ask that you be generous in your **SUPPORT OF OUR PARISH**. Most of you are being charged "**IN-PARISH TUITION**" because it is presumed that you are giving financial support to the Parish.

No student will be refused admission to St. Thomas More Catholic School because of **GENUINE INABILITY** to pay. Partial tuition assistance must be approved by the Principal and the Pastor. Parents contract a moral, if not legal, obligation to pay their tuition and other school bills. If they consistently fail to do so, the School may have to apply the following sanctions:

- Refusing to re-admit to school at the end of the first semester, any student whose tuition is in arrears.
- Refusing to re-admit to school in September, any student whose past bills are not paid in full.
- Refusing the transfer of records to a new school until all fees are paid in full.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are worn by all students at St. Thomas More Catholic School, every school day, unless the Principal pre-approves an alternate dress for a particular day. Plaid uniform skirts, skorts, and jumpers may be purchased at the Spokane Uniform House at 502 E 3rd Ave., or acquired from the school Uniform Exchange room. (see next section)

The uniforms of St. Thomas More are in response to parental request and therefore, uniform supervision is first and foremost the responsibility of the parents. Please observe the following guidelines:

1. If a student cannot arrive at school in complete uniform, a note must accompany them explaining the reason why a uniform is not worn.
2. If a student arrives at school not in uniform for legitimate reasons, they must wear dress clothes, NOT jeans.
3. P.E. clothes are acceptable ONLY during P.E. class, at which time they are highly recommended. All students need a pair of "PE use only" tennis shoes.

FULL UNIFORM IS DEFINED FOR GIRLS: REGULATION SKIRT/SKORT/JUMPER & BLOUSE OR COLLARED SHIRT; FOR BOYS: REGULATION LONG PANTS & SHIRTS WITH COLLAR.

GIRLS

- Blouses are plain white, long or short sleeve, with a collar.
- Plain white or red polo shirts. Shirts must be of adequate size and length that they can be easily tucked in and remain tucked in, fitting properly and not causing a distraction in appearance.
- Collars include Peter Pan, sport, or standard.
- Ruffles and trim are *not* acceptable.
- School plaid or black shift jumper, skirt, or skort. Skirt length must be a **maximum of 3" above the knee**. The hem of the skirt must be even all the way around.
- Slacks may be worn from November 1 until March 31st. **(EXCEPTION: If the temperature that morning is below 45 degrees student may choose to wear pants for that day only)**
- Slacks or cords must be black, with no striping or distracting insignia
- Walking shorts (not short shorts) must be black & may be worn from the start of school until November 1st, & from April 1st through the end of the year. **(Exception: If the temperature is expected to be above 75 degrees students may choose to wear shorts for that day only)** Shorts must be **between 4" below and 3" above the knee**.
- Tights or leggings must be solid white or black; no lace!

BOYS

- Shirts are plain white short or long sleeved with a collar.
- Plain white or red polo shirts. Shirts must be of adequate size and length that they can be easily tucked in and remain tucked in, fitting properly and not causing a distraction in appearance.
- Collars include sport or standard.
- Pants or cords must be black with no striping or distracting insignia
- Walking shorts (not short shorts) must be black & may be worn from the start of school until November 1st, & from April 1st through the end of the year. **(Exception: If the temperature is expected to be above 75 degrees students may choose to wear shorts for that day only)** Shorts must be **between 4" below and 3" above the knee**.

ALL STUDENTS

- T-shirts are not allowed under any circumstances unless pre-approved by the Principal.
- Sweaters are black or red with v-neck, pullover, or cardigan, with no striping or distracting insignia.
- Sweatshirt/Fleece - **only the approved S.T.M. sweatshirt/fleece may be worn in the classroom.**
- Shorts must be uniform dress shorts of an appropriate length.
- Shoes with laces need to be tied at all times.
- Students must have gym shoes that will only be worn in the gym and may be stored in the classroom.
- Jeans are not allowed under any circumstances unless pre-approved by the Principal.
- Clothing should be clean, free from tears, holes, shredded, written on, or drawn upon.
- Shirts/blouses must be tucked in.
- Students who are found to be out of uniform or whose appearance is not acceptable will be given an acceptable uniform from the Uniform Exchange for the remainder of the day, and may receive a conduct reminder or detention for repeated non-compliance.

➤➤FULL UNIFORMS ARE TO BE WORN ON MASS DAYS.◀◀

UNIFORM EXCHANGE

There are various sizes of used uniforms, shirts, blouses, pants, sweatshirts, etc., which are kept at the school. You may buy these at a minimal cost or exchange them for different sizes from what you have. The school is usually open 2 weeks before the first day of school between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. You may also come in during the school year.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome to visit St. Thomas More Catholic School and classes any time, provided they have previously called to make arrangements. Parents, as well as all persons not enrolled as students, must identify themselves at the School Office before entering the class area of the building.

Parents picking up a child for whatever reason during the normal course of a school day (other than regular before and after school times) must check in at the School Office and sign the student out. Your child will then be called to the office by staff and will be released to the parent from the office.

VOLUNTEERS

PARENT VOLUNTEERS are a much **NEEDED AND VERY WELCOME** enrichment to our St. Thomas More Catholic School program. We ask each of you parents to examine your particular interests and talents and offer your services to the school. All volunteers must complete the Code of Conduct/VIRTUS requirements as laid out by the diocese. For more details on this see the “Code of Conduct/VIRTUS” section in this handbook.

Of special importance is your assistance in the classroom as a **TEACHER HELPER**. This gives you additional opportunity to become involved in your child's education.

Our fundraisers contribute over \$130,000 to the operating fund of our school. These remarkable efforts by generous parent volunteers and benefactors have kept our tuition low and in fact, one of the lowest in the city.

We have recommitted to the four existing fundraisers for the coming year. The Fund Run in the fall, the Auction and Dinner in February, the Rummage Sale in April, and \$CRIP, which is year round.

The Fundraisers are very important financial supports for our school, but WE ALL AGREE that they do more than just raise money. They are an intricate part of building the community of faith here at St. Thomas More Catholic School. The fundraisers have an absolute need for all of the families to be involved not only monetarily but also with their physical presence. An hour or two of your valuable time affords us all a chance to be Christ for one another.

We reaffirmed each of these fundraisers for their specific diversities that allow for everyone to take part in whatever way they can contribute. It is in this spirit of the value of **VOLUNTEERS** that we seek to involve all of you in helping to staff these fundraisers and activities that fuel our school. “Many hands make light work,” that is never more appropriate than in the task of raising and educating our children in the spirit of Jesus Christ. This is a very fundamental stewardship issue that teaches our children by our example what is really important in our lives.

We ask our families to prayerfully consider what they have to offer to the children and the community at St. Thomas More. We all have a part in our parish school. Please actively join us this year and help us to build the city of God.

Volunteer Opportunities

The following are brief descriptions of the volunteer opportunities that are listed on the registration form, as well as the anticipated time commitment involved. All of the times listed are approximations, and most areas are quite flexible in hours and time spent. Thank you for all that you do for our school!

Accelerated Reader Store: There are 2 ways to help out the Accelerated Reader Program. One is to volunteer in the *A.R. Store* selling items to children who have earned points through reading books. Volunteers are asked to commit to a 2-hour shift once per month. The other way to lend a hand to A.R. is to help in distributing rewards to the students in grades 6 – 8. This is roughly a 1-hour commitment once per month.

Library help: An offer to help staff our school Library is an offer of about 1 – 2 hours per week.

Teacher Aide: This is a very flexible volunteer opportunity. The time commitment varies with each teacher, so if this is an area that interests you, please speak with the teacher involved for more information.

Field Trip Driving: This one is fairly self-explanatory. Teachers send home a request for drivers when they are needed. Of course, times and days vary.

Parent w/pick-up for rummage sale: This is an opportunity for those with a strong back! The rummage sale is held each spring and there are often individuals who donate larger items but have no way of getting them to us. Our rummage sale coordinator asks a small crew to go on runs to pick up these items at donors homes. Runs are usually made in the evening, but times and days are flexible. It's a handy way to help out the rummage sale without having to be there during the actual event!

Help serve hot lunch T W Th (circle preference): This opportunity involves assisting in handing out lunch to our students, and you are asked to give of your time from 10:45 am – 12:30 pm on a Tuesday through Thursday approximately once per month.

Room Parent for grade(s): There are 2 – 3 Room Parents for each class. The Room Parent coordinator will contact you a few times during the school year to ask you to assist in various functions—mostly classroom party planning. Please indicate for which grade(s) you wish to volunteer.

Coaching (please identify grade/sport): Coaching is a great way to get to know the students. Feel free to volunteer to coach even if you don't have children at that particular grade level. Time commitment is variable, although there are some requirements for the grades 7 & 8. (Please address any questions to the Athletic Director)

Other: Maybe you have a special skill or work somewhere that the students would benefit from visiting...perhaps you own a business that could help with some of our fundraisers...or maybe you can see some other need that you could fill that we just haven't thought of...

PLEASE NOTE:

All volunteers are required by the Diocese of Spokane to complete a Diocesan Code of Conduct/VIRTUS class (one session, approximately 1 – 1½ hours in length) or complete the yearly renewal online after taking the class, as well as complete the required paperwork for our staff to run a Washington State Patrol background check. Several opportunities will be made available to you at the beginning of the year to attend one of these classes.