



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT GUIDE
TO DAILY PROCEDURES

St. Thomas the Apostle School
1331 N. Main Street
Elkhart, IN 46514
574-264-4855

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CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

1331 North Main St.

Elkhart, IN 46514

Phone: 574-264-4855

Fax: 574-262-8477

Web site: www.stselkhart.com

Aftercare: 574-361-4848

DAILY SCHEDULES

Business Office Hours

7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday During the school day

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday – Friday During the summer

School Day

7:00 a.m. Doors open: Students assemble in the cafeteria area, by grade level

7:55 a.m. Morning prayer in the cafeteria

8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in the classrooms

8:05 a.m. Tardy bell, classes begin

8:15 a.m. School Mass begins: please refer to the school calendar for school Mass dates

3:10 p.m. Afternoon prayer and announcements

3:15 p.m. Dismissal

3:25 p.m. Students must leave the building and/or premises or report to the Aftercare School Program

DISMISSAL GUIDELINES - School is regularly dismissed at **3:15 p.m.** ALL STUDENTS MUST LEAVE THE BUILDING PROMPTLY AND **NO LATER THAN 3:20 p.m.** Students who do not leave the building must report to the Aftercare School Program promptly at **3:20 p.m.** St. Thomas the Apostle School will not be responsible for any supervision outside the school grounds after this time. This rule applies to all after-school practices and activities as well. **Students are not to be in the building unless under the supervision of a teacher or sponsoring adult.** If an activity starts later than **3:20 p.m.**, participating students must report to

Aftercare until sponsor/adult(s) come and retrieve the participants from Aftercare. Participants will be charged the usual Aftercare fee.

VISION - Through diverse and challenging learning experiences, St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School students will develop foundational skills bridging faith and education while serving God and others.

BELIEFS - **We believe** that through the collaborative efforts of school staff, religious leaders, students, parents and community stakeholders, St. Thomas students will achieve faith foundations and academic excellence by understanding:

- That the purpose of Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School is to communicate Christ to students so that their attitudes toward others will be that of Christ;
- That the **whole child** is to be educated;
- That all children registered at St. Thomas the Apostle School will be provided an opportunity for educational growth to the optimum degree of their potential;
- That the school shares with the home, the Church, and the community the responsibility to maintain this environment;
- That to these ends, the school should develop in children the knowledge, skills, habits, understandings, attitudes, and character traits essential for a rich personal faith life- *"I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly!"*
- That the school should assist students to discover, in the light of their faith, their special vocation to live responsibly in a community with others, to share their personal lives with God, and to achieve responsible, contributing citizenship;
- That no one should be excluded from St. Thomas the Apostle School on the basis of race, ethnic background, or economic status;
- That school staff will provide a challenging, rigorous academic experience for diverse learners.

MISSION - To provide students with the opportunity to develop their God-given talents through academic excellence and co-curricular programs as well as to empower them to develop a zeal for their faith with a commitment to prayer and service.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

1. Students will engage in reading activities that teach strategies for improved understanding of non-fictional/informal text and apply those skills to every day learning.
2. Students will engage in activities that promote the mastery of basic math facts/skills and apply them to every day problem solving.
3. Students will engage in activities that promote Christ, compassion and character and relate those activities to their daily lives and interactions within the family unit and the school setting.
4. The staff at St. Thomas the Apostle School will engage in training sessions throughout the school year learning to best utilize the NWEA testing program as a means of identifying students strengths and weaknesses with the goal of improving instructional opportunities to meet the needs of individual students.

PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION - At St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, we consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life, mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Your choice of St. Thomas the Apostle School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with St. Thomas the Apostle School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (preschool through eighth grade), your child needs constant support from parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical attributes. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the efforts of their educational partners in the quest of challenging, yet nurturing, the student to reach his/her full potential. It is vital that parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you, as a parent, must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teacher will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause students to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs to have adults who offer understanding, guidance, and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. The boundaries and limits provided through discipline give your child both guidance and security.

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

Let us work together throughout the school year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to reach his/her potential and in developing the qualities necessary for your child to face the demands of life, while serving God and others, in an ever-changing society.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS - As partners in the educational process at St. Thomas the Apostle School, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times and limits so that your child is dressed according to the school uniform/dress code,
- Arrives at school by 7:55 am and is picked up on time at the end of the day,
- Has a nutritional lunch each day,
- Completes assignments on time, and
- Gets to bed early on school nights.
- To actively participate in school activities such as parent/teacher conferences.
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student.
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy.
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly.
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education.
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policies of the school.
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP - In order to foster an environment which promotes the optimum educational and spiritual development of the student, every parent/guardian of each student is expected to act as a cooperative partner with the Diocese and School and comply with all policies and rules which are established by the Diocese or School.

The school retains the right to rescind approval for the enrollment of any student if it determines that there is a lack of

cooperation on the part of the student's parent/guardian and, as a result, the withdrawal of the student would be in the best interest of the student, the school, other students attending the school or the fulfillment of the school's mission.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL DELAYS AND CLOSINGS - St. Thomas the Apostle School will use the emergency notification phone system to relay information about school delays and closings. Delays and closings will also be posted on WNDU and WSBT TV stations which also offer free weather apps for your phone. We DO NOT follow the Elkhart Community School Corporation. The doors will open at 9:00 am on 2-hour delay days and school will begin at 10:05 am.

LUNCH PROGRAM - A lunch service is provided for a fee paid by participating school families. Participation in this program is optional, and students are welcome to bring their lunch to school from home. Menus provided by the school are subject to change without notice and beyond the discretion or control of STS. Lunches need to be ordered through **boonli.com**.

LUNCH POLICIES – Students are not permitted to leave the school property to buy lunch. A forgotten lunch may be dropped off at the office. A parent may, on occasion, have lunch with their child.

MILK PROGRAM- Milk is included in the price of ordered lunch. Supplemental milk is also available in the ala carte line.

RECESS - STS students participate in an outside recess each day (weather permitting). Students are expected to have appropriate outerwear that meets the demands of the weather each day.

When the wind chill is below 20 degrees or the outside play surface is unsafe (ice covered) for children to play, students will have an inside recess. At grades K-5, the classroom teacher establishes rules for inside recess activities. At grades 6-8, students return to their classrooms and are given time to socialize.

EMERGENCY CARDS - Each child in grades Preschool through 8 must have an up-to-date emergency card on file in the office. These are distributed at the beginning of the school year. If any changes in the information occur during the school year, parents should notify the school immediately.

ATTENDANCE

TARDY PROCEDURE - Each student enrolled at St. Thomas the Apostle School is expected to arrive at school on time and on a regular basis in consideration of the academic pursuits of all students. Any student arriving in the classroom after 8:05 a.m. is considered tardy. Students who are tardy are required to report to the school office for a tardy admit pass to class. During each quarter, a student may be tardy two (2) times with no consequence. Upon the third tardy, and for each subsequent tardy, the student will be assigned an after school detention from **3:20 – 4:15 p.m.** Parents of a student accumulating (5) tardies in any quarter will be contacted by the school principal to discuss attendance concerns. Tardiness for doctor appointments scheduled early in the morning will not count toward the accumulated tardy totals if the student has a note from the doctor's office. No tardies will be assessed on days that the administration determines to be "bad weather" days.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE - A parent/guardian shall contact the school to report a student's absence. **Absences will not be excused and the student may be considered truant if the procedure for reporting an absence is not followed. Absences must be called in before 9:00 am.** A written explanation signed by a custodial parent/guardian is required for any absence upon the return of the student to school. The school is not required to provide credit for makeup of assigned work missed because the student's absence is unexcused or the student is truant.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Illness of the student with written statement by parent/guardian or doctor.
- Funerals -For death in the immediate family or

for persons outside of the immediate family with parental permission.

- Medical and legal appointments – Such appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.
- Out-of-school suspension (Make-up work is NOT accepted.)
- School visits – Eighth grade students may visit Marian High School for 1 school day. Visits to other high schools are unexcused absences.
- Prearranged activity approved by the principal.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- No parent contact with the school giving an explanation for the absence on the day of the absence.
- No physician's note to excuse an absence once more than 5 days of absence has occurred (see Frequent or Prolonged illness below).
- Family Vacations. (See procedure on p. 11)
- Absences other than those defined as excused.
- A determination shall be made by the classroom teacher and principal regarding make up work for an unexcused absence.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR AN EXCUSED ABSENCE - It is important that students and parents understand that the classroom instruction that occurred during a school absence cannot be replicated for the absent student upon his/her return to school. When a student misses school for an excused absence, assigned school work, tests, and quizzes may be completed with no loss of credit. The make-up work must be completed within a prescribed period. A student is allowed one day, following the return to school, for each absence date (up to 5 days) to complete the make-up work.

A single day's absence example: The student is absent on Tuesday and returns to school on Wednesday. The student would have Thursday (the day after returning to school) to complete the work. The work is due on Friday.

A multiple day's absence example: If a student is absent for two school days, the student has two days after returning to school to complete the make-up work. The student who is absent Friday and Monday, then returns to school on Tuesday would have Wednesday and Thursday to complete the work. The work is due on Friday.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Example: 1 day absence		Absent	Return to school	Complete Make up homework	Turn in make up homework
Example: 2 day absence					Absent
	Absent	Return to school	Complete make-up homework	Complete make up homework	Turn in make up homework

- In Kindergarten through Grade 5, the teacher provides and directs the make-up work that is required.
- At the middle school level, the student is responsible for obtaining make-up work upon his/her return to school following an excused absence. The student planner becomes the tool for guiding make-up work. Each middle school teacher works with his/her class and provides direction for planner entries. If a parent requests make-up work, a copy of a student's planner will be provided. Upon return to school, the student still has the responsibility to check with each teacher regarding his/her make-up work. Parent questions about make-up work related to a specific absence may be emailed to the teacher(s).
- Students must also check with the specialty teacher of the class they missed to gather any information regarding assignment work or upcoming tests and/or quizzes so as to be prepared for the next specialty class with this teacher.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENT - No one is permitted to leave the school premises during school hours without written permission from a parent or guardian. If a child needs to leave school during the day

for any reason, a note MUST be written by the parent and turned into the office before the student leaves. Those students leaving the building for appointments during the school hours are to be picked up in the school office. If an emergency should arise, permission must be obtained at the office and the student will be summoned. Parents must enter the school and sign the student out. Students returning from or entering school from an appointment should have a note from the doctor or dentist.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ELIGIBILITY UPON SCHOOL ABSENCE

- Students who are absent from school for a full day are NOT permitted to participate in any school-related extra-curricular activities on the day of the absence. This policy applies to both excused and unexcused absences. Final decisions on special situations are at the discretion of the principal.

FAMILY VACATION ABSENCE - School vacation days are scheduled in an effort to provide family time without any absences. Use of regular school days to take family trips is strongly discouraged. Parents should consider that the State of Indiana does monitor attendance at each school. Absenteeism can affect our school's standing.

We recognize, however, that on certain occasions the dates of family trips may be out of control of the parents or that family travel may itself be educational in nature. In any event, all absences during regular school hours due to family trips are considered unexcused absences.

When students are absent from school for family vacations, a vacation absence form is to be completed by the parent.

Pursuant to Diocesan Policy 4040, certain school absences are determined to be unexcused absences. School absence related to family vacations is one of the school absences determined to be an unexcused absence. St. Thomas the Apostle School has established the following policy related to the student absence for family vacations:

- When a student is absent from school due to an unexcused (family vacation) absence, the parent is to complete the Family

Vacation Absence form found in the Student/Parent Handbook at least one week prior to leaving.

- Student(s) will be given their work upon return to school. The work is due two days after assigned. Tests/quizzes are to be taken two days after returning to school.

VACATION ABSENCE FORM

My child, *(student name)* _____,

Grade _____

Will be absent from school for a family vacation from
_____ to
_____.

- I recognize that this absence from school is an unexcused absence as defined by Indiana statute and Diocesan Policy.
- I understand that the classroom teacher is unable to replicate the instructional experiences that are missed during my child's absence.
- I understand that the make-up work that may be required to be completed accounts only for the practical application of skills taught during my child's absence.
- I understand that make-up work will be provided following the guidelines listed above.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

TRUANCY - A student is truant when s/he is absent from school or class without the permission of his/her parent or guardian and the school. Students who are habitually truant shall be reported to the juvenile authorities in accordance with applicable state law and following diocesan procedure.

HABITUAL TRUANCY may be evidenced by the following:

- Refusal to attend school in defiance of parental authority.
- Accumulating a number of absences from school without justification over a period of time, such as a grading period. Habitual truancy is not evidenced by a single isolated incident of unexcused absence.
- A case of habitual truancy will be reported to law enforcement.

FREQUENT OR PROLONGED ILLNESS - If a student is absent for five consecutive days due to illness or has contracted a contagious disease, a physician's statement is required in order for the student to return to school.

RESPONSE TO IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE - If an irregular attendance pattern begins to develop, the school may use the following procedure to encourage the student's return to a pattern of regular school attendance.

A daily telephone call from school (secretary, principal, or attendance clerk) to parent/guardian to verify absence and to determine reason.

- After a student is absent 6 days per school year, a school administrator, attendance clerk, or counselor will make contact with the student's parent/guardian. The date and content of this contact shall be documented.
- After a student is absent over 12 days per school year, a conference shall be held with the parent/guardian and the student. An attendance contract may be established at this time and documentation shall be kept.
- After a student is absent over 15 days per school year, a referral shall be made to the principal. If the principal is unable to fully

resolve the attendance problem, a referral may be made to the intake officer of the local Juvenile Probation Department.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES - EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Students are expected to practice reasonable preventive measures, such as frequent hand-washing and covering of the mouth and nose when sneezing. **After being ill, students should not return to school until they have been fever-free or symptom-free for 24 hours.**

St. Thomas the Apostle School makes every effort to protect the confidentiality of students, which includes their medical and/or health conditions. The school administration will only publicly disclose that information which is required under the Health Department's authority for purposes of preventing an outbreak, such as meningitis or pandemic influenza.

All communicable diseases contracted by a student should be reported to the office immediately. Information on most communicable or infectious diseases can be found on the Indiana State Department of Health website, www.IN.GOV/ISDH.

The following regulations are set down by the Indiana State Department of Health and/or the Elkhart County Health Department and are followed by the school administration:

- Students are excluded from classes for the following diseases and cannot be readmitted without written approval of the Elkhart County Health Department:
 - Diphtheria*
 - Meningitis*
 - Smallpox*
 - Tuberculosis*
 - Whooping Cough*
- Students are excluded from classes for the following diseases/conditions and can be readmitted by approval of the school administration after the time indicated:
 - Chickenpox*- 10 days from onset, all lesions have crusted
 - Pink eye*- after 24 hours of topical antibiotic therapy have passed
 - German measles*- 7 days from onset of rash

-*Impetigo*- after 24 hours of systemic antibiotic therapy have passed and all sores have crusted over
-*Measles*- when recovered, but not less than four (4) days from date of onset of rash
-*Mumps*- 9 days from onset of swelling
-*Ringworm*- when under medical treatment
-*Streptococcal Infections, including Strep Throat and/or Scarlet Fever*- after 24 hours of systemic antibiotic therapy have passed, or with release from physician
-*Head lice (pediculosis)* - after comprehensive hair treatment has been completed, all nits are removed, and the student has been NIT-FREE FOR A MINIMUM PERIOD OF 24 HOURS.

NOTE ON HEAD LICE - Head lice infestation is highly-contagious and difficult to eradicate. The school administration will follow the directives of the Diocesan nurse's office in complying with all requirements for the management of lice. The school's written procedure to manage head lice infestation is available in the nurse's office. Any student found to have nits present on his/her scalp or hair shall be immediately separated from the student body, and the parents will be contacted to retrieve their child. The directives and procedures include the understanding that a student shall not return to the school environment until the student has been nit-free for a period of 24 hours, and that select school personnel will inspect the student upon his/her return to school for the presence of lice. The cooperation of all STS families upholding these policies is vital to the continued health maintenance of the students, staff, and administration at our school.

UNDIAGNOSED INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND/OR RASHES - If a student should be sent to school with any undiagnosed infectious disease, open lesion, or rash, the parent/guardian of the student shall be called to the school to take the student home. The student cannot return to school until the parent/guardian can provide a doctor's note to the school administration. The note should include the diagnosis of the infectious disease, open lesion, or rash and the treatment of

care. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide any necessary equipment for the treatment of care and, possibly, be responsible to come to the school to execute the treatment of care.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Indiana state law states that no child will be permitted to attend school beyond the first day of classes without furnishing to the school their current immunization records. Upon enrolling in the school, students in grades K through 8 MUST present an immunization form signed by the doctor on or before the entrance day. These forms are available in the office. All students entering grade 6 must have proof of MMR on the first day of school. The Indiana State Department of Health recommends boosters for all students who have received their basic series before four (4) years of age.

INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: School Entry Immunization Requirements

As found on the Indiana State Department of Health website, www.IN.GOV/ISDH, the chart below describes the number of doses and each vaccine required for 2017 – 2018 school entry.

VACCINE TYPE	Preschool Pre K	K-2 nd grade	3rd-5th grade	6th-8 th grade
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)	4	5	5	5
IVP/OVP (polio)	3	4	4	4
MMR	1	2	2	2
Hepatitis B	3	3	3	3
Varicella	1	2	2	2
MCV (Meningococcal)				1
Tdap (Pertussis)				1
Hepatitis A		2		2

Additional immunizations are recommended by the CDC for your child's safety but are not currently required for school entry.

INJURY OR ILLNESS WHILE AT SCHOOL

INJURY- Any type of accident which occurs on school premises will be reported to the office as soon as possible.

When the accident is of a minor nature (slight cut, scrape, bruise), the student's injury will be treated in the classroom or nurse's office so that the student may return to his/her normal activity.

If the accident is of a serious nature (one which may require more extensive professional care), the school will make the student comfortable and immediately contact the parent. If a parent is unable to be contacted, the school will contact the emergency number provided to the school by the parent on the student's emergency card. If no one can be contacted, EMS may be called at the discretion of the administration.

In the event of extreme injury or emergency, the administration will call EMS immediately before attempting to contact the parents or guardian.

ILLNESS- If a student becomes ill while at school (headache, cramps, upset stomach), the school will follow the same procedure as outlined above in "INJURY". If the student displays a measurable fever, the parent will immediately be contacted to retrieve their child.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE - Non-prescription medication administered at school must be sent to school in its original container and must be accompanied by the St. Thomas, **Administration of Medication Form***, from the parent.

Prescription medication administered at school must be sent to school in its original container and must be accompanied by a written note from the doctor. All medication shall be kept in the school nurse's office.

*A printable form is available on the STS website: www.stselkhart.com .

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH FOOD OR OTHER ALLERGIES

The administration and staff of St. Thomas the Apostle School recognize the emergent nature of some medical allergies existing in their student body. Full and broad disclosure of these potentialities is paramount to effective management of incidents.

Parents of students who have food or other severe allergies must report in detail the allergen(s) and the physician-prescribed treatment(s) both to their student's teacher(s) and to the school office. Any medication, including Epi-pens and inhalers, must be kept in the nurse's office unless other arrangements are made through the administration. A Written Consent for Administration Form and Written Order for Medication Form must be completed and submitted to the school office.

In addition to procedures to treat emergent allergic reactions, STS recognizes the importance of preventing these reactions as reasonably capable. Parents of students with allergies are encouraged to discuss with their student's teachers and the administration strategies for addressing school lunches, classroom snacks, and birthday and other treats provided throughout the school year. The staff and administration wish to work with the parents of these students in a cooperative way, so as to provide as safe and yet fluid an environment as possible within the confines of the communal setting.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS -St. Thomas the Apostle School shall provide Before and After School Care Programs located on the school premises. The Before School Care and After School Care Programs will be offered at times determined by the school administration. A fee, determined by the school administration, will be charged to parents of students participating in the Aftercare Program.

BEFORE CARE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Before Care Program will be offered from **7:00 – 7:50 a.m.** at no charge to school families and is located in the North gym, separated by grade level.

- Designated staff will provide supervision for the students as they arrive at school. Students must go to the cafeteria gym. No classroom entrance is permitted.
- The Before Care Program arranges the students by class as the Before Care facility becomes populated but allows for free-play within the designated areas.
- No snacks are provided.
- At approximately **7:55 a.m.**, the students participate in prayer with their teachers. The students are then escorted to their classrooms, where they begin their day.

AFTERCARE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Mission of Our Program- The mission of the Aftercare Program is to provide a safe and enjoyable experience after school, while nurturing the spiritual, academic, and social growth of our students.

Admission Requirements - The program is open to all PS – 8 grade students of St. Thomas the Apostle School.

- Each enrolling family must complete a registration form prior to the first time their children attend the Aftercare Program.
- The program will use the emergency contact information provided by the parent or guardian on the Aftercare registration form in the event of an emergency.
- Every family must provide a list of authorized persons who will be allowed to retrieve the student(s). No exceptions will be made to this list, except by express direction of the parent or legal guardian.
- If a parent wishes a student to be released from Aftercare to someone other than the parent, the parent is required to provide authorization. The authorization may be written or by telephone call. The call may be made to the school office during school hours or directly

to the Aftercare Supervisor after school hours at (574)361-4848.

Hours of Operation - The program will begin at **3:15 p.m.** and conclude at **6:00 p.m.** All students will proceed to or be escorted to the designated Aftercare Program facilities at the end of the school day.

- Students are expected to remain under the supervision of the Aftercare staff until they are signed out by a parent, guardian, or authorized responsible adult.
- Students who are signed into Aftercare are charged for a minimum of 15 minutes.
- Parents or authorized adults shall use the Main St. doorbell to gain access to the Aftercare areas. He/she shall sign the Aftercare attendance log book, acknowledging the time of pick-up, gather the student(s), and promptly leave the facility.
- Students who participate in extracurricular activities which begin later than **3:15 p.m.** MUST remain in the Aftercare program until the adult responsible for the activity (i.e. coach, leader) signs the student out of the Aftercare attendance log. This adult must have been previously identified in writing by parents as authorized to accept responsibility for the student to attend the practice or activity.
- Students will not be allowed to leave Aftercare to attend or participate in an activity without following school guidelines.

Fees Assessed -

- The cost to participate in the Aftercare Program is \$4.00 PER HOUR PER STUDENT. Weekly statements will be sent home for payment using the white envelope system or by email. Payment is due upon receipt of invoice.
- ADDITIONAL FEES will be charged for parents who are late picking up their children, at the rate of \$5.00 PER CHILD FOR EVERY 15 MINUTES PAST 6:00p.m.

Location - The After Care Program is located in the north gym and the south playground facilities. Homework rooms utilize the school classrooms surrounding the north gym area.

General Schedule - Though the After Care staff attempts to adhere to a basic schedule, many variables exist which can create some changes from day to day in the timing of After Care events.

A general schedule is as follows:

3:15 – 3:30 p.m.	attendance check-in
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	activities and playtime, gr. K-3
3:15 - 4:15 p.m.	homework and quiet activities, gr.4-8
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.	snack time
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	playtime and/or crafts

Snacks - A small snack and drink is provided to each student. Students who have food allergies are encouraged to pack a light snack for themselves, as the snack assortment for the Aftercare Program is limited.

Homework Policy - The staff will provide a reasonably quiet area to do homework, but the students are expected to willingly cooperate. The Aftercare staff will provide supervision but should not be expected to act as a tutor or to accurately judge the quality or quantity of completed work.

- Students in grades 4-8 are required to work independently toward completion of their homework, study for tests, or read while in designated homework rooms.
- Students in grades K-3 are encouraged to complete their homework, study for tests, or read after snack time.
- Students are not entitled to access classroom areas to retrieve forgotten materials once they enter the Aftercare Program.

Physical Activities - During warmer weather months, students will have the opportunity to play outside under the supervision of the Aftercare staff. The program will follow the school's policy for when to stay indoors, mainly due to inclement weather. Normal playground and recess rules apply to physical recreation during Aftercare.

Discipline Policies - The Aftercare Program requires the same standard of behavior from its participants as is customary within the school day setting. All school rules apply while in Aftercare.

- Inappropriate and/or problematic behaviors will be documented and addressed. The Aftercare staff will work in accordance with the principal in handling serious disciplinary concerns.
- Students may be removed from the program for any offense deemed contradictory to its mission or compromising the safety of its other participants

Emergency Procedures - The After Care Program will follow the St. Thomas the Apostle School Emergency Handbook and procedures during times of emergency. Communication during emergencies will be conducted using the telephone numbers provided to the Program on the student's After Care registration form.

UNIFORM DRESS CODE:

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN ALL GRADES

St. Thomas the Apostle School requires that students follow a specific Uniform Dress Code. Compliance to the Uniform Dress Code is a condition of enrollment at St. Thomas the Apostle School. The school uniform is utilitarian and basic. As a Catholic school, St. Thomas promotes modesty in dress and appearance. All school clothing is to be clean and free of holes, frays, tears, or tatters. School clothing is to be gender appropriate.

SOURCES OF APPROPRIATE SCHOOL CLOTHING

School uniform apparel may be purchased from the following merchants. Each of these options provides uniforms that meet the St. Thomas color requirements.

- French Toast Uniform Company (Kohl's and J.C.Penney's)
- Land's End
- Sports Imaging Apparel

SPARTAN CORNER

St. Thomas the Apostle School also hosts the Spartan Corner. The Spartan Corner hosts the uniform exchange where gently used uniforms are available to interested families.

STS Boys K-5		
Shirt, Polo	Maroon	Short or Long Sleeved
Pants/Shorts	Khaki	Loose fitting
Sweater	Gray	V-neck or crew(Boys only)
Fleece	Maroon/Gray	May be worn over uniform shirt

STS Girls K-5		
Shirt, Polo	Maroon	Short or Long Sleeved worn with khaki shorts or pants
*Shirt	Heather Gray	May be worn with plaid jumper, skirt or skort
Pants/Shorts	Khaki	Loose fitting
*Skirt/Skort/ Jumper	Burgundy/Gray Plaid – Land's End	Appropriate length
Sweater	Heather Gray	Cardigan (Girls only)
Fleece	Maroon/Gray	May be worn over uniform shirt

STS Boys 6-8		
Shirt, Polo	Black	Short or Long Sleeved
Pants/Shorts	Khaki	Loose fitting
Sweater	Gray	V-neck or crew(Boys only)
Fleece	Maroon/Black/Gray	May be worn over uniform shirt

STS Girls 6-8		
Shirt, Polo	Black	Short or Long Sleeved worn with khaki shorts or pants
*Shirt	Heather Gray	May be worn with plaid jumper, skirt or skort
Pants/Shorts	Khaki	Loose fitting
*Skirt/Skort	Burgundy/Gray Plaid	Appropriate length
Sweater	Heather Gray	Cardigan (Girls only)
Fleece	Maroon/Black/Gray	May be worn over uniform shirt

Belt Gr. 4-8	Solid, Plain leather belt. No woven, cloth or braided belt
Socks	Solid white, black, gray, or brown. Crew, knee high, athletic style socks and tights are acceptable. Leggings and thigh high stockings are not appropriate for school. Socks must be visible above the top of the shoe. A small logo may be visible but must be the colors listed.
Shoes	Black, brown, white, or gray Plain leather dress shoes (low heels) or athletic shoes with laces. Shoes are to compliment the uniform not detract from it. No sandals, clogs, crocs, moccasins, or boots are permitted. No prints or patterns. Shoe jewelry, frayed shoes, shoes with wheels or flashing lights are not allowed.
Hair	Hair should be well groomed each day. Fads, extreme styles, unnatural colors, tails, corn-rows or beads/ornamentals braided into the hair, or designs shaved into the hair are not permitted. No hats or caps are to be worn inside the school building. Boys – Sides should be no longer than the top of the ear and the back cut so that no hair falls onto the shirt collar. Bangs shall fall above the eyebrow. Girls – Bangs must either cut above the eyebrow or pulled back so that they do not cover any part of the eyes. Hair adornments must be limited to maroon, black, white, gray, brown, or the burgundy/gray plaid.
Jewelry	Watch, ring, and a cross or medal on a metal chain are acceptable choices of jewelry. Boys – no earrings Girls – Small earrings (no dangles or hoops) are permitted.
Make-up	No make-up is permissible for students in K-8. Colored nail polish and artificial nails are not permitted for students in grades K-8. Girls in grades 6-8 are permitted to wear clear lip gloss and clear nail polish. No French manicures.
Contact Lenses	Special effect contact lenses, including halogen lenses, are not appropriate for school.
Logo's	Optional The "STS" logo may be on the left sleeve of the uniform shirt. The St. Thomas "crest" may be placed on the left chest on any top.

Gym Wear	<p>Shirts - Gray – Available through St. Thomas</p> <p>Shorts - Maroon – Available through St. Thomas</p> <p>Sweatpants/Sweatshirts - Grades K-2 only – Maroon or gray</p> <p>Shoes – Athletic shoes only, non-marking soles, Velcro or tie. Athletic shoes will be left at school throughout the academic year. No color restrictions.</p>
	<p>All gym clothing must have student's identification. Students in K-2 will wear their gym uniform to school. All other students will change at STS for their gym class.</p>

Casual Day – (Formerly known as Jeans Day)	
<p>Jeans may be worn and must follow the same style guidelines as the uniform pants. Jeans must be loose fitting. No skinny jeans, capris, cargo-style or jeggings are permitted.</p> <p>Athletic pants may be worn. They must be loose fitting. Tight fitting workout wear is not allowed.</p> <p>Tops for casual day include uniform polos, spirit wear, Catholic schools week shirts, Artsonia shirts, scouting tops or vestments, or any STS athletic tam jerseys with sleeves.</p> <p><i>Athletic shorts or jeans shorts (appropriate length for both) may be worn during short season.</i></p>	

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS - Following the Uniform Dress Code is a condition of enrollment at St. Thomas the Apostle School. Violations of the dress code are treated as willful acts of disobedience.

The following steps are included in the dress code violations procedure:

1st Offense – Infraction discussed with student/ Phone call home to parent.

2nd Offense – Infraction discussed with student/Written documentation/form sent home for parental acknowledgment.

3rd Offense – Infraction was discussed with student/Written documentation/form sent home for parental acknowledgment.

4th Offense - Administrative Intervention: Student may meet with principal & parent. *Consequences may be Issued.*

At the beginning of each quarter, the student starts with a clean slate.

The school administration and teaching staff have the final determination as to the appropriateness of clothing and/or other regulations listed under the Uniform Dress Code. If necessary, parents may be called to bring in appropriate clothing.

STUDENTS - ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

ACADEMIC PROGRAM - The Academic Program of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School is based on the belief that each student should be encouraged to reach the highest potential he or she can attain in mastering the basic skills of an elementary education. These skills are taught with the understanding that all aspects of life and learning are permeated with the principles of Christianity.

The curriculum is in accordance with State and Diocesan regulations. The curriculum includes instruction in Religion, Mathematics, Reading, English, Social Studies, Science, Spanish and Health. All K-8 students also experience Music, Art, Physical Education, and Computer Applications as specialty area classes.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION PROGRAMS/HONOR ROLLS - The school recognizes academic achievement by individuals. This recognition takes different forms, depending on the grade level of the student. An Awards Program is held at the end of the school year for grade levels using GPA. Students achieving Honor Roll status are recognized in the STS News each Quarter.

Honor Rolls – Students in grades 5-8 are recognized for the students' demonstration of excellence throughout the school curriculum and school experience.

The following restrictions apply and eliminate a student from the honor roll during the quarter under consideration:

- * Receipt of an "F" grade in any subject
- * Receipt of a B- or below in Conduct at grade 5
- * A second detention at grades 6-8
- * Suspension (either in school or out of school)

Spartan Honor Roll – 3.75 GPA or higher

High Honor Roll – 3.50 – 3.74

Honor Roll – 3.0 – 3.49 GPA

GRADING SCALE

Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	
		Full	Half
A+	97 - 100	4.00	2.00
A	93 - 96	4.00	4.00
A-	90 - 92	3.67	1.84
B+	87 - 89	3.33	1.67
B	83 - 86	3.00	1.50
B-	80 - 82	2.67	1.34
C+	77 - 79	2.33	1.17
C	73 - 76	2.00	1.00
C-	70 - 72	1.67	.84
D+	67 - 69	1.33	.67
D	63 - 66	1.00	.50
D-	60 - 62	0.67	.34
F	59 - Below	0.00	0.00
Grade 1-2	Percentage		
O	95 - 100		
S +	87 - 94		
S	80 - 86		
S -	70 - 79		
N	60 - 69		
U	59 - Below		

REPORT CARDS - Report cards are issued at the conclusion of each quarter. Each quarter is nine weeks in length and contains approximately 45 instructional days. Parent/Teacher Conferences are conducted following the first grading period.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS - Home study is an essential part of each student's educational program. Each student is expected to spend time in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. Some assignments are long range in nature and require planned study time for their completion. Planned study eliminates the necessity of spending too much time in completing an assignment the day before it is due.

Students are expected to routinely complete their homework on a daily basis. Each teacher shall set his/her own homework policies and clearly explain his/her expectations with regard to homework completion and the various consequences available for late or missing homework assignments. Students who abuse homework privileges or show little regard for classroom expectations on a continued basis open themselves to more severe consequences. Any questions regarding homework, grades received, or consequences given for late or missing homework should be directed to the student's teacher.

STUDENT INTERVENTIONS AND LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSISTANCE

St. Thomas the Apostle School has developed a variety of effective interventions for students who struggle with school. The first step is always to meet with the parent and the student to discuss the source of the problems, whether due to missing/incomplete/inaccurate daily work, low test scores, low motivation, or other issues. Together a system of communication and accountability is agreed upon to support the child, in developing independent study habits. Teachers will document the success of or lack thereof the set plan.

As a second step, St. Thomas the Apostle School, in cooperation with the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the Elkhart Community School Corporation, provides testing for learning disabilities, speech difficulties, and emotional or behavioral concerns for students currently enrolled at St. Thomas the Apostle School. St. Thomas the Apostle School works cooperatively with the Elkhart Community School Corporation to provide necessary interventions for those students requiring these services.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING - Cheating and plagiarism have no place in St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School.

Plagiarism, defined (from Encarta:

<http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary>) Stealing somebody's work or idea: the process of copying another person's idea or written work and claiming it as original.

Cheating, defined (from Encarta: <http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary>)

- To deceive or mislead somebody, especially for personal advantage; to break the rules in a game, examination, or contest, in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage.

Cheating constitutes:

- Cheating by any means on any test, quiz, and/or assignment
 - Copying the written work of other student(s).
 - Supplying other student(s) with answers
- Consequences for plagiarism and/or cheating may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Conduct grade deduction
 - Grade of zero for the test/quiz/assignment
 - Parent/Principal/Teacher/Student Conference
 - Loss of privilege(s) – extra curricular participation
 - Detention(s)
 - Meeting with counselor
 - Teacher/parent/principal conference
 - Academic probation and/or ineligibility Suspension

Athletic Academic Requirements

- A student participating in the school sponsored athletics must maintain a "C" average in all subjects. Including all academic and specialty courses.
- An "F" in any subject renders a student ineligible.
- Grades will be evaluated prior to participation and bi-weekly during the season. Any student who falls below the minimum academic requirements will be put on probation for 2 weeks. During that time, the student must attend all league events, but may not play in any games. If the student meets the minimum requirements

after those two weeks, they regain full participation. Any student who does not meet minimum academic requirements for four weeks will no longer be eligible for that season.

- Students must maintain schoolwork and meet requirements of teachers and staff.
- Any students suspended from school cannot participate in any YAC sponsored activities for the term of the suspension.
- A signed parental consent form must be returned to the coach before the first game.

DISCIPLINE

In guiding a child's growth in the proper formation of Christian values and attitudes, a positive approach will be emphasized. Self-discipline, the key to effective overall discipline, is accomplished through firmness, consistency, and a positive outlook. Order and self-discipline are the outgrowth of good teaching and parenting. This principle of self-discipline must start at home and be maintained in the learning atmosphere. In the final analysis, the combined efforts of teacher and parent are the key to achieving an atmosphere of responsible behavior and Christian attitudes. The student must understand that choosing one form of behavior over another brings with it certain consequences. Thoughtless or deliberate disregard of regulations on the part of the student will be addressed with corrective measures fitting the inappropriate behavior. Parents will be informed at the beginning of each year of the specific regulations for each department regarding everyday behavioral expectations. As stated in the school philosophy, all discipline at St. Thomas the Apostle School will be directed by school administration and faculty members with a constant attitude of true concern for the student and the students in the school.

Respect – ations - All St. Thomas the Apostle School discipline will be firmly rooted in our vision of *Christ Compassion Character*. We are taught to see Jesus in those around us and to love our neighbor as our self. Students will be challenged to put those words into action.

The STS discipline plan, developed to promote positive behavior among all grade levels, and creates consistent expectations and a positive environment for learning, is called *Respect-ations*. It is based on a positive behavioral intervention and support system. A student at St. Thomas will be expected to *Respect Yourself, Respect Others, and Respect the World Around You*.

Staff will teach, model, and review *Respect-ations* throughout the year so students observe examples of appropriate behavior. Students will be given feedback in order to alleviate any chance of misunderstanding of the expectation. Staff will be pro-active in complimenting students observed exhibiting positive behaviors.

Grades K-3 will utilize a card system as follows:

Level 1

Green Card Intervention: Inconspicuous teacher support (ie: hand on shoulder, teacher vicinity) in which teacher lets student know that s/he should stop and reflect on the behavior to determine how it does not support respect to self, others, or the surroundings.

Yellow Card Intervention: Student meets for teacher support to privately discuss the behavior and *Respect-ations*. Meeting ends with student understanding and commitment to do better.

Red Card Intervention: The student meets for support from the teacher to discuss *Respect-ations* and the STS vision statement. Afterwards the student completes a reflection sheet utilizing that discussion to create a positive plan of action. This sheet is sent home for a parent signature and should be returned the following day.

Level 2 Repeated Card Interventions

In addition to continued positive redirection from staff, the student may have an individual written agreement that addresses behaviors and expectations which will be monitored on a specific schedule (daily, weekly, bi-weekly). Parent support is expected at home. Student, parents and teacher will communicate regarding progress.

Level 3 Non-responsive to Levels 1 and 2 Administrative Intervention

If progress has not been made in student behavior through prior interventions, the administration will review the intervention process that has occurred and meet with student, parent, and teacher to determine what is best for the student at that time.

Grades 4 and 5 Discipline

- 3 Cards – Green – Warning – Student marks the violated skill.
- Yellow – Student writes about the behavior and the violated skill.
- Red – Student completes the form that is attached to the red card. Form and card go home for parent signatures. Student may be required to call parent if appropriate.

Lunch detentions may be assigned for frequent offenders.

Referrals to the principal will be made at the discretion of the teachers.

Non-structured Areas of the School, (including Specialty classes), Lunchroom, Recess, and Aftercare

1 two-sided
Orange card

Step 1 – Student is verbally informed that he/she is to receive a card.

Step 2 – The supervisor provides a brief written description of the offense on the back of the card, and the card is given to the homeroom teacher.

Step 3 – The homeroom teacher at grades K-5 pulls a card in the classroom as though the infraction occurred in the teacher's own classroom.

Step 4 – At Grades 6-8, the specialty teacher discusses the offense with the student and may determine, if the student offense warrants, to implement level 2 or 3 dependent upon the infraction.

Aftercare – The process for the Orange card, described above, is followed by Aftercare staff. In addition the following steps are to be followed:

Step 1 – The student receives and automatic timeout. The length of the timeout is left to the discretion and judgment of the supervisor.

Step 2 – The parent is notified of the incident and consequence when the child is picked up from Aftercare.

Grades 6-8 will also allow for three levels of intervention but it will look differently due to developmental differences.

Level 1 *Reminder Stage*

Inconspicuous teacher support (ie: hand on shoulder, teacher vicinity) in which teacher lets student know that s/he should stop and reflect on the behavior to determine how it does not support respect to self, others, or the surroundings.

Level 2 Teacher Intervention

Student meets for teacher support to privately discuss the behavior and Respect-ations/STS vision statement. A Respect-ation form to be signed by the student and the teacher and kept by the teacher will be completed to support student understanding as well as develop a positive plan of action. In addition to continued positive redirection from staff, the student may have an individual written agreement that addresses behaviors and expectations which will be monitored on a specific schedule (daily, weekly, bi-weekly). Parental support is expected at home. Student, parents and teacher will communicate regarding progress.

Level 3 Non-responsive to Levels 1 and 2 Administrative Intervention

Students not responding to prior interventions will be assigned a detention after school. At this time, students will compose an essay reflecting on their behavior in correlation to the STS Respect-ations and vision of *Christ Compassion Character*. It should conclude with a positive plan of action to move forward so another event does not occur. This essay will be copied, with one copy going home to parents and the other being kept on file by the teacher assigning the detention.

Two detentions per quarter will remove the student from qualifying for the Honor Roll for that quarter. After the second detention in one quarter, a meeting with the student and the principal will ensue to discuss further steps.

Due Process - All students are entitled to due process. This means school officials will follow certain procedures before assigning disciplinary consequences. This includes notice of the charges (what you did wrong) and an opportunity to respond (may be done orally or in writing). Parents will be notified by phone, letter or by having a copy of the Discipline Referral brought home by the offender.

BULLYING BEHAVIOR - The St. Thomas the Apostle School community does not tolerate bullying behavior. Students are taught that “a person is bullied when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons. Bullying behavior is hallmarked by repeated aggressive actions occurring over a period of time and with a perceptible imbalance of power, creating a feeling of inadequacy and isolation by the victim. These acts could include aggressive physical behavior, verbal or written communications or images, including transmission through technological means.

A student who believes he is being bullied should *immediately* tell an adult who is nearby. This may be a teacher, staff member, counselor, or principal. It is that person's responsibility to *investigate* and *document* the incident, *notify* the student's teacher, and *forward information* to the administration.

Possible consequences for actions deemed to be bullying behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Teacher/student conference
- Letter of apology
- Contact with parent
- Meeting with school social worker
- Loss of privilege(s)
- After school discernment
- Removal from the classroom setting
- Teacher/parent/student conference
- Meet with administration
- Suspension
- Expulsion

**The administration reserves the right to administer any of these consequences without respect to the order in which they are listed. Additionally, the administration has the right to administer other consequences as deemed appropriate or necessary.

SCHOOL FAMILIES - St. Thomas the Apostle School has devised a unique vehicle to create connections between students in other grades. School Families include one student from each grade and meet on a regular basis. The agenda of School Families is guided by the Catholic Identity Committee and centers around Christian attitudes, behaviors, and celebrations, generally following the liturgical seasons. Eighth grade students are given the leadership role within each family, encouraging their self-confidence as role models while fostering a sense of community across the grade spectrum.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION NEWSLETTERS - The flow of information between home and school is important for effective communication.

In grades PS – 5, parents shall receive a weekly newsletter, either via email or through use of a communications folder, from their student's teacher describing pertinent classroom details and/or activities and upcoming events such as field trips.

Middle School parents may access teacher newsletters on the STS website.

PARENT CONTACT WITH TEACHERS - Teachers welcome your interest and concern in our school. They are happy to meet with you and discuss your child's progress if an appointment has been scheduled. The procedure for contacting a teacher is:

- By email
- By phone at 574-264-4855
- Through a note sent with the child requesting the teacher to call you
- Should a parent/guardian need to contact a teacher during school hours, we require that you contact the office. Teachers are never free during the lunch period or during school hours. Appointments are usually held before or after school.
- **To facilitate continuity of the learning process, parents are not to enter classrooms and interrupt the teacher during the teaching hours.**

Parent/Legal Guardian Concerns Procedure - To facilitate and promote the orderly and efficient resolution of concerns, parents/legal guardians wishing to address individual and/or question an academic area or situation regarding a specific teacher or classroom procedure must follow the grievance procedure below:

Step 1: Individually address the issue with the classroom teacher in a formal manner (face-to-face or in writing). If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then the parent/guardian should place his/her concerns in writing to the person involved at steps 2 & 3.

Step 2: Individually address the issue with the Principal.

Step 3: Individually address the issue with the Pastor who will schedule a meeting to include the teacher, principal and parents.

Step 4: Contact the Catholic Schools Office.

Parents/legal guardians should follow the steps set forth in this policy, except where a situation is specifically covered under another school or Diocesan policy which provides for a different reporting procedure (e.g. harassment).

SCHOOL VISITOR PROCEDURE

- *General Visitors*- All visitors to St. Thomas the Apostle School must gain access to the school via the school office doors. All other doors to the school shall be locked during school hours. The visitor must sign his/her name and intended location/business in the visitors' log and wear a provided sticker, denoting their status as an approved visitor. Visitors shall visit only the destination they are there to serve, and then exit the school upon completion of their business through the school office, notating their departure time on the visitors' log. Visitors are not to stray from their approved area.
- *Students from other Schools*- All visitors, including those considering enrollment at STS, must follow the procedures outlined under General Visitors. Students from other schools may NOT visit without the prior approval of the principal.

SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOL PLAN - The staff and administration of St. Thomas the Apostle School are concerned with the safety and the well-being of our students. As a result, our school and the Diocese have prepared a *Safe and Secure School Plan* which addresses events that may threaten our students. During the school year, the school conducts drills for fire and severe weather, as well as lockdown drills. In addition, the Plan provides for responding to crisis situations, such as identifying evacuation sites and providing support for students, parents, and staff, including counseling services provided through school counselors on the staff at Catholic Charities.

PLAN FOR SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT - St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school has a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to insure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crisis are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint. A copy of this plan is available for review upon request.

Behavioral interventions for children must ensure all children are treated with dignity and respect. This environment should allow all children to be free from physical or mental abuse, aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and any physical seclusion or restraint imposed solely for purposes of discipline or convenience.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – St. Thomas the Apostle School is proud to offer a variety of extra-curricular programs including:

Altar Servers	Geography Bee	Young Vincentians
Athletic Teams	Scouting	Girls on the Run
Band	Spelling Bee	Tutoring

VOLUNTEERISM OPPORTUNITIES - The success of St. Thomas the Apostle School is due, in part, to the generous volunteerism of our school families. Whether the volunteer donates his/her time,

talent, and/or treasure, all forms of generosity are welcome, and indeed vital to the health of our school. The needs of our school are fluid. For a current listing of ways in which one can participate at STS, please check with the teachers, office staff or on the PTO and YAC sections of the website. Opportunities are also frequently listed in the Principal's Letter within the White Envelope.

Frequent needs include: support of the elementary teachers, lunchroom assistance, the Minds In Motion program, PTO and YAC participation, and library help.

ROOM PARENTS – Volunteer room parents are assigned to each classroom and coordinated through the PTO. Room parents help organize special events such as parties, class treats, class projects, school socials, and assist the teachers as requested.

VOLUNTEER APPROVAL PROCESS – All volunteers performing services for a school on a regular or recurring basis must successfully complete the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Volunteer Application, Criminal Background Check, and the Safe Environment Training. The acceptance, utilization, and supervision of volunteers in a school is the responsibility of the school principal. All school volunteers are required to be approved through a screening process. The process requires the volunteer to complete a volunteer application. The volunteer's limited criminal history check is also completed. Following these processes, volunteers are approved to work with or near students during the school day or outside the school day in school-approved extra-curricular activities.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT SUPERVISION - Adult volunteers who work with children at St. Thomas the Apostle School in both curricular and extra-curricular activities are expected to provide supervision that promotes school citizenship and is consistent with school behavioral regulations and expectations. Volunteers may redirect students to correct behavior. Volunteers may direct the students to a staff member if disciplinary action is necessary.

The school administration has the right and responsibility to immediately discontinue the use of a volunteer's service at the school if the volunteer is no longer necessary, does not suitably perform assigned duties, or

otherwise engages in behavior unacceptable in a Diocesan school. Please refer to Diocesan Policy 2430 for more information.

FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES - St. Thomas the Apostle School participates in a variety of field trips throughout the school year. Each student is required to have a field trip permission form completed by a parent or guardian, and possibly an associated fee, returned to the school office prior to the day of the field trip in order to attend the field trip.

Transportation to and from each field trip may be by school bus or by assigned and approved volunteers. If a car safety seat is required, the parents of the student who needs the seat must supply the car seat to the school before the field trip.

FUNDRAISING PROGRAMS AND POLICIES - St. Thomas the Apostle School participates in several fundraising programs throughout the school year. All fundraising opportunities provide vital funding for programs that otherwise would not be possible. STS families are encouraged and expected to participate to the best of their ability in these fundraisers, which include:

- *SCRIP Program*- the primary source of fund-raising for the school and PTO
- *School-wide fundraising events*- STS participates in several fund-raising opportunities throughout the school year. These include:
 - Burger King "You Can Lend a Hand" coupon booklet sales
 - Box Tops for Education program
 - Land's End Preferred School program
 - *STS classes, organizations and teams*- On occasion, classes, organizations, and/or teams may sponsor a fund-raising event for specific purposes. These fund-raisers must be pre-approved by the school administration.

Solicitations by non-school organizations, agencies, clubs, or companies may NOT be conducted at the school or at school-related events unless expressly authorized by the school administration. Please see Diocesan Policy 2130 for further information.

GUM AND CANDY USAGE - Chewing gum is NEVER permitted on school property. Candy is also not generally permitted in the classrooms or hallways, except by express permission and under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher. Any parent wishing to supply candy to a specific classroom, as in the case of a holiday or birthday treat, shall gain pre-approval by the teacher in charge of the classroom. Pre-approval may be given in the form of the teacher's weekly newsletter. Candy will be allowed in the lunchroom; however, parents are asked to consider healthy options when packing lunches for students.

TREATS FOR STUDENT BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS - St. Thomas the Apostle School encourages parents to celebrate their child's birthday. The following guidelines have been established for parents who choose to provide a birthday treat to their child's class in celebration of their special day.

- A simple treat may be brought to the lunchroom during their regular lunch time. Please consider any students who have food allergies.
- No drink is necessary.
- If a parent is unable to be present at lunchtime to distribute a treat, the lunchroom staff and volunteers are happy to assist the student if the treat is brought to school in the morning.
- No balloons or additional items allowed.

Celebrations of the various holidays that occur during the course of the academic year are organized by the school staff and Parent Teacher Organization. If necessary, assistance by school families will be solicited.

WHITE ENVELOPE PROCEDURE - The purpose of the white envelope is to provide a weekly avenue of communication between the school families and the administration. Each Wednesday, the white envelope will be sent home with the oldest student in each family. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall review the contents of the white envelope, complete and insert any required documents, and return the completed white envelope to the school via the oldest student in the family by

Friday. Payments to the school for anything may be returned to the office via the white envelope.

If it has been predetermined that school will NOT be in session on Friday, the White Envelope is due on Thursday, the day after distribution.

STUDENT-FAMILY DIRECTORY - Addresses and phone numbers of school families published in the student-family directory are solely intended for the use of school staff, administration, and STS families. This information is NOT to be used for purposes of outside solicitation or commercial use.

Changes in addresses or telephone numbers should be reported immediately in writing to the school office. It is extremely important to have updated records in case of emergency notifications.

STUDENT TELEPHONE ACCESS - Students may make emergency telephone calls to parents during the school day, but they must obtain permission from a staff member to use a school telephone. Parent telephone contact with students during the school day is discouraged. The office will deliver emergency messages from parents to students.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES - Electronic devices, including but not limited to video and still cameras, electronic readers ("e-readers"), mp3 players, iPods, iPads, cellular telephones, netbooks, electronic organizers, and personal computers, are prohibited from school without written permission from a teacher or the school administration. Written permission may be in the form of a teacher's newsletter granting specific permission for use in a particular project and for a specified period of time. The school is not responsible for any personal electronic devices that become damaged, lost or stolen.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP) – Outlines acceptable use of technology on school devices. Please review, sign, and return before school begins.

Cellular telephones, pagers, and other electronic communication devices are prohibited at school. Use of such devices at school will result with the device being confiscated.

POWERSCHOOL PROGRAM - St. Thomas the Apostle School utilizes *PowerSchool*, an internet-based educational data management system that assists with student assignments, current grades, assessments, and parent/teacher communications. Teachers in 4th through 8th grades use *PowerSchool* for their students. Parents of students in these grades are provided the access information necessary to gain entry to their student's account at the onset of the academic year.

Teachers do their best to enter assignments and test scores on a regular basis. A reasonable time frame may be approximately one (1) week after the assignment/test is completed. Late work will not necessarily be entered into *PowerSchool* on the day it is submitted. The online grade book is not an official grade but a guide for students and parents to gauge the student's progress through the grading period. Any questions regarding scores shown on *PowerSchool* should be discussed with the associated teacher.

A student's *PowerSchool* remote access information will only be provided by the school office to the parent or legal guardian of the student. Please protect all security information required to log into a student's account, as the internet always carries some inherent security risks.

INSURANCE COVERAGE - All students are covered by diocesan insurance while they are in school or are engaged in any school-related activity that is under the supervision of St. Thomas the Apostle personnel or their designee.

LOST AND FOUND - Parents should instill a sense of responsibility in their children for their personal belongings. Labeling items with the child's name often helps in the effort to retrieve misplaced items. Occasionally smaller items found are given to the school office personnel for recovery. Please check Lost and Found and inquire in the school office for misplaced items. The school is ultimately NOT responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING OPTIONS - Through the local public school district, STS shares in the testing services of a School Psychometrist. No child is tested without the written consent of the parents.

VISION, HEARING, AND SCOLIOSIS SCREENING - The Diocesan nurse offers vision and hearing screening to the following:

Vision: 1, 3, 5, 8, and new students

Hearing: K, 1, 4, 7 and new students

Scoliosis: screening is given in grade 6

Children in grades other than those regularly scheduled may be tested on request from parents. If you wish your child tested, please notify the homeroom teacher.

TUITION AND FEES POLICIES

1. TUITION PAYMENTS

Payments are made to St. Thomas through the FACTS Management System.

2. PAYMENT DUE DATES:

- Registration fees are due at time of enrollment.
- Technology fee, Book Fees, and Insurance fees must be paid before the start of school or arrangements made with the FACTS System.
- Tuition payments are due monthly unless a prior change in due date was made with the office.
- Lunch order payments are made on boonli.com or may be sent to the office.
- Aftercare payments are due each week. A statement will be sent home via email unless the family does not have internet access.

3. OUTSTANDING TUITION OR OTHER FEES

While school is in session, if your tuition payment is two weeks late, you will receive a late letter. If payments are not made, or arrangements are not established for payment, your child/children may be excluded from school.

Any STS family having difficulty in meeting the tuition obligation or extenuating circumstances have arisen, such as unemployment, is encouraged to contact the pastor to review the payment plan options.

4. ALL ACCOUNTS must be current before report cards will be released in any trimester.

5. TUITION ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance through St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is available to active PARISHIONERS of St. Thomas the Apostle Church only. Those seeking financial assistance toward payment of tuition and other fees should contact the school office for guidance.

6. INDIANA SCHOOL OF CHOICE PROGRAM/"VOUCHERS"

St. Thomas the Apostle School participates in the Indiana School of Choice ("Voucher") Program. Please call or visit the school office and visit the official website, www.schoolchoiceindiana.com, for more information.

7. TUITION REFUND POLICY

Parents of students who leave the community of St. Thomas the Apostle School, either voluntarily or by dismissal as a result of violation of school policies may receive a pro-rated refund if they have paid the tuition balance in advance of the transfer. All refunds are subject to approval by the pastor.

TUITION RATES FOR CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR

Tuition costs will be determined by Diocesan policy. St. Thomas the Apostle School maintains a system of calculating tuition and fees which partially funds the costs of operating and maintaining the school.

PARISHIONER TUITION:

1 child (K-8)	\$4330
2 children (K-8)	\$6930
3 or more children (K-8)	\$8920

NON-PARISHIONER TUITION:

Per child (K-8)	\$6600
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PRESCHOOL TUITION

All Day Preschool (\$30 a day)	\$4700
½ Day Preschool (\$15 half day)	\$2700

PRE – K TUITION

½ DAY (8:05 AM – 12:30 PM)	\$3000
FULL DAY – MONDAY-FRIDAY	

ANNUAL FEES FOR THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR

Each year St. Thomas the Apostle School assesses certain fees to offset the administrative and other costs associated with enrolling each student at the school. These fees are re-evaluated each year by the administration and the Parish Finance Committee and adjusted as determined necessary.

ANNUAL FEES, PER STUDENT:

K-8 Registration Fee:

Book fees, Tech fee, Insurance, Supplies etc.	\$600
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PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registration Fee:	\$250
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St. Thomas the Apostle School does NOT assess fees to cover costs associated with eighth grade graduation or most Sacrament-related events. All fees are non-refundable.

SCRIP-TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM - Parents of St. Thomas the Apostle students may earn tuition credit through purchases made via the SCRIP Program. Please refer to the school website, www.stselkhart.com, under the SCRIP Program link for more details regarding the terms of the program.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

OVERVIEW - The office of Religious Education aids and supports the Catholic Identity of St. Thomas the Apostle School through faith development of the staff and students. Catholic resource materials are made available for the staff to supplement their Religion curriculum. Parents are also invited to call or stop in the Religious Education Office for religious materials to foster their family's faith life at home.

The students receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time in the second grade. Students receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the 8th grade. Parents are involved in the preparation for all the Sacraments.

Children in 2nd and 8th grade who are of other faith traditions also participate in the retreats and special activities related to the Sacraments. The parent meetings are not required for families of other faith traditions.

Families from other faith traditions who would like to inquire about the Catholic faith are invited to attend an enquiry meeting held in the fall. Students who have been baptized in another faith tradition but who would like to join the Catholic Church will enter the process of the Rite of Christian Initiation for children and be welcomed into the Church during the Easter Vigil. Also, students who have never been baptized and are interested in the Catholic faith are welcome to begin the process.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATIONS IN SECOND GRADE - Students in 2nd grade prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Two required parent meetings are held in the fall, and two required parent meetings are held in the spring. These meetings are a vital part of the preparation of the Sacraments so that parents have the information and resources to help their child embrace the fullness of the Sacraments. Prior to the celebration of First Holy Communion, the students participate in a day-long retreat during the regular school day. Parents are encouraged to help with this retreat, as well as to attend the Retreat Day Mass and the closing prayer service.

- First Reconciliation, "A Hug from God", is celebrated the second week of January on two weeknights.
- First Holy Communion is celebrated the last Sunday of April during the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION IN EIGHTH GRADE

Students in 8th grade prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Parents and Candidates are required to attend three (3) preparatory meetings held throughout the school year. Confirmation is celebrated in either late April or early May.

Candidates also choose a Sponsor to help them along their journey and to offer support to the parents as their child says "yes" to their Catholic faith. A Sponsor must follow the Code of Canon Law 872-874, which states the sponsor is:

- confirmed in the Catholic Church,
- living out their faith in a befitting role to be a Sponsor,
- a member on good status of their parish,
- at least 16 years of age, and
- someone other than the candidate's parent.

Confirmation Candidates prepare for this Sacrament throughout their 8th grade year at St. Thomas the Apostle School. The Religion curriculum requirements for the Candidates in this preparation time include the keeping of a Service Journal, selection of a Saint for their Confirmation name, and attending the Diocesan Youth Rally. Parents are encouraged to attend the Youth Rally as a chaperone.

ALTAR SERVERS - Students who are of the Catholic faith are invited to offer ministry to the Parish by becoming altar servers for the school Masses as well as the weekend Masses for the Parish. The pastor offers annual training sessions in the fall for all interested students in 5th grade and older. These students will attend the training sessions during the school day. Altar Servers are commissioned at an All-School Mass in early October. The Office of Religious Education will solicit interest from students at the beginning of each school year and is responsible for organizing and assigning altar servers to the weekend and Holy Day Masses. Please direct any inquiries of Altar Services to the Office of Religious Education.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY COMMITTEE (C.I.C.) - The principal, the Director of Religious Education, and faculty volunteers gather monthly to guide and foster the Catholic Identity of St. Thomas the Apostle School. Each school year, a Scripture is selected to be the theme of the year and is carried out in all aspects of the school day. The C.I.C. plans activities and prayer services that follow the liturgical year. Advent and Lent are preparation times for the feasts of Christmas and Easter, and weekly events are planned during these times. Also, the students are given the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.

Living out our Baptismal call to be Christ-like to others is fostered through our Christian Service to the community. Each grade level chooses an area of Community Service to reach out to others. The Women's Care Center, St. Vincent de Paul Society, our nursing homes and homebound parishioners along with the neighborhood community surrounding the school are some of the people our students have helped. Monetary donations collected from "Casual Days" and our food drives touch the lives of those who are less fortunate. "Whatever you have done to the least of these, you have done unto Me." Matthew 25:40.

LIBRARY CURRICULUM AND GUIDELINES - The philosophy of the St. Thomas the Apostle School library is to instruct the students in skills that will make them proficient in accessing information through various media and to help them develop a life-long interest in reading. It is also a goal of the library to use books and other media to understand the world and be exposed to a variety of topics that will enhance their lives and engage their imaginations.

The St. Thomas the Apostle School library currently holds nearly 13,000 books and magazines available to students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our library facility. We are constantly updating and adding materials to advance the library at St. Thomas the Apostle School.

Each K- 5 class visits the library once per week, scheduled through the homeroom teachers. Visitation at other times during the week may be scheduled as needed. Grades 6-8 will visit the library every other week and as a specialty rotation.

The following STS library curriculum goals have been established to maximize students' ability to effectively use not only the STS library but any library they may encounter:

Kindergarten through Second Grade- Students learn to follow checkout practices, properly care for library materials, begin an understanding of the basic organization of a library, use good listening skills and quiet voices, use shelf markers, return books in a timely manner, use alphabetical skills, and are introduced to the Dewey decimal system.

Third through Fifth Grades- Students learn the parts of a book, different literary genres, how call numbers relate to location of a book within the library, about the different literary awards, how to use dictionaries and encyclopedias, how to gain information from a variety of sources, and increase their understanding of the Dewey decimal system.

Middle School- Students are able to conduct a keyword search and to independently locate needed materials. Students continue to master their use of the online catalog, use of the internet for research, and critical thinking skills in approaching research topics and keyword searching. Students learn to use specialized reference works, to select materials from multiple sources for research, to be information-literate and pursue information related to personal interests, to evaluate information critically and competently, and the structure of bibliographic form.

The following STS library guidelines have been established to allow the library to best serve the student body:

- Books are checked out to the students for an initial 2-week period.
- Books can be renewed several times for additional 2-week periods. The book(s) to be renewed must be brought to the library to be scanned in order to complete the renewal process.
- Kindergarten students are allowed to check out one (1) book at a time. These students are given a special book bag to help them keep track of the checked book.
- First grade students are allowed to check out two (2) books at a time.
- Second through Eighth grade students are allowed to check out up to three (3) books at a time.
- The library does not issue fines for overdue books. However, if a book is lost or damaged beyond reasonable repair, as determined by the library staff, the student is responsible to pay the replacement cost of the book.

- Books may be checked out during the holiday break periods, with the exception of summer break. Students are encouraged to make use of vacation time to read.
- At the end of each school year, all books must be returned to the school library. The final due date of checked books varies each year but is approximately two weeks before the last day of the school year. This policy allows time for all books to be re-shelved and the library organized before closing for the summer. The replacement cost of any book(s) not returned to the library by the last day of the academic year will be charged to the student's family account.
- Parent Volunteers are always welcome to help in the library. Volunteer tasks include re-shelving books, reading to the classes during their library visits, processing books checked in/out, repairing damaged books, and other miscellaneous tasks. The only qualification for helping in the library is the love of books and of kids!

