

St. Thomas Catholic School Catholic Diocese of Peoria

Parent/Student Handbook 2023-2024

Mission Statement: Through the highest educational standards that seek to address the intellectual, spiritual, and physical needs of every child, the mission of St. Thomas Catholic School is to guide our students to LIVE as examples of Christ, LOVE as Christ loves us, and SERVE as Christ calls us to serve now and throughout their lives.

Pastor: Fr. Keith Walder

Principal: Ms. Jean Holmes

Academic Recognition: St. Thomas Catholic School is officially recognized by the National Catholic Education Association and the Illinois State Board of Education according to Policy and Guidelines for Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Address: 311 E. Madison
Philo, IL 61864
Phone: (217) 684-2309
Fax: (217) 684-2217
school.stthomasphilo.org

School Hours: Start: 8:15 a.m.
Lunch/Recess: 11:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
Dismissal: 2:45 p.m.

School Colors: Green and White

School Mascot: St. Thomas Tiger

School Motto: Live, Love, and Serve as Christ

Circumstances may arise in which St. Thomas Catholic School determines that changes are required in these guidelines and procedures. For this reason, St. Thomas Catholic School reserves the right, at any time, to modify, terminate, rescind, or supplement any or all of the guidelines or procedures contained herein, and to take actions which may be contrary to guidelines, benefits, or procedures set forth in this handbook.

Philosophy of St. Thomas Catholic School

We, the principal and faculty of St. Thomas Catholic School, believe this Catholic Christian school is an expression of the faith of the parish communities and that Christ is the center and purpose of our school life.

We believe St. Thomas is unique because we witness Christ's presence with us. We meet Him in the Good News, share Him with others in community, and praise Him in worship. We believe our role as educators is to create an environment conducive to the development of each child's giftedness--spiritually, intellectually, morally, emotionally, socially, and physically.

We believe the strong, quality academic program we offer at St. Thomas Catholic School must be enriched with Catholic Christian attitudes and values that enable the students to be of service to the community.

We believe the school life we share will prepare our students for the future and enable them to bring the message of hope to a world crying out for peace and justice. We believe the parents are the primary educators of their children, and that our role is one of support and professional service to the family.

We believe these ideals can only be fulfilled through the cooperation of the entire parish community – pastors, administrator, Education Commission, faculty, parents, students, and parishioners with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Catholic School Statement of Purpose

"From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic School, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom...."

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, #25

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria are established to assist the bishop and pastors in the transmission of the Faith to the young people of the diocese. We welcome non-Catholic students into our schools who wish to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Catholic education. Every school must have as its main goal to help each student develop a personal and ecclesial relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). The principles, practices, and beliefs of the Catholic Faith must be fully integrated throughout the school's curricula, service projects, co-curricular activities, and culture.

Students in our Catholic schools are reminded of their dignity as children of God through the study of Catholic doctrine, frequent opportunities for personal and communal prayer, and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Together with the parents, the primary educators of their children, our Catholic schools pursue academic and spiritual

excellence by helping students develop their intellectual abilities, foster wholesome friendships, practice discipleship, strengthen their daily prayer life, grow in virtue, and become leaders through serving others.

All personnel who work in our Catholic schools must have at heart the promotion of the educational mission of the Church and live as visible role models of faith within the parish/school community. Catholic doctrinal, moral, and social teaching is an integral part of each school. Therefore, all faculty, staff, administrative, and volunteer personnel must support the teachings of the Church, actively practice their faith in daily life, and be loyal to the Church's Magisterium. Our Catholic school personnel share this educational mission and its various commitments and responsibilities with parents and the local Church communities.

“It is crucial that the policies and procedures of Catholic Schools reflect that primary purpose and that the Catholicity of the school and its faithfulness to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (Magisterium) are not compromised.” *Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., Ph.D.*

St. Thomas Catholic School Personnel 2023-2024

School Faculty and Staff

Ms. Jean Holmes, Principal
Mrs. Jana Boyer, Business Manager / School Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Kathy Webb, Parish Office Manager / School Office Manager
Mrs. Tracy Cain, Receptionist / Marketing–Fundraising–Event Coordinator
Ms. Jessica Henson, Preschool Teacher
Mrs. Tiffany Dodd, Preschool Teacher / Preschool Program Coordinator
Mrs. Bridgett Bollman, Preschool Aide / Tech Time–Library–Lunch Supervisor
Mrs. Karisa Finical, Preschool Aide / School Custodian
Mrs. Jaime Hogan, Preschool Aide
Mrs. Shannon Reno, Preschool Aide
Mrs. Jhonalyn Toler, Preschool Aide / Kindergarten–1st Grade Aide
Mrs. Jodi Saunders, Grade K Teacher
Mrs. Betsy Stierwalt, Grade 1 Teacher
Ms. Rachel Erb, Grade 2 Teacher
Mrs. Wendy Carmien, Grade 3 Teacher
Mrs. Patty Tierney, Grade 4 Teacher
Mrs. Diane Deters, Grade 5 Teacher
Mrs. Julie Gay, Junior High Teacher (Grade 6 Homeroom)
Mrs. Debbie Reinhart, Junior High Teacher (Grade 7 Homeroom)
Mr. Eric Miller Junior, High Teacher (Grade 8 Homeroom)
Mrs. Beth Pugh, Physical Education–Health Teacher / Athletic Director
Mrs. Betty Kolakowski, RtI Program Coordinator / RtI Interventionist
Mr. Chad Billman, Music–Band–Choir Teacher / Aftercare Program Teacher
Ms. Skye Wilkins, Aftercare Program Teacher

Pastor

Fr. Keith Walder, St. Thomas, Philo
Fr. Freddie Gomez Torres, St. Patrick, Tolono

Education Commission 2023-2024

Education Commission Members

Mr. Tim Osterbur, Mrs. Missy LeFaivre, Mrs. Jordan White, Mrs. Christine Schwenk, Mr. Nick Unser, Mrs. Emily Kampmueller, Mrs. Devin Brocksmith, Ms. Kristy Geier, Mrs. Courtney Grussing

Ex Officio Education Commission Members

Fr. Keith Walder, Pastor; Ms. Jean Holmes, Principal; Dcn. Don Koeberlein, DRE; Mrs. Beth Pugh, Athletic Director; Mr. Jim Deters, Trustee; Mrs. Jean Cain, Trustee

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I. RELIGION

Eucharistic Liturgies

Students and staff are required to attend the student-led Masses that are scheduled throughout the academic year, usually on Fridays at 8:30 a.m. The students plan and participate in these liturgies. All students are required to follow the *Mass Day Attire* section in the Dress Code policy of this handbook. After Mass on first Fridays of each month, junior high students usually sponsor coffee and donuts in the gym. All parishioners and guests are invited to enjoy this event.

Sacraments/Sacramental Preparation

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure that their children participate in the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation on a regular basis. Children are expected to attend weekly Mass on Sunday and to participate in the weekly school Mass each Friday that school is in session. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to bring their children for Reconciliation at the regularly scheduled times as published in the church bulletin. Students in grades 2 through 8 will also have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at school during Advent and Lent.

With the cooperation of their parents/guardians, the 2nd graders prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. The first reception of these sacraments will be in their own parish or, with the permission of their pastor, at St. Thomas. Eighth grade students are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation each year.

II. ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Achievement

Students are expected to complete assignments, cooperate in the school environment, and work to the best of their abilities. Failure to accomplish these stated items will be reflected in student evaluations.

Homework

While some children may be able to complete most of their written work in school or during Aftercare or Homework Club (jr. high), longer assignments and studying for tests should be done at home. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review their child's homework, assignment notebooks, folders, and FACTS academic records regularly. A reasonable suggestion of time for homework would be 10 minutes for each grade level, but parents/guardians should allow for evenings requiring more or less homework time. By way of a general example, a 4th-grade student should plan on 40 minutes of homework. Time should also be set aside for individual and family prayer.

If a parent/guardian wishes to pick up homework at dismissal for the day at 2:45 p.m. for a sick child or have it sent home with a sibling, this request must be made when the parent calls in the absence that morning.

Assignments should be recorded in students' assignment notebooks / daily planners, but they may also be available on FACTS and/or the teacher's webpage on the school website.

Having a designated place and time each evening for homework during which only studying or reading takes place will encourage good study habits and emphasize the importance of learning.

Honors/High Honors

Students achieving Honors or High Honors should demonstrate excellence in all things, including academics, regular attendance, behavior, and faith.

Honors/High Honors are presented quarterly to students in grades 5 through 8. Honors require a minimum GPA of 3.00, and no grade of "D" or "F" in the core curriculum subjects of religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health/PE, and music. High Honors requires a minimum grade point average of 3.67, and no grade of "D" or "F" in the core curriculum subjects as listed above for Honors requirements.

Both Honors and High Honors requires an attendance rate of 93% each quarter (44 days per quarter would be 3 days missed).

Make-Up Work

Students may have one day for each missed day to submit school work. Work not turned in at the end of that extension period may be scored/recorded as a "0."

Report Cards

Parents have access to their child(ren)'s grades via the online program, FACTS. Report cards are viewable/printable from FACTS at the end of each quarter (approximately every nine weeks). Parents will be notified when report cards are open for viewing/printing each quarter. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled for all preschool–8th-grade students during the fall semester. While these fall conferences are required, and an additional optional day of parent/teacher conferences is scheduled during the second half of the year; as well, **parents can arrange a conference with any teacher at any time.**

Grades 3 through 8 — Academic Marks Points

- A+ (101 +) Excellent 4.33
- A (100-96) Excellent 4.00
- A- (95-94) Excellent 3.67
- B+ (93-91) Very Good 3.33
- B (90-88) Very Good 3.00
- B- (87-86) Very Good 2.67
- C+ (85-83) Satisfactory 2.33
- C (82-79) Satisfactory 2.00
- C- (78-76) Satisfactory 1.67
- D+ (75-74) Below Average 1.33

D (73-71) Below Average 1.00
D- (70-68) Below Average 0.67
E Effort Shown, but Below Grade Level
F (Below 68) Failing 0.00
I Incomplete

Response to Intervention (RtI) / Special Needs

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tier approach used to identify students with learning needs early. The RtI process begins with universal screening of all K–8 students each fall, winter, and spring. St. Thomas Catholic School uses Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment for this purpose; AIMSweb assessments are used for students who require progress monitoring throughout the school year. Data from these assessments, in conjunction with teacher input, helps clarify which students are in need of extra support (intervention) in specific areas of reading and/or math. RtI is designed to get help to students who are struggling as early as possible. Once a need is identified, the student's classroom teacher, the RtI coordinator/RtI interventionist, and parents will work together to create a specific RtI plan to help meet that need. A specific intervention will then be delivered to the student and the student's progress will be monitored over time. The teachers and parents will confer during the school year to determine if the intervention plan needs to continue as is or be altered (in intensity or type) to best help the student succeed.

Parents/guardians may contact the classroom teacher at any time if they have a concern regarding their child's progress. If the teacher has concerns about a student's progress, he/she will contact that student's parents/guardians. If, after meeting with the parents/guardians, it is determined that further academic assessment is needed, the teacher will work in conjunction with the RtI coordinator, principal, and the Tolono Unit 7 School District to determine what assessment may be needed. Parents/guardians will be notified of any further assessments deemed necessary. Conferences including parents/guardians, St. Thomas School staff, and Tolono Unit 7 School District staff will take place following assessment and additional action plans, if needed, will be made.

St. Thomas Catholic School receives limited, and in some cases consultation-only, services from the Tolono Unit 7 School District in the areas of special education (including speech language services, occupational therapy, and physical therapy). Counseling and support for behavioral, social, and/or medical problems do not fall within the Special Education services St. Thomas receives.

Retention/Promotion

Decisions of promotion and retention are determined by the student's performance on assessments, teacher recommendation, quarterly grades, and attendance. Additionally, a student's achievement of the skills for the grade to which he/she is assigned and his/her readiness for work at the next grade level will be assessed and evaluated before he/she is retained or promoted. Promotion and retention of a student will be determined by a multidisciplinary team consisting of the principal, teacher(s), resource teacher, and parents/guardians. Criteria for retention shall be based on a wide variety of information about the student in order to assist the team in a decision that is educationally and emotionally best for

the student. If conflicts concerning promotion and retention cannot be resolved, the administration has the authority to make the final determination.

Students who fail two or more subjects in the core curriculum (math, science, language arts, reading, social studies, and religion) will be considered for retention. The student may be asked to complete work during the summer to advance to the next grade level.

St. Thomas Distinctive Achievement Award

This award is given in honor of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois, for their dedication to the education of students at St. Thomas Catholic School. The award was established in 2010 and is presented at graduation to 8th-grade students who achieve a graduating grade point average (GPA) of 3.67 or higher from 5th through 8th grade. Students must have attended St. Thomas Catholic School for at least 5th–8th grades to be eligible for this award. It is given in memory of Sr. Mary Lois Clennon and Sr. Mary Richard Godsell.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

Appeal and Review

A review or appeal of any decision concerning policies, procedures, or other serious matters made by the competent authority of any of the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria may be requested by any member of the diocese under the following conditions only:

- The decision violates or is in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church;
- The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable diocesan policy;
- The decision violates or is in conflict with a policy or procedure of the parish, the school, or other entity that takes precedence over the decision in question; or
- The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable, federal, state, or local civil law.

It is to be noted that dissatisfaction with a decision is not a sufficient condition for appeal. The individual or group desiring the appeal of the review must make that request known to the governing pastor or board of pastors responsible for that school in the form of a letter. As a matter of record, a copy of that letter is to be forwarded to the Office of Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Peoria and to the local vicar.

This letter must clearly cover each of the following points:

- The decision that is being questioned, and which competent authority made it;
- The grounds for the appeal or the review with specific reference to one or more of the four conditions listed above; and
- The proposed resolution.

The governing pastor or board of pastors, having received the request for appeal or review, is to respond in writing to those making the request within 30 days of receiving the request. A copy of the response letter is to be forwarded to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools of the

Catholic Diocese of Peoria and the local vicar.

In most cases, the decision of the governing pastor or board of pastors is final. However, those who have requested the appeal or review may further appeal to the local vicar, who has the authority to summarily dismiss the case or who may forward the appeal for review to the Office of Catholic Schools and the Vicar General of the Diocese of Peoria.

Bullying (OCS Policy D-147)

All elementary and secondary schools of the diocese shall actively seek to provide a supportive, caring environment that is safe from all forms of intimidation, including bullying. Bullying is repeated behavior involving a deliberate, conscious intent to hurt, threaten, frighten, or humiliate someone. It may include physical and/or verbal intimidation or assault; extortion or taking belongings; oral or written threats; outrageous teasing, mocking, taunting, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; suggestive comments; false accusations and/or social isolation. Bullying behavior shall not be tolerated in any form, including via social media.

Any behavior defined as bullying will be addressed in the following manner:

- Conference with principal and student; parent/guardian notification of initial conference;
- Conference with principal, student, and parent/guardian;
- If not resolved, conference with pastor, principal, student, and parent/guardian; could lead to permanent dismissal.

Conflict Resolution

Misunderstandings and confusion can give rise to conflict between the student, parents/guardians, and faculty/staff. The most effective way to avoid such conflict is to contact the individual teacher or staff member directly and as soon as possible. Maintaining an open perspective during the course of this dialog will serve to facilitate resolution of the issue. For the items that cannot be resolved at this initial level, the principal may be included in the discussion, but only after the parents/guardians and the teacher have made their best efforts toward resolution. At the discretion of the principal, the pastor may also be included. Efforts to avoid the initial steps are strongly discouraged.

Discipline

Our school motto to *Live, Love, and Serve as Christ* is at the center of our school life. Our students, through their personal conduct, should reflect this Christ-centeredness. Our discipline policy will be used to guide students toward positive, Christian behavior.

Additionally, we at St. Thomas Catholic School hold the belief that:

- Students will be held accountable for their behavior;
- Both the severity of the misbehavior and the age of the student will be given consideration in deciding the consequences of the action(s);
- Each child's behavior will be dealt with individually; and

- All faculty, staff, volunteers, guests, and students will be respected by all students.

The disciplinary regulations at St. Thomas Catholic School are intended:

- To maintain order wherein an atmosphere for learning can prevail;
- To teach respect for the rights of others;
- To develop good character traits;
- To provide opportunities for the development of leadership; and
- To form intelligent and virtuous Catholic citizens.

Teachers and/or supervisors are responsible for maintaining, in their areas of responsibility, an atmosphere conducive to learning as well as the safety of each individual. Each teacher and/or supervisor handles discipline problems as they arise. The principal will be consulted if further disciplinary action is needed. Parents/guardians will be given a written notification of the teacher's expectations of behavior in the classroom at the beginning of the school year. Parents/guardians should be aware that their support and cooperation are needed when their child is having behavior or academic problems at school.

Any student who, whether inside or outside of school, engages in conduct that is detrimental to the reputation of the school and/or inconsistent with the mission, philosophy, or teachings of the Catholic Church may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion. Several examples of prohibited student conduct, such as bullying and harassment, are set forth in the *Code of Conduct* section of this handbook. Certain conduct, while not listed in the *Code of Conduct*, may still be determined to be inconsistent with the standards of conduct required by St. Thomas. Also, lesser forms of unacceptable conduct, after repeated occurrences, rise to the level of conduct that is also subject to the following levels of anticipated disciplinary consequences.

Disciplinary consequences can range from warning to expulsion. Both the severity of the misbehavior and the age of the student will be given consideration in deciding the consequences of the action. It is assumed that the offending conduct will be remedied by the first application of a disciplinary response. However, if the conduct continues, or a more serious misconduct occurs, St. Thomas will proceed to more serious forms of discipline including:

Detentions: Detentions are disciplinary measures used to give consequences to unacceptable conduct and negligence in classwork, classroom management, and/or violations of the *Code of Conduct* or *Dress Code*. Detentions will be served at lunch recess or before or after school for 30 to 60 minutes. Parents/guardians will be notified the day the detention is issued. Parents/guardians must arrange for transportation home if need be.

Office Referral: If a student's behavior demands an immediate removal from the classroom, the teacher will send the student to the principal along with an explanation of the circumstances requiring removal. The principal will discuss the incident with the student and determine what, if any, additional consequences will result. The parent/guardian will be notified to make them aware of the circumstances.

Suspension: Suspension is the temporary termination of a student's enrollment for a serious offense or continued insubordination. The principal has the authority to suspend

students upon notification of his/her parents/guardians for a period not to exceed three school days. Suspensions may be either in-school or out-of-school.

If the suspension is in-school, a student will be removed from all classes and activities during the school day and may not participate in any after-school activities, including athletic practices and events. The student will be responsible for completing and turning in all assignments assigned during the length of the suspension.

Prior to suspension, the teacher and principal may have pursued other alternatives of discipline and will have notified the parents/guardians of the student's prior offenses in such cases. If a suspension is issued, the principal shall immediately notify the parents/guardians of the reason(s), and the time period in which it will be enforced. In the case of suspensions longer than three days, a student and his/her parents/guardians are entitled:

- a. to receive a formal hearing by the Education Commission in executive session, with written documentation to be presented at that time; and
- b. to have the charges and/or penalties removed from the record if the pastor, after taking into consideration the advice from the executive session Education Commission, determines his/her innocence or non-involvement.

Expulsion: Expulsion is the permanent termination of a student's enrollment for a serious offense or continued insubordination, such as:

- Morally delinquent students whose conduct may be detrimental to the safety of other students or pupils, and who will not conform to the school program;
- Violation(s) of the substance abuse and/or weapons policy;
- Physical or threatened violence to self or others or willful destruction of school or parish property; or
- Other serious misconduct.

Prior to expulsion, the student and his/her parents/guardians will be granted a conference with the pastor, principal, and parties involved. If expulsion is still contemplated, the Education Commission chairperson will be notified and will call the Education Commission members to meet in executive session to discuss the seriousness of the matter and advise the pastor the course of action to be pursued. The parents/guardians shall be requested in writing by the Education Commission chairperson to be present at this executive session stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

In judging the justification for expulsion, consideration must be given to the extent of the school's previous efforts to remedy the problem, to the legality of the reason for dismissal, and to the maintenance of the school's philosophy and goals. In order to protect the reputation of the person involved, all matters discussed during executive session must be held in strict confidence. If expulsion is determined, the parents/guardians shall be notified of the expulsion by registered letter. The final ruling will be determined by the pastor.

Corporal Punishment: Corporal punishment shall not be used as a form of discipline.

Harassment Policy

The Harassment Policy for the Diocese of Peoria is incorporated by reference into this policy. It is set forth in Appendix A for further reference. Harassment, including sexual harassment, of any student by another student is unethical, illegal, and prohibited. It is the responsibility of the complainant or any witnesses to report incidents of harassment. Students are subject to disciplinary procedures up to and including expulsion.

The term “harassment” includes but is not limited to “slurs, jokes, or any other form of verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct or advance which reflect (seriously and) adversely on a person’s race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship, or physical or mental condition.” Harassment under this policy includes sexual harassment which means any unwelcome sexual advances or any conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment even if the actions take place off school property or outside of school hours. The term shall also include any other conduct or actions as defined as harassment under the Illinois Human Rights Act as it is amended from time to time. Further, cases of retaliation against a complainant or witness who initiates a case under this policy are included within the term “harassment” as used herein and shall be handled under this policy.

While intervention strategies are suggested even in the case of what the Supreme Court has called “simple acts of teasing and name-calling among school children,” such acts do not constitute harassment under this policy.

This policy outlines the reporting of harassment by the person harassed or by the parent/legal guardian of the person harassed (the complainant) or any witness to harassment. It includes harassment by a student of the school against another student of the school.

If the complainant believes that he or she has been harassed, he or she may first wish to deal with the harassment on an informal basis with the harasser. A witness to harassment may wish to do the same. However, whether a complainant follows that path or not, if harassment continues or if a single instance of harassment is of such magnitude that the complainant or witness feels that such an informal resolution is not feasible for any reason, the harassment should be reported immediately by the complainant or witness to the classroom teacher, activity supervisor, or directly to the principal of the school. A notice of harassment should be given within a reasonable time of the alleged harassment in order to promote a fair, prompt, and appropriate response. For the purposes of this policy, reasonable time shall mean five school days.

When a report is given to a classroom teacher or activity supervisor from a complainant or a witness, this report should be given to the principal, who shall have the responsibility to follow up. The principal shall make a written account of what has been reported, the parties involved, the facts alleged, and the date of the report. The pastor should receive a copy of this report. If it is determined that harassment, as defined in this policy, has occurred, then the principal shall take appropriate action to ensure that the harassment ceases immediately, and that appropriate and meaningful counseling takes place. Each school shall determine the appropriate discipline to

be assigned to the harasser. This discipline can range from warning to expulsion.

At this time, there is nothing that suggests that schools must notify any other agency if there is an incident of harassment as defined herein. If this position changes as a result of rulings by the courts, state regulatory agencies, or the Diocese of Peoria, the policy will be modified accordingly. If a parent/guardian, for any reason, contacts an agency, such as the police, with a complaint of student-to-student harassment, the school will not be involved except as the law requires or unless the harassment complaint reverts to the school by the outside agency.

Incidents of Battery against Teachers or Other School Personnel

Upon receipt of a written complaint from school personnel, the principal shall immediately report all incidents of battery committed against teachers or other school personnel to local law enforcement authorities. In addition, incidents of battery against school personnel shall be reported to the Illinois State Police within three (3) days of the occurrence through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS) in IWAS (105 ILCS 5/10-21.7).

Language

Inappropriate or disrespectful language will not be tolerated. Parents will be notified if there is more than one occurrence.

Property Damage Policy

Students who damage, break, or destroy school property carelessly are required to pay for, repair, or provide for replacement in full. Behavior resulting in property damage will not be tolerated in any form at school or school-sponsored programs and activities.

Sporting and Extra-Curricular Events

Sporting and extra-curricular events are intended to encourage the active participation of all students in events outside of school hours. By way of these opportunities, the students' Christian values and leadership skills will be incorporated into their daily lives.

Eligibility for Sporting Events

See current *St. Thomas Catholic School Athletic Handbook* available on the school website.

Rules for Riding the St. Thomas Bus to Athletic, Extra Curricular, and Field Trip Events

The St. Thomas School bus driver and supervisors/chaperones are in charge of the students. If a student is disrespectful, a written report will be given to the principal by the bus driver and/or supervisor/chaperone by the end of the next school day. A conference will be held as soon as possible to discuss the rider's attitude and lack of respect for the rules and his/her parents/guardians will be notified. Disciplinary actions may result when a student does not abide by the below listed rules.

1. Riders will stay seated at all times.
2. Riders are not to move from seat to seat.
3. Riders are to keep their hands to themselves at all times.
4. Riders are to be silent at all railroad crossings.
5. Riders are not to make gestures, signs, etc. to people outside the bus.
6. Riders must ride the bus both ways unless a parent/guardian contacts the bus driver.
7. Riders are responsible for picking up paper, trash, etc., about the bus.
8. Windows should not be opened unless the driver grants permission.
9. The bus driver or bus supervisor/chaperones have the authority to assign seats at any time.
10. Food items are not to be brought onto the bus without the driver's permission.
11. Riders are never to throw items about the bus.
12. Loud talking is not allowed at any time.
13. The school, bus driver, and supervisor/chaperone will not be responsible for students' or others' lost personal items.

Substance Abuse Policy

Student consumption, possession, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, illicit drugs, or look-alikes, and/or tobacco are not permitted in school buildings, on school grounds, or at any school events at any time. This drug policy extends to all school-sponsored and school-related activities including, but not limited to, field trips and athletic events. Behavior involving consumption or use of these items shall not be tolerated in any form at school or school-sponsored programs and activities.

Weapons Policy

Possession of knives, firearms, explosives, or other types of materials that may have a strong potential for bodily harm are not permitted in school buildings, on school grounds, or at any school events at any time. The Diocese of Peoria policy on Possession or Use of Weapons or Look-Alike Weapons in School, set forth in Appendix B, is also incorporated herein. Behavior involving weapons shall not be tolerated in any form at school or at school-sponsored programs and activities.

IV. Dress Code

The Catholic code of modest dress, and the understanding of our human dignity, should guide the choice of clothes and the way they are worn. The dress code is designed to ensure uniformity of acceptable dress and show respect for others and self. These guidelines will assist parents/guardians and children in the choice of appropriate clothing for school days.

Students should come to school in uniforms that are clean, fit appropriately, and follow the dress code guidelines. Student dress must always be conducive to a safe, healthy, non-disruptive learning environment. Parents are encouraged to be aware of these guidelines and see that their children dress accordingly. Teachers will notify the principal of those students who are out of dress code; if deemed necessary, the principal will notify parents. Additional non-listed issues

are left up to the discretion of the principal. The final decision regarding the dress code rests with the principal.

A lost-and-found-clothing area is maintained. Students and parents should check it often for missing items.

Dress-down days may occur occasionally throughout the school year. Dates and guidelines for what to wear will be announced via Tiger Tales, classroom newsletters, and morning school announcements.

Shirts

- Students must wear a solid-colored, collared polo shirt, long- or short-sleeved, with or without the St. Thomas School logo (no other company logos may be worn). No ruffles or other embellishments allowed.
 - Acceptable polo colors are:
 - Evergreen, Maize, and Ice Pink – these colors must be purchased through Lands’ End only using preferred school code 900137209
 - Navy blue, light blue, and white – these colors may be purchased through any retailer offering school uniforms
 - Polo shirts should be tucked in at all times.
- An Evergreen polo from Lands’ End with the St. Thomas School logo must be worn on Mass days and field trips.
- Students may wear a solid-colored, long-sleeved shirt under their polo shirt. These shirts must be navy, black, or white and may not have any visible logos.
- Any St. Thomas Catholic School or High School of St. Thomas More “spirit wear” shirt/sweatshirt or school event shirt/sweatshirt (Jump Rope for Heart, Summer Camp, Schumacher Shuffle, etc.) may be worn on the first school day of each week.
 - St. Thomas School spirit wear can be purchased during limited sales periods throughout the school year; sales periods are usually held two to three times each year.

Pants / Shorts

- Students must wear navy or khaki pants or shorts, or blue denim jeans. Material may be solid twill, cotton blend, or corduroy. Navy and khaki pants for Mass days may not be “jeans” style.
- Students may wear khaki or navy pants or shorts on Mass days (no blue denim).
- No rhinestones, gems, cargo pockets, painter pants, holes, rips, or frays allowed.
- No jeggings or pants with elastic bands at the ankle allowed.
- Belts must be worn with pants or shorts having belt loops in grades 4th–8th.
- Shorts and capri pants may be worn 1st and 4th quarters. This period may be extended at the discretion of the principal.
- Shorts’ length should be a minimum of the student’s fingertips when arms are down.

Jumpers / Skirts /Polo Dresses

- Girls may wear navy or khaki jumpers or skirts. Material may be solid twill, cotton blend, or corduroy.
- Girls may wear denim skirts on non-Mass days; no rhinestones, gems, cargo pockets, “painter” style, holes, rips, or frays allowed.
- Girls may wear polo dresses in the same acceptable colors as polo shirts and with no ruffles, company logos other than that of St. Thomas School, or other embellishments.
- Girls may wear khaki or navy pants, shorts, or skirts on Mass days; denim skirts may not be worn on Mass days.
- Girls may wear Evergreen polo dresses from Lands’ End with the St. Thomas School logo on Mass days. This is the only acceptable polo dress on Mass days.
- Skirts, jumpers, and polo dresses must be solid in color without designs, embellishments, ruffles, or cargo pockets.
- Jumper, skirt, and polo dress lengths should be a minimum of the student’s fingertips when arms are down.

Shoes / Socks / Tights

- No sandals, flip flops, open-toed shoes, or shoes without backs may be worn.
 - Shoes with laces must be tied; mismatched laces are not allowed.
- Crocs may be worn 1st and 4th quarters. Charms are not permitted on the Crocs. Crocs are not permitted on Mass Days.
- Boots are not to be worn during the school day. Snow or rain boots may be worn to/from school, but students must bring an appropriate pair of shoes to be worn during the school day.
- Socks must be of matching color. Socks are to be worn at all times. On Mass days, socks must be solid-colored black, gray, white, or navy.
- Leg warmers are not allowed.
- Shoes must be of matching color and worn at all times.
- Students must have a pair of athletic shoes for PE and indoor recess. These need to be an *additional* pair of athletic shoes changed into before such use and left at school for the sole purpose of PE and indoor recess.
- Tights and leggings must be solid-colored with no patterns or prints. Leggings must be ankle-length. Acceptable tights/leggings colors are black, gray, white, and navy.
- Tights and leggings may not be worn alone as pants.

Mass Day Attire

BOYS:

- Evergreen polo shirt with the St. Thomas School logo purchased from Lands’ End using preferred school code 900137209.
- Khaki or navy pants or shorts.
- Socks must be solid-colored and may only be black, gray, white, or navy in color.

GIRLS:

- Evergreen polo shirt with the St. Thomas School logo purchased from Lands' End using preferred school code 900137209
- Khaki or navy pants, shorts, or skirts OR Evergreen polo dress with the St. Thomas School logo purchased from Lands' End using preferred school code 900137209.
- Khaki or navy jumper may be worn over the Evergreen polo from Lands' End with the St. Thomas School logo.
- Socks must be solid-colored and may only be black, gray, white, or navy in color.
- Tights and leggings must be solid-colored. Leggings must be ankle-length. Acceptable tights/leggings colors are black, gray, white, and navy.

Spirit Wear Day Attire (first school day of each week)

- Any St. Thomas Catholic School or High School of St. Thomas More "spirit wear" shirt/sweatshirt or school event shirt/sweatshirt (Jump Rope for Heart, Summer Camp, Schumacher Shuffle, etc.).
- Jeans, khakis, or navy pants or shorts.
- Girls may wear khaki, navy, or denim skirts.

Other Items

- Girls may wear a single stud earring in each ear. Boys are prohibited from wearing earrings. No other jewelry may be worn by students unless it is of a religious or medical nature.
- Watches may be worn as long as they do not cause a disruption to the learning environment. Smart watches/watches with texting, calling, internet usage capabilities will be treated in the same manner as cell phones; therefore, they must be kept in students' bookbags.
- Fake nails are not permitted. Nail polish, if it is worn, should be well-maintained and one color.
- Makeup: girls in grades 6, 7, and 8 may wear black or brown mascara and clear lip gloss.
- Hairstyles must be conservative and of natural color and style; boys' hair should be no longer than the eyebrow in front, ear lobe on the sides, and the top of the collar in the back. Artificial hair coloring is not allowed.
- Tattoos, real or otherwise, are not allowed on students attending St. Thomas School or St. Thomas School activities.
- Good personal hygiene, neatness, and cleanliness are required.
- Students may not wear hats in the school building.
- St. Thomas School "spirit wear" hooded sweatshirts are the only hooded sweatshirts allowed and may only be worn on Spirit Wear Days.
- In the classroom, for an extra layer of warmth over the approved polo shirt, students may only wear:
 - Evergreen full- or half-zip fleece with the St. Thomas School logo, purchased from Lands' End using preferred school code 900137209. School-approved Evergreen fleeces purchased through Lands' End or St. Thomas School in

previous years are acceptable. Fleeces should be labeled with the child's name.

- For recess, any coat or jacket is sufficient.
- Students may be asked to cease wearing any item that causes a disruption to the learning environment.
- The final decision regarding the dress code rests with the principal.

V. School Governance

St. Thomas Catholic School follows the policies of the Diocese of Peoria. These policies are developed by the Diocesan Education Commission. Along with the Diocesan policies, St. Thomas has local policies to further direct St. Thomas Catholic School in carrying out the policies of the Diocese. The governing board of St. Thomas Catholic School is the St. Thomas Education Commission. Local policies are voted on by the St. Thomas Education Commission and enacted by the pastor of St. Thomas Parish. The procedures for making policy and revising policy are stated in G-232, P-CDOP, G-232, and AR-OCS, 1/03 of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria Policy Book, Office of Catholic Schools. The St. Thomas Education Commission follows the CDOP Policy Book, which the school follows if a local policy has not been written for a defined area.

Education Commission

Each diocesan school is to have a local Commission on Education responsible for discerning the Catholic formation and educational needs of the entire school community and for providing policies to meet those needs. The commission serves in an advisory role to the pastor and principal and has its own by-laws. It functions in collaboration with dioceses, religious congregations, bishops, pastors, and school administrators, by acting as fiduciaries for the Catholic community and by providing long-range direction for the school.

The Education Commission's purpose is:

- To assure fidelity to the school's mission;
- To ensure organizational effectiveness;
- To serve as a positive voice for the school;
- To provide resources for the school and to connect the school to resources;
- To provide for collaboration, participation, ownership, and common vision;
- To enable leadership;
- To provide guidance in strategic planning.

Education Commission meetings are held as scheduled on the school calendar, during selected months throughout the year. All are invited to attend unless the commission is in executive session. Such sessions may be called if areas of discussion include discipline, teacher conduct, or sensitive issues. Appointment of commission members is held as vacancies become available.

Members of the Education Commission, appointed by the pastor(s), serve on the commission for a three-year term with an option to serve for a second term. The terms of members are staggered so that up to one-third of the commission members may be departing each year. All members of

St. Thomas School's affiliated parishes and school parents are eligible to be commission members.

VI. General Policies and Procedures

While the school and the parish wholeheartedly believe in the policies and procedures set forth in this Parent/Student Handbook, it reserves the right to alter, modify, or terminate any policy or procedure at any time as the needs of the school or parish may require. Parents will be notified of any modifications.

Parental/guardian cooperation and working in partnership with the mission and policies of St. Thomas Catholic School is a condition for a student's continued enrollment. The school can require participation in all classes, activities, and programs, except for sex education classes.

Parents/guardians are required to read the St. Thomas Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook. Continued enrollment is contingent on the signing and returning of the handbook statement by the end of the first full week of the school year.

Admission Policy

St. Thomas Catholic School shares the vision that admission to the school be limited to children of families who have a strong commitment to the community of Christian faith that the school represents and the highest ideals of morality that sustain that community, and the vision of Catholic education and formation.

No student shall be refused admission to St. Thomas Catholic School on the basis of race, color, gender, national, or ethnic origin. Students with special needs shall be included whenever possible. No student shall be refused admission to St. Thomas Catholic School based on his or her immigration status. St. Thomas Catholic School complies with all applicable federal and state laws, including all Federal and State Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Laws and Regulations regarding admissions. Please refer to **OCS Policy D-111** on the Catholic Diocese of Peoria website at www.cdop.org for additional information regarding this policy.

It is understood that all students requesting admission to the school shall meet the age and grade requirements in addition to the stated admissions policy of St. Thomas Catholic School. Students entering in kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1.

All students currently enrolled will be admitted before any other priorities are considered. This means that a currently enrolled non-Catholic student will not be dismissed to admit a new Catholic student.

Students requiring retention shall not be refused a place in a class even if the retention causes the class size to exceed the limit.

Required at time of enrollment:

- Birth certificate
- Baptismal certificate (if Catholic)

- Record of immunizations must be submitted by all new students before school begins; immunization records must be current prior to the first day of the school year
- Proof of health exam for all students entering school for the first time and in grade 6
- Proof of vision exam by October 15 for students entering Kindergarten
- Proof of dental exam by April 15 for students entering Kindergarten and grades 2 and 6
- All students entering grade 6 must have the Hepatitis B vaccination series
- See *Health Forms, Physicals, and Screenings* in this section of the handbook for more information

As part of the admission process, families agree to maintain a commitment to the mission, goals, and religious values of St. Thomas Catholic School through support of the policies in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Students transferring from other schools must have a record free of major disciplinary incidents (e.g., suspension, expulsion, major infractions of school rules). In addition, if the information gathered indicates that St. Thomas Catholic School does not have the educational program to best serve the academic, behavioral, or social/emotional needs of the student, the student will not be accepted for admission. **Requests for transferring between area Catholic schools is strongly discouraged.**

Conditional admission, such as a probation period of one (1) grading period, will be required for transferring students, depending upon individual considerations.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that all admission policies are followed. Contact the school office with any questions or for more information.

Admission Process

Admission decisions for students transferring from another school or seeking re-entry into St. Thomas Catholic School shall be made by the principal and the pastor. Students seeking transfer or re-entry admission must provide records of previous academic and behavior history to the St. Thomas Catholic School office before acceptance is considered. They may also be asked to provide letters of referral from their previous school.

The admissions process includes:

- A school tour followed by an interview with the principal
- A thorough review of all prior academic and behavior records (e.g., transcripts, standardized test scores, IEPs, 504 plans, behavior plans and/or behavior documentation, attendance records, etc.)
- A Shadow Day is often recommended if school is in session wherein the prospective student spends the day (or half day) at St. Thomas Catholic School
- Outreach to the prior school
- Submission of all required registration forms, creation of an online FACTS account, and payment of the registration fee

Priority Admission Procedures

If maximum class size is approached at any grade level and there are more applicants than

space available, the following admission priority procedures will take effect, in descending order of preference:

1. Children who are currently enrolled;
2. Children of active parishioners; “active parishioner” is defined as those who are registered members of and who actively participate in the parish community of St. Thomas Philo, St. Mary’s Pesotum, St. Joseph’s Ivesdale, St. Patrick’s Tolono, or St. Patrick’s Urbana spiritually by conscientiously attending Mass and participating in the sacramental life of the Church, financially by contributing to the support of the parish to the best of their ability through annual sacrificial giving, and by sharing a commitment of time and talent;
3. Children of active parishioners who recently moved into the parish;
4. Children transferring from a public school whose parents/guardians are active parishioners;
5. Children transferring from a Catholic school whose parents/guardians are Catholic and members of another parish;
6. Children transferring from a public school whose parents/guardians are Catholic and members of another parish; and
7. Children transferring from a public school whose parents/guardians are non-Catholic.

Aftercare Program

St. Thomas is fortunate to have an onsite after-school care program, referred to as Aftercare. This program is a service to those parents/guardians who need to have their child(ren) remain at school after the school day ends at 2:45 p.m. The program provides an after-school snack, a supervised homework period, and recreation. Arrangements can be made for your child to attend St. Thomas athletic practices, if scheduled during Aftercare hours.

For more information concerning the Aftercare program, please see the St. Thomas Catholic School Aftercare Handbook (available on the school website) or contact the school office.

Asbestos Compliance

St. Thomas Catholic School is in compliance with all regulations of current law regarding asbestos. The building has been inspected for asbestos-containing materials by a licensed inspector and there is an asbestos management plan for the school prepared by a licensed management planner. The inspection report and management plan are on file in the school office and may be reviewed during school hours.

Attendance

Daily attendance is required of all students and is important at all grade levels to ensure students’ continuous academic growth. It is equally important for students to be on time for school each day. Students should be in the gym for the all-school morning assembly and prayer each school day when the bell rings at 8:15 a.m. Students arriving after the 8:15 a.m bell are tardy and are to report to the office before going to the gym or classroom. Frequent tardies will be addressed at a parent/guardian conference with the principal on a quarterly basis.

Parents/guardians should monitor the time of their children's arrival at school. If transportation arrangements make it necessary for your child to arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m., he/she should report immediately to the Robert Trost Gym. Playing outside before school is not permitted without adult supervision; no adult supervision is provided by school staff before school.

A call from the office will be made to the parents/guardians by 9:00 a.m. if a student has been marked absent and a parent/guardian has not called to report the student's absence. Phone calls will also be made to a parent/guardian if school notification is made by email or text. Absences exceeding 10% of a quarter and/or academic year will be addressed at a parent/guardian conference with the principal on a quarterly basis. Absences exceeding the 10% per quarter limit, and not resolved after the first conference, could lead to permanent dismissal from St. Thomas School.

Attendance will be recorded as follows:

- Full Day of Attendance - For at least 5 hours 45 minutes of instructional time
- 1/2 Day of Attendance - Between 3 hours and 5 hours 44 minutes of instructional time
- Full Day Absent - Under 3 hours of instructional time

Absences from school shall be noted on the student's permanent record even though the absence has been excused. Parents shall be notified in the event that classes are dismissed at other than the regularly scheduled time.

A healthcare provider's note may be required to excuse a student and/or for returning to school after the third consecutive day of being reported ill. If medical documentation is not provided, the absence may be marked "unexcused." Students absent for four or more days in a quarter will not receive Honors Status. Honors status not only reflects grades but also qualities such as attendance and integrity. After five days absent, a meeting with the principal will be scheduled.

Students are allowed up to five mental health days per school year. Students must make up all work missed.

Band

- **Beginning Band**

Beginning Band is open to all students in 4th grade. Band instrument tryouts are held each August before the start of school.

- **Advanced Band**

Advanced Band is open students in grades to 5th through 8th who have completed one or more years in band.

- **Switching Instruments**

Students who want to switch instruments should contact the band teacher.

Bicycles and Recreational Vehicles

Bicycles are to be parked in the bike racks. They are not to be ridden on the playground. Students must follow all safety guidelines as they arrive on/ leave school property on their bicycle. Riding a bicycle to school is a privilege that may be revoked if safety guidelines are not followed. The unauthorized use of another's bike is prohibited. Bicycle locks are recommended. St. Thomas is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any bicycle.

Power driven recreational vehicles (3- and 4-wheelers, golf carts, motor scooters, motorcycles, snowmobiles, etc.) are prohibited on the school grounds during and after school hours.

Birthday Celebrations/Special Celebrations

Please do not plan a classroom pizza party or other such meal for your child's classroom to celebrate a student's birthday or distribute invitations to parties unless everyone in the class is invited. Bringing your child a special birthday lunch just for him/her is permissible. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any special treats to the classroom for birthdays or other special celebrations. All special deliveries of flowers, balloons, etc. during school hours will remain in the school office until the students are dismissed at the end of the day.

Bus

St. Thomas students who meet Unit 7 designated criteria are authorized to ride Unit 7 buses. If a student who normally does not ride the bus needs to do so, First Student service (not the St. Thomas School office) must be notified at 217- 485-3400 or by note. The child's teacher should also be made aware of any transportation change a child may need to make at the beginning of a school day.

Calendars

The school calendar will be available on our school website. A paper copy will be included in the Family Packet each summer.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices such as tablets, iPods, MP3 players, electronic readers, **smart watches**, and games may not be used at St. Thomas School during the school day. For the safety of the students, it is important for the school office staff to monitor calls that students make or receive. Therefore, if a student phone call is necessary, the student must use the office phone for all calls (after first obtaining teacher permission). If a student must bring a cell phone for the purpose of after-school use, it must remain off and in the student's book bag in his or her locker/cubby during the school day. Inappropriate use of cell phones or other electronic devices will result in confiscation by the teacher or principal and only released to a parent/guardian.

Cell phones are not allowed on field trips. If a phone call must be made, the supervising teacher(s) will have one available for use.

Child Abuse/Neglect

All school personnel, by law, are mandated reporters of any suspected child abuse or neglect. Therefore, they are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

The policies and procedures of the Diocese of Peoria set forth in Appendix C are also incorporated by reference into this provision.

Correspondence

All notes and letters from the school office will be sent home with the *youngest* child in grades K–8. Please check the folder of the youngest child daily to determine if such notices have been sent home. If a note goes home in a sealed envelope, the child will be reminded not to open it.

Custody

St. Thomas School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be limited or no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order.

Parents should settle their differences outside of school. St. Thomas School will not become involved in disagreements between separated or divorced parents. Separated or divorced parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the separation or divorce decree with the principal's office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known. School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court-mandated custody arrangements. However, parents must accept the primary responsibility for such arrangements.

Emergency Closing

When unforeseen closing of school is necessary, families will be notified by use of the school's text alert system. Please notify the school office of any phone number changes. Closings will also be announced on WCIA and WICD as well as the school's Facebook page. Closings because of weather or road conditions will always be the same as Unit 7. Please avoid calling the school. The phone lines must be open for emergency situations. If the school has an emergency closing, Aftercare will be closed and all scheduled athletic events (except certain IESA games) will be canceled.

Emergency Contact Information

It is occasionally necessary to have parental/guardian contact during the day. Accurate phone numbers are required. Please advise the school immediately of any change in phone numbers of parents/guardians or other approved individuals. If parents/guardians are planning on being out

of town, they should notify the school with alternative contacts during their absence.

Field Trips

Teachers are encouraged to plan educational field trips. The cost of a field trip is divided equally among those attending and shall be paid in advance. Permission forms are sent home before a trip and must be signed by parents/guardians and returned to the school. Students not meeting the required deadline for fees and permission forms will have to forfeit the opportunity to accompany the class on this trip. **School staff is unable to accept field trip permission by phone.**

On occasion, chaperones may be needed to assist with a field trip. Diocesan guidelines require that all field trip chaperones and drivers complete the required background checks as well as Safe Environment Program and Volunteer Driver trainings found online at www.cmgconnect.org. Paperwork and information on these trainings is available each summer in the Family Packet and may also be obtained by calling the school office. Diocesan guidelines also require all field trip drivers to submit to the school office a signed liability statement, proof of valid vehicle insurance, and a copy of a valid driver's license in advance of any field trip. The responsibilities and expectations of chaperones are set forth in Appendix E.

The school requires the students to wear their Evergreen Mass-day polo shirt and conduct themselves in an exemplary manner on field trips.

On occasion, the teacher or principal may decide that an individual student will not be allowed to participate in a field trip based on the student's behavior and/or the completeness of their schoolwork during the school days preceding the field trip. In the event of such a decision, the parents/guardians of the student will be informed in advance of the trip.

Cell phones are not allowed on field trips. If a phone call must be made, the supervising teacher(s) will have one available for use.

Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is not permitted at any time on the premises during school or at any school event.

Health Forms, Physicals and Screenings

1. **Physical Examination/Immunization Record:** All kindergarteners, 6th graders, and all students transferring from another state are required by state law to have a physical examination prior to the start of the school year. A complete immunization record must be on file for each student in the school.
 - a. For students entering school before October 15 of any given year, the proof of immunization must be presented by this date or the student will be excluded from school until the requirement is met.
 - b. If, for medical reasons, one or more required immunizations must be given after October 15, then the student shall present, by October 15, a schedule for the administration of the immunizations and a statement of the medical reason for the delay.
 - c. Students enrolling after October 15 must present the immunizations record

and their latest health examination as soon as possible, but no later than two weeks after admission.

- d. All records must be completed and returned before the child may be accepted.
2. **Dental Examination:** All Illinois children in kindergarten, 2nd, and 6th grades are required to have an oral health examination. The examination must be performed by a licensed dentist, who should sign the uniform State of Illinois report form.
 - a. Each child in the above listed grades shall present proof of examination by a licensed dentist prior to May 15 of the school year.
 - b. If a child in kindergarten, 2nd, or 6th grade fails to present proof by May 15, the school may hold a child's end-of-year report card until:
 - i. Child presents proof of dental examination OR
 - ii. Child presents proof that dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.
3. **Eye Examination:** Effective January 1, 2008, children enrolling in kindergarten and any student enrolling in a public or private school for the first time are required to have an eye examination. The exam must be conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist and must include history, visual acuity, subjective refraction to best visual acuity near and far, internal and external examination, and a glaucoma evaluation, as well as any other tests or observations that in the professional judgment of the doctors are necessary.
 - a. Children required to have an eye exam shall present proof of examination within the previous year before October 15. If a child fails to present proof of examination, the school may hold the child's report card until one of the following occurs:
 - i. Child presents proof of completed eye examination OR
 - ii. Child presents proof that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15.
 - b. There is a waiver for children who show an undue burden or a lack of access to an eligible physician.
4. **Sports Physicals:** Sports Physical forms are required each year; they must be on file with the school before the first day of practice.
5. **Vision and/or Hearing Screenings:** The school will set a date each year, with prior notification to parents, to have a registered nurse visit the school and perform the following screenings:
 - a. Vision – Mandated are children in kindergarten (if no eye exam is presently on file), 2nd, and 8th grades; children in all special education classes; children referred by teachers; and transferred children.
 - b. Hearing – Mandated are children in kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades; children in all special education classes; children referred by teachers; and transferred children.

Illness Guidelines

Parents/Guardians should notify the school office of any health problem, including any type of communicable disease, concerning their child. A student will not be permitted to attend school or other school-sponsored activities if the student is known to have a communicable disease. Communicable diseases common to school children include but are not limited to chicken pox,

strep throat, measles, and conjunctivitis (pink eye). The principal will notify parents of students in those classes if a student has a communicable disease.

If your child has to stay home from school for any medical reason, **please notify the school office before 8:30am**. The school office will call the parent/guardian by 9:00 a.m. if a student has been marked absent and a parent/guardian has not called to report the absence. For the safety of the student, phone calls will also be made to the parent/guardian if school notification is made by email or text.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should report to the school office. If it is necessary for a student to go home, all efforts will be made to contact the parent/guardian. The student will remain in the office awaiting transportation home.

The following guidelines should be followed to keep our school a healthy and safe environment:

- No child should be sent to school with a fever. If the child has had a fever, he/she should not return to school until they have been **free of fever without the use of medication for 24 hours**. A fever is a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater.
- If a child has diarrhea or vomiting, he/she **should not return to school without a doctor's note or 24 hours after the last time the diarrhea or vomiting occurred**.
- If your child develops a body rash or skin lesions, a doctor should diagnose the problem and the school should be informed of the doctor's recommendation. There may be times when a doctor's note is required before the student may return to school.
- If your child has strep throat, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis, pinworms, ringworm, or impetigo, the child needs to be on prescription medication from your doctor for 24 hours before returning to school. A doctor's note may be required before the student may return to school.
- When a child has chicken pox, they may return to school after all the pox are dry and crusted over, usually not sooner than six days after the onset of the illness.
- If your child has head lice, the child may not return to school until appropriate treatment has been obtained and all of the nits (eggs) are removed. If nits are visible in the hair, the child will be sent home. Manual removal of all lice and nits is the best option to assure total lice treatment of the hair, especially with increasing reports of possible lice resistance to treatment products. Of course, thorough cleaning of the home environment, clothing, bedding, combs, brushes, etc., is a critical part of the solution to this problem.
- **Students must attend school to attend after school activities.**

Leaving School Grounds during the School Day

No child may leave the school grounds without first obtaining permission from the principal, teacher, or staff. **A parent/guardian is required to sign the student in and/or out in a notebook located in the office.** The school must be notified by a parent/guardian if a child will not be returning that school day.

Library Books

Throughout the school year, students may have the opportunity to borrow books from the school library. All borrowed books must be returned to the school library on or before their due date. Parents/Guardians must pay to replace any lost book. All lost books must be paid for before Fun Day at the end of the school year. If a student has an unpaid lost book charge, that student may not participate in Fun Day.

Additionally, some classes may have the opportunity to visit the Philo Public Library during the school year. Any books borrowed from that library are checked out to the classroom teacher and therefore remain at school until returned to the Philo Public Library.

Lunch/Recess

Milk is available for lunch. No glass bottles are to be brought in a child's lunch. Students are not allowed to bring pop or buy pop from the school pop machine for lunch or at any other time during the school day. Students are encouraged to drink milk, juice, or water with their lunch meal, and should not bring other types of beverages in their school lunch.

Students should bring their lunches each full day of school. If a child forgets to bring a lunch to school, a small lunch will be provided. Periodically, a hot lunch may be offered or provided to all of the school children. Most of the hot lunches will be offered to the children at cost. Information about the hot lunch program will be sent in the summer Family Packet.

Depending upon grade level, recess will be from 11:30–11:50 a.m. or 12:00–12:20 p.m.; lunch will be from 11:30–11:50 a.m. or 12:00–12:20 p.m. If a student plans to eat lunch any place other than school, a parent/guardian note must be presented to the teacher *before* lunch. Students who go to their own home for lunch on a regular basis will need to bring a parent/guardian note at the beginning of the school year. Students may not leave until 11:30 a.m. and must return by 12:20 pm. They must sign out and in on a sheet found in the office.

Medication

Parents/guardians may come to school at any time to dispense medication to their child. If it is necessary for a child to take medication during school hours and a parent/guardian is unavailable to dispense the medicine, the principal and/or designated staff will dispense medication only under the following conditions:

- **Prescription Drugs:** If medications can safely be given outside of school hours, please do this. However, if your child's condition requires that medication be given at school, it is necessary that we have a "Required Medications during School Hours" form completed and signed by the parent/guardian and the child's physician, and then returned to the school office. No medication can be given at school until the completed form is on file. Medication must be sent in appropriately labeled pharmacy containers as prescribed by law. The container must indicate the name of the pharmacy, the prescription number, the child's name, the name of the drug, and the dosage.
- **Over-the-Counter Drugs:** If medications can safely be given outside of school hours, please do this. However, if your child's condition requires that medication be given at

school, it is necessary that we have a “Required Medications during School Hours” form completed and signed by the parent/guardian and the child’s physician, and then returned to the school office. No medication can be given at school until the completed form is on file. Parent/guardian notes are not acceptable for permission to dispense medication. The medication must be in the bottle or container purchased at the store.

- **Self-Administration of Medication:** The law allows students to self-administer asthma medication, certain allergy medication (epinephrine), and diabetes medication. Prerequisites for self-administration of these medications are: (1) signed parent permission; (2) prescription information provided and signed by a doctor; (3) written notification to parents that the school shall not incur liability; and (4) parent sign-off acknowledging the liability waiver. The above information must be obtained each school year.

Money for Student Charges

All school fees will be charged to the parents’/guardians’ online FACTS account. No money should be sent to school.

Parent Cooperation as a Condition of Continued Enrollment

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal/dismissal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

Parent/Teacher Organization (“PTO”)

Communication between the parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators is an integral part of the education process, and our goal is to promote this concept. The Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) meets regularly and has its own by-laws. Meeting dates are posted on the school calendar and website. All parents of school children at St. Thomas are automatically members of the PTO and are encouraged to take part in the activities planned by the organization.

The objectives of this organization are:

- To promote open communication among the parents, teachers, administration, and parishioners;
- To promote good will and cooperation between and among parents, faculty, administration, Education Commission, and the parishes of St. Thomas (Philo), St. Patrick (Tolono), and St. Mary (Pesotum); and
- To strengthen parental involvement in all school programs.

Playground

Every child, unless excused for health reasons, is expected to participate with his/her own class at recess. Students may not leave the assigned area without the permission of the faculty/staff member on duty.

In inclement weather, recess will be held indoors. If snow is on the ground, students are to wear boots or have a change of shoes available. In winter weather, hats, gloves, and scarves are highly recommended. Whenever possible, students will go outside during recess, including if the “feels-like temperature” is 20 degrees or above.

Students are expected to be respectful on the playground. Throwing rocks, sand, mulch, snowballs, or other similar objects is strictly forbidden. Wrestling is not allowed. Hard balls are prohibited at all times.

Phone Calls

Teachers and students will not be called to the phone during school hours unless there is an emergency. Phone messages should be limited only to necessary information.

Use of cell phones during school hours is prohibited. Students will be sent to the school office to make phone calls.

Program of Studies

The program of studies for St. Thomas Catholic School shall include the following:

- Religion
- Language Arts—Reading, Literature, English, Writing, Spelling
- Science
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Physical Education

In addition, either through a separate curriculum or incorporated into one of the basic curriculum areas, the following subjects shall be taught:

- Health/AIDS Education/Alcohol & Drug Abuse
- Technology Instruction
- Fine Arts—Music, Art, and Speech
- Media Literacy/Digital Citizenship
- Foreign Language

Registration Fee

This annual per-student K-8 fee is intended to include costs related to textbooks, workbooks, testing materials, art materials, technology fees, classroom supplies, etc., for the school year. The registration fee should be paid before June 1, prior to the start of the new school year. This fee is nonrefundable.

Each student is responsible for the books/materials assigned to them. Any serious damage or loss must be reported to a teacher immediately. The teacher will report it to the office and an invoice to replace the item will be issued to the parent/guardian, payable immediately. Contact paper or any other kind of sticky paper should not be used to cover books. Students may not mark, draw, or write anything inside the book.

Snacks

Students will have an opportunity to eat a nutritious snack each day in their classroom. Each homeroom teacher will coordinate how snacks are to be provided for his/her students.

Student Records/Confidentiality

Students and their families will be afforded the necessary and expected confidentiality for their student records and all matters involving their academic and social conduct. The following are established guidelines for school records:

- *Right to Inspect:* You have the right to look at your child's permanent record, which includes report cards, health records, accident reports, attendance records, and biographical information.
- *Right to Prevent Disclosure:* The school will not disclose anything to third parties from your child's record unless you consent in writing prior to the disclosure, or the information is part of the Family Address List in which the information has been approved for publication.

Student Safety

Any student injured in the classroom, gym, playground, or other school area must report the injury to his/her teacher or supervisor immediately. The safety of children is ensured by organized drills, posted EXIT/Emergency signs, posted procedures, and the St. Thomas Catholic School Crisis Plan.

Tuition Policy

Enrollment at St. Thomas Catholic School includes a financial obligation for tuition and related expenses. Tuition payments can be paid in full in July, quarterly, or monthly. All tuition and fees are paid online via the parent's/guardian's FACTS account. Tuition and fees are nonrefundable.

Tuition charges are assessed at the beginning of each month, beginning in July and ending in June. With any attendance during a particular month, the tuition for the month will be assessed. Annual fees including, but not limited to, registration fees, hot lunch, milk/juice, athletic fees, etc., are assessed at registration and are nonrefundable.

All tuition and fees must be current at the end of each semester. If a family is unable to pay on time, a parent/guardian must inform the principal or business manager. At the end of each semester, the principal will contact any families with past due amounts. If necessary, a payment plan may be established by the principal. Failure to pay the full amount by June 15, without exemptions made by the pastor, will result in the child's name being removed from the class list for the following year. Re-entry will depend on full payment and available room.

Even with the established tuition, our affiliated parishes subsidize a large portion of Catholic education at St. Thomas Catholic School. This is especially true when families have more than one child in the school. In all cases, the parishes pay more than half the actual cost to educate each child.

It is the policy of St. Thomas Catholic School that parishioners will not be denied access to a Catholic School education based on an inability to pay. Should the payment of tuition cause any family financial hardship, they are to obtain an application for tuition assistance from the school office. A professional service, FACTS, will evaluate a family's ability to pay tuition, and let the pastor know how much the family can afford to pay (the parish never sees the financial records). At the discretion of the pastor and based on available funds, the parish may pay some or all of the balance of tuition. The hardship of tuition should not be the sole cause of not attending St. Thomas Catholic School. Every family is given the opportunity to apply for tuition assistance. Each family is highly encouraged to apply for the Diocese of Peoria's John Lancaster Spalding Scholarship Fund each year. Currently, Empower grants may be written to help pay for tuition.

In order to receive a subsidy from the parish (St. Thomas Philo, St. Mary Pesotum, St. Patrick Tolono, St. Joseph Ivesdale or St. Patrick Urbana) for the cost of child(ren)'s education at St. Thomas School, parents must be registered with their respective parish and be active members in good standing. If a child is a member of any other Catholic parish, parents must receive permission from their pastor to receive a subsidy from their respective parish. If a child's family is non-Catholic, parents are obligated to pay the full tuition amount set by the pastor, unless other arrangements have been made with the pastor.

Visitors

For the safety of all children, all visitors must sign the Visitor's Log at the office upon arrival and sign out upon departure. If it is necessary to take a child home due to illness or family matters, the student must remain in the school office until a parent/guardian arrives to sign out the student. It is also necessary to sign in when a student arrives late or returns to school after an outside appointment.

Volunteers

Diocesan guidelines require that all volunteers wishing to help within the school and/or chaperone field trips complete the required background checks as well as Safe Environment Program and Volunteer Driver trainings found online at www.cmgconnect.org. Paperwork and information on these trainings is available each summer in the Family Packet and may also be obtained by calling the school office.

Water Bottles

Students will have St. Thomas Catholic School water bottles to use throughout the day. Students should bring the empty water bottles to school each Monday. They will have opportunities throughout the day to refill the bottles using the school water fountains. The water bottles will be sent home with students on the last day of the school week for cleaning. If students need to replace their water bottle, a new one may be purchased for \$1 from the school office.

VII. Internet Usage Policy

Making internet access available to students carries with it the potential that some students might encounter information that some have identified as controversial and of potential harm to students. Because information on the internet appears, disappears, and changes, it is not possible to predict or control what information students may access. St. Thomas educators will take an active role in restricting student access to controversial material. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials an industrious user may discover.

The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. In order for a student to enjoy the privilege of internet usage, the student and their parents/guardians must sign and return the St. Thomas Catholic School internet Usage Agreement form provided in the Family Packet each summer. The administration and faculty of St. Thomas reserve the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. **No student is allowed internet access without an adult staff member being present in the room housing the device and supervising the student(s) at all times.** All internet users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of computer and network etiquette and student conduct.

The following guidelines are the minimum taught to St. Thomas students:

- Do not reveal your personal address, phone numbers, or addresses of students or colleagues.
- Be aware that email is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or employ any other inappropriate language.

Unacceptable use of the internet:

- Using the network for any illegal activity including violations of copyright or other laws;
- Using the network in ways that violate school policies and behavior standards;
- Using the network for financial or commercial gain;
- Degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance;
- Invading the privacy of other individuals by accessing and/or vandalizing their computerized data;
- Wasting technology resources, including bandwidth, file space, and printers;
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Using an account by another user, with or without their permission; and
- Posting personal communications without the author's consent.

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, internet, or other networks that are connected. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges

and restitution will be expected.

The Acceptable Use Policy for the Diocese of Peoria is incorporated by reference into this policy. It is set forth in Appendix G for further reference.

Student Private Social Network Accounts

In accordance with state law (105 ILCS 75/15), the school shall not request a student to provide a username, password, or similar information in order to gain access to the student's private account or profile on a social networking site (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat). However, the school may require a student to cooperate in an investigation by sharing the content of their private social network account if the principal determines there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's disciplinary policy. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the school from having unrestricted access to school computers, email addresses given by the school, or anything else owned or operated by the school. The school has the right to regulate its own equipment, monitor internet traffic, block social media sites with a firewall, and the like.

VIII. School Events

The school year at St. Thomas is filled with a number of exciting activities and events. Occasionally, classroom or school needs might require a change or give new direction to a "traditional" event. Many times, events need parental/guardian assistance and participation to ensure that St. Thomas Catholic School and the students benefit from these wide varieties of experiences.

Preschool Parent Information Night: In August, a Preschool Parent Information Night may be held at the school. Parents will have the chance to meet the preschool teachers, pastor, and principal, visit their child's classroom, hear an overview of plans for the school year, learn more about classroom and school policies, and ask any questions they may have. Parents may bring their children's school supplies on this night. **One-on-one meetings between parents and the teacher before the start of school in August may be held in lieu of Preschool Parent Information Night.** Parents will be made aware of such plans each school year.

K-8 Meet-and Greet-Night: Shortly before the start of the school year, a K-8 Parent Information Night may be held at the school. On this night, parents and students can meet the teachers, staff, pastor, and principal. This night may also include an opportunity for students interested in the band program to try out musical instruments and meet the band teacher. Parents and students may "shop" for free donated uniform items. Information on our PTO, Aftercare program, Unit 7 busing arrangements, and more may be available. Parents of students participating in Speech may also have a brief meeting on this night.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher conferences for all students are held in the fall of each school year, and all parents are highly encouraged to attend. Additionally, parents/guardians are encouraged to request meetings with their child's teacher at any time they see fit throughout the year. An afternoon for Parent/Teacher Conferences will be made available

during the second semester of each school year, usually the afternoon of Grandparent's Day; these spring conferences are optional for all parents.

Fall Wiener Roast: This PTO-sponsored event is a time for all school families to come together for an evening of fun. Music, food, and fellowship usually highlight this night.

Book Fairs: This fundraiser gives students and parents/guardians opportunities to purchase a variety of books at the Scholastic Book Company rate. All proceeds go toward replenishing library books and classroom libraries.

Advent and Lenten Prayer Services: During Advent and Lent, weekly prayer services will be prepared by the students. This provides an opportunity for students to learn how to plan and implement a para-liturgy.

Christmas Program: Students will participate in Advent and Christmas activities in the weeks leading up to Christmas Break. A Sunday afternoon Christmas program will likely be held.

Santa Shop: Thanks to generous donations of new and gently-used items and great effort by several volunteers to organize and man the shop, our students are able to shop for Christmas gifts for their immediate family members for bargain-basement prices (most items are \$1 or less). Proceeds from the sales are used to help fund events for our students, such as the school-wide field trip during Catholic Schools Week and a pizza party for our preschoolers.

Pancake and Sausage Breakfast: Junior-high students hold a bake sale and raffle during this St. Thomas Parish-sponsored breakfast, which is held in the school. Parents are asked to volunteer and assist the students in preparing for this event and during the event itself.

Catholic Schools Week: This is held the last week of January or first week of February and is a time to celebrate our faith and Catholic School identity. Many special events, including a Meet-and-Greet for prospective families, a family social event, and student-led Masses to kick off the week may be planned for that week. A school-wide field trip for K-8 students is often the highlight of the week.

Sports Awards Ceremony: One evening in April or May students are recognized for their participation and accomplishments in the St. Thomas School Athletics Program (IESA-based).

Grandparent's Day: Each spring our students honor their grandparents or a close family friend by inviting them to share a special morning with us at school. The day usually includes classroom visits, Mass, and refreshments.

May Crowning: May Crowning is held the first Friday of May. The 8th-and 2nd-grade students prepare the Mass for May Crowning. All students are asked to bring a fresh-cut flower with them to church that morning. Coffee and donuts in the school may follow Mass.

Kindergarten Visit Day: A special visit day may be scheduled during April or May for incoming kindergarten students and their parents. Parents/guardians will have an opportunity to visit the kindergarten classroom, meet the teacher, and get to know more about St. Thomas Catholic School. The incoming kindergarten students will spend the morning in the

kindergarten classroom, getting to know the teacher and some of what awaits them as a kindergarten student. Parents will spend some time with the principal and pastor to learn more about our school and what to expect for the coming school year.

8th Grade Banquet: This banquet is organized by the junior high teachers and hosted by 6th- and 7th-grade students and their parents/guardians to honor the eighth-grade students and their parents/guardians. St. Thomas School administrators, teachers, staff members, and Education Commission members are also invited to attend.

8th Grade Field Trip: Each spring, 8th-grade students go on a field trip to St. Louis, Chicago, or Indianapolis. The students help choose the location. Eighth-grade parents/guardians are also invited to attend. The cost of the trip is covered by the students with money earned throughout the year (e.g., raffle during Pancake & Sausage and monthly Donut Days). If necessary, 8th-grade parents/guardians may be asked to contribute toward costs. Any remaining class money is given to the school as a gift from the graduating class.

8th Grade Graduation: The Graduation Mass will take place at St. Thomas Church no sooner than five school days prior to the last scheduled day of school for the year. It is traditionally scheduled for the evening of the last Thursday of school for the 8th graders. The graduating 8th graders take active roles in the Mass.

Funeral Honor Guard: As a way to show respect and honor our parish community members, some St. Thomas School students may be asked to participate as a Funeral Honor Guard member for funerals held at St. Thomas Church on a school day during the school year. These students wear their Mass attire and stand silently and respectfully at the edge of the church's entrance as funeral attendees enter the church for the funeral. Participation is voluntary.

Work Day: In addition to participating in regular maintenance throughout the year, parents/guardians may be asked to give a few hours of their time on days designated to help clean the school and make minor repairs.

IX. School Employee Code of Professional Conduct Pursuant to Illinois's Faith's Law

The Diocese of Peoria adopts this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. Each of the provisions below is contained in existing policies and rules of the Diocese of Peoria, but are restated as a Code of Conduct for School Employees to comply with the law. Each school is required pursuant to Faith's Law to post this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees on the school's website and to publish this document in the school's parent/family/student handbook, if the school has one.

I. Educator Code of Conduct

Pursuant to recent Illinois law, the Diocese adopts the relevant portions of the Illinois Educator Code of Conduct, as follows, which applies to school employees who are certified or working toward certification or whose certification has been waived: Principle 1: Responsibility to Students. Educators are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the

inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society. Principle 2: Responsibility to Self. Educators are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment. Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession. Educators are committed to collaborating with school and Diocesan colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators. Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families. Educators are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and families striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families. Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE. Educators are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to Catholic schools, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable to Catholic schools, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators, as applicable to Catholic schools. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with the state and federal codes, laws, and regulations that apply to Catholic schools. Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. The Catholic Diocese of Peoria and its associated schools have no tolerance for any unprofessional conduct. II. Sexual misconduct The Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment, prohibits sexual abuse of minors by its employees, clergy members, and volunteers. Pursuant to Faith's Law, the Diocese has amended its Norms to add additional description of acts constituting sexual abuse of a minor: I. Sexual misconduct, defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic

nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 1020676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5)). II. Grooming behavior, defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child. III. Expectations of School Employees School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact. 1. Employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and/or inappropriate between an employee and student. 2. Employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee's privately owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained the prior permission of the Principal to do so. 3. Employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices that would be construed as inappropriate. 4. Employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship in all interactions, both in and out of school. IV. School employees are mandated reporters The Diocese restates here the Diocese's requirement that its employees, including employees who work at diocesan elementary schools and high schools, shall report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-800- 25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected. V. Employee training related to child abuse and educator ethics The Diocese requires its employees be trained annually in their obligations as mandated reporters and every three years to be trained in preventing, detecting and responding properly to sexual harassment. The trainings are entitled DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and the State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training. Those requirements are set forth in the Diocese's Employee Handbook and in the Diocese's Safe Environment Requirements for Clergy, Adult/Teen Employees and Volunteers whose role involves direct contact with minors. The Diocese will require its school employee educators to receive training in educator ethics. When those resources are completed, they will be shared with educators. Effective 7/1/2023

Appendix A

Harassment Policy

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on C Personnel

Click on C-401 Harassment Policy Diocese of Peoria

Appendix B

Possession or Use of Weapons or Look-Alike Weapons in School

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on D Students

Click on D-150 Possession or Use of Weapons or Look-Alike Weapons in School

Appendix C

Policies and Procedures Relating to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons, or by Lay Employees or Volunteers

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on C Personnel

Click on C-402 Policies and Procedures Relating to Allegations...Employees or Volunteers

Appendix D

Safe Environment Program

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Forms tab

Click on All Documents and Forms

Click on Safe Environment Program

Appendix E

Roles and Expectations of Chaperones

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on C Personnel

Click on C-122 Roles Expectations of Chaperones

Appendix F

Student Wellness Plan

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on D Students

Click on D-151

Appendix G

Acceptable Use Policy

Please refer to:

www.cdop.org

Click on Catholic Education tab

Click on School Policies

Click on E Instruction

Click on E-165 Acceptable Use Policy