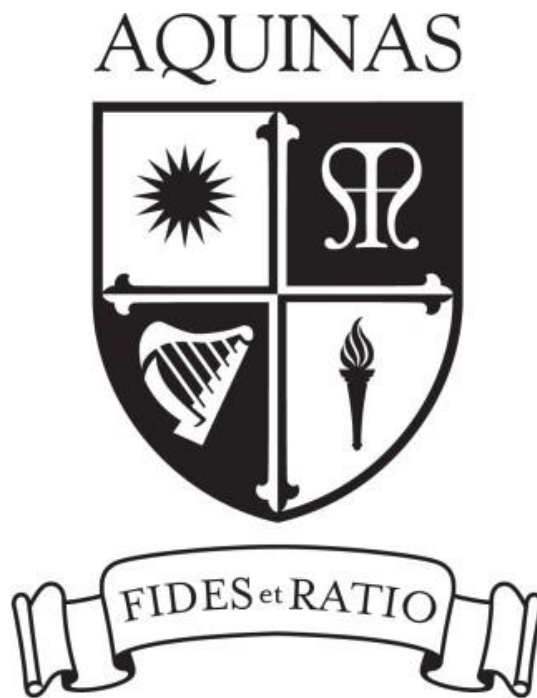


Elementary School Parent/Student
Handbook Pre-K Parent Handbook

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School



2023-2024

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Regional Catholic Elementary School
Diocese of Arlington



This school is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia State Board of Education.

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Echoing the Desire of St. Thomas Aquinas

Although Saint Thomas Aquinas lived eight centuries ago, his spirit and philosophy have lived on, not only through his timeless writings, but also through those institutions dedicated, as his life was, to the pursuit of Truth. When he was only five years old, Thomas began his formal studies under the direction of the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino Abbey. Even from his youth, his soul burned with the desire to know the one truth that gave meaning to all other truths: "What is God"? As the years of Thomas' studies passed, his great desire for a life of prayer and study led him to the Dominican Order, whose motto of "Veritas" or "Truth" mirrored the object of his longings. Within the Order, he encountered the genius and holiness of Albert the Great. Under Albert's influence, Thomas was not only moved to a deeper hunger for study, but also to live more fully the Dominican religious life of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Thomas sought truth wherever it could be found, not fearing to delve into the writings of thinkers of other times and beliefs. Although his reading was so extensive that it enabled him to write one of the greatest syntheses of theological thought of all time, Thomas attested that he learned more at the foot of the Cross than from any book.

In keeping with the legacy of our patron, we at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School strive first and foremost to nurture in our students a spirit of prayer, sustained by a comprehensive knowledge of truth. This emphasis on the sacred does not, however, negate the value of the secular courses of study. In his **Summa Theologica**, Saint Thomas wrote that grace builds on nature. The natural gifts of mind and body are the foundation for the greater, supernatural gifts of the soul. By instructing our students in a well-rounded curriculum, we hope to impart to them those truths which prepare them to accept the grace to know, love, and serve God, Who is the source of all Truth.

Reflecting on the life and relying on the intercession of Saint Thomas, who sought God from his childhood, we endeavor to instill, even in the very young, a love for learning and a desire for prayer. It is our goal that through our apostolate of Catholic education, we will each be formed in the spirit of Saint Thomas Aquinas, so that at our lives' end we will echo his great desire. When asked by the Lord what reward he would have for writing well, Thomas replied, "Nothing, Lord, but Thyself."

I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations teaching them to carry out everything I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:19-20

These words of Christ addressed to the apostles at the Ascension bestowed on the Church the office of teacher. Obedient to this divine challenge, the Church provides education permeated with the spirit of Christ and dedicated to promoting the full development of the human person.¹ The two-fold goal of Catholic schools is to provide an environment which will foster rich religious training as well as solid academic education in a Catholic, value-oriented manner.

¹ Declaration on Christian Education #3

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington are an essential component in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing an education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ where Catholic doctrine and values and academic excellence prepare each student for a life of faith, service, and integrity.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Following the example of St. Thomas Aquinas, patron Saint of Catholic schools, our mission is to teach:

Faith and Reason: that all truth comes from God and academic excellence finds its purpose in Him.

Philosophy of Learning Statement

In light of our motto, Faith and Reason, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School believes it is essential to:

- offer a dynamic, faith-filled learning environment centered in the Person of Jesus Christ and following the teachings of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.
- partner with parents, the primary educators, in a whole-child approach that includes spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, artistic and physical formation.

- provide a safe environment where children feel accepted and respected. • inspire students to desire knowledge and skill, allowing them to grow into lifelong learners.
- meet the needs of diverse learners, promoting creativity and inquisitiveness through a challenging academic curriculum as well as offering a variety of teaching methods and academic support services.
- embrace the uniqueness of each child in a community of caring and supportive teachers whose instruction helps them grow in the love of God and others.
- guide students to live well on earth so they may rejoice with God forever in heaven.

History of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School (Aquinas) is located at Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church in Woodbridge, Virginia. The school is staffed by the Dominican Sisters of the St. Cecilia Congregation and a lay faculty serving three parishes: Our Lady of Angels, Sacred Heart, and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, formerly Aquinas School, is a regional Catholic elementary school established in 1977 by parents seeking a Catholic school in the Woodbridge area. At the invitation of Bishop Thomas J. Welsh, the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia came to Woodbridge in the spring of 1977 to staff the school.

That same year Aquinas opened its doors to 190 students. Three years later it was necessary to expand the building. With enthusiasm and hard work, money was raised to pay for the addition of an office, faculty room, and four new classrooms. This allowed for two classes per grade level - kindergarten through grade eight. In 1987, a science room was added. In 2000, a new wing was built which provided new classrooms for grades K-5, a library, and a computer room. In 2002, a pre-kindergarten program began which was expanded in 2018 to include two all-day PK classes. In 2010, Aquinas partnered with the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth to implement an advanced science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curriculum for students in grades 5-8. In 2011, Aquinas was recognized as a high-performing National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the Department of Education. In addition to demonstrating that we have many programs in place to support our faculty and students, Aquinas was also recognized for consistently performing as a high-achieving school on national standardized tests. In 2013, we implemented our Advanced Language Arts program for students in grades 6-8. In 2018, we added a Heritage Spanish program for native speakers of Spanish in grades 7-8. Certified teachers on staff include PE, science, STEM, music, band, strings, art, algebra, and geometry teachers. A librarian, a registered nurse,

a full-time school counselor, and administrative staff also direct the activities of Aquinas. The pastors of our three parishes celebrate Mass, provide opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and lend spiritual guidance to Aquinas students, faculty, and staff.

The School Crest

The school crest colors and symbols represent our Catholic school identity and the Dominican Sisters: the sun (Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, light of truth); the "M" (Mary, the Blessed Mother); the harp (St. Cecilia, patron saint of music and the Dominican Sisters); and the torch (St. Dominic, setting the world on fire with the love of God through preaching and the founder of the Order of Preachers/Dominicans). "*Fides et Ratio*" is Latin for Faith and Reason.

Our Purpose

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School serves the parishes of Our Lady of Angels, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, and Sacred Heart as well as the wider community in the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Virginia. It was founded and is partially staffed by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation and a lay faculty. The charism of the Dominican Sisters gives Aquinas its distinctive character.

The Church recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. We are committed to aiding parents in developing children who can live their Christian vocation, become productive citizens, and unite with God for all eternity. We believe in the human dignity of each person as unique and unrepeatable.

We follow the teachings of the Catholic Church and apply it in every aspect of our curriculum. Our setting is both traditional and welcoming of new technologies and current teaching practices.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Each school shall utilize the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents/guardians. All local policies and procedures must be in conformity with the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines and regulations.

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook. The handbook shall be updated annually to reflect policy and procedural changes. Principals shall establish a process for review and revision of local school policy to ensure changes reflect the input of key stakeholders. All parents, along with students in middle and high school, are required to provide a signature of receipt acknowledging they have read the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook, and they agree to abide by those rules (Appendix AG-1 and AG-2). An acknowledgment form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook and the form must be signed and returned by Friday of the first full week of

school. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and or preventing a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given access to copies of all school handbooks.

Handbooks and all subsequent changes are subject to prior written approval by the Diocese. To the extent any local handbook or policy statement therein may be inconsistent with the policies, guidelines, or regulations of the Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, or regulations shall be of controlling force and effect.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN ROLE

Since parents/guardians have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children.

In this Handbook, the term “parent” refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, Diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles and support the school policies as outlined in school handbooks (i.e., annually sign the school's Handbook Agreement Form). One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at the school is receipt of this signed form indicating the parent's support of the school's philosophy, policies, and regulations.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal may do so, but after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. Similarly, parents should discuss matters of concern with the school principal, and pastor when necessary, before bringing them to the Office of Catholic Schools.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish, or diocesan staff (in verbal, written, or digital form), the school may take corrective action. Such corrective action may include, at the discretion of the principal (and, for parish schools, the pastor of the parish) the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; restriction or termination of the parent's access to school or parish property; dismissal of the parent's child(ren).

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

As foundation for a faith-community, parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the school's celebration of prayer and Liturgy.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the programs, which are developed for the education of their children. The wide spectrum of this involvement includes volunteer work, participation in parent-teacher conferences, attendance at meetings and seminars designed to help parents assist their children at home, and active involvement in the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.

SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles affirming that the body reveals each person as male or female and that the harmonious integration of a person's sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul by God and in the image and likeness of God. In fulfillment of these religious truths, our Catholic educational environment shall reflect a relation to persons (including name and pronoun usage, uniforms, access to facilities and overnight accommodations, and eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities) that is respectful of and consistent with each person's God-given sexual identity and biological sex at birth.

Recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God ensures that dignity is safeguarded, and safe environments are fostered. When parents send their children to Catholic schools and when persons choose careers in Catholic education, they should expect an environment consistent with the truth that God-created sexual identity speaks to His vision for each person's relationship to Him, oneself and others. Behavior and expressions of a person's sexual identity within the school environment that are inconsistent with these principles and/or which cause disruption or confusion regarding Catholic teachings on human sexuality are prohibited. The full cooperation with this policy of school officials, faculty, parents and students is required and a condition precedent to the continued enrollment of each student and the continued employment of each employee, and the enforcement of this policy by the school is deemed a spiritual mandate.

Diocesan Policy Related to the Human Person and Gender Ideology

Situations involving gender dysphoria must always be addressed with pastoral charity and compassion rooted in the truth. Any unjust discrimination or needless insensitivity in addressing such situations must be avoided and/or corrected. At the same time, in responding to this question justly and charitably, one cannot deny or obscure the truth of our created nature and human sexuality. Indeed, charity always requires the clear presentation of the truth.

Names/Pronouns:

All young people and their family members will be addressed and referred to with pronouns and names or nicknames consistent with their God-given biological sex. If a young person or family member proposes the use of any different name or nickname (male, female or neutral) in connection with the assertion of an identity at odds with biological sex, that request will be denied. Any effort to affirm something that is not true does harm to the individual.

Restrooms/Sleeping Facilities:

Locker rooms and multi-stall bathrooms will be for single-sex use only. All young people and adults will use bathrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their biological sex. On a case-by-case basis, young people diagnosed with anxiety disorders or similarly debilitating health issues may be given approval to use a single-person, unisex facility. For overnight events, participants will be grouped by biological sex in assigning any single-sex rooms, dormitory space, camping areas, etc. Family members may share a space with the permission of a parent or guardian if the arrangement of the facility permits.

Uniforms/Clothing/Grooming Standards:

Schools will select distinct school uniforms for males and females and set dress codes and grooming standards for each sex. All students will wear the designated school uniform consistent with their biological sex while on school premises and for all school-related activities. Schools are encouraged to work with uniform vendors to provide a female uniform option with pants. Students attending field trips, extracurricular, or other school events where school uniforms are not required should wear attire appropriate to the occasion and consistent with the school's dress code standards for each sex. Students must adhere to school grooming standards on school premises and at any school-related events held outside of school hours or at other locations. Exceptions to dress code policies may be made on a limited, case-by-case basis (e.g., when required for theatrical performances or similar reasons). Young people participating in faith formation or youth ministry activities will wear attire appropriate to the occasion and consistent with their biological sex and with Christian modesty. In all circumstances, clothing with inappropriate symbols, pictures, or words is not acceptable.

Athletic Teams and Events:

When possible, separate athletic teams will be offered for each sex. Young people will participate on teams consistent with their biological sex and may not participate on teams offered for the other sex. When (for example, in swimming or track) a team may include both sexes, individuals will participate in events consistent with their biological sex. In the case of golf,

if separate male and female teams are not offered, members of both sexes may participate together on a single team in the same events.

Single-Sex Events:

Whenever a ministry or event is divided according to sex (e.g., retreats, small groups, etc.), young people will participate consistent with their biological sex.

Counseling and Medical Issues:

When a young person experiences distress, confusion about sexuality, or is diagnosed with “gender dysphoria,” “body dysmorphia,” or similar issues, the individual and the individual’s family may wish to seek psychological counseling to address the causes of the distress or to resolve other issues. In such cases, the Diocese of Arlington supports the family’s efforts to resolve the individual’s distress and advises parents to seek counseling from professionals whose practice reflects a Christian view of the human person (Christian anthropology) and adheres to Catholic teaching. Clinics or physicians that offer “gender-affirming care” do not align with Catholic teaching and have the potential to harm both the child and the parent-child relationship. Catholic teaching emphasizes the personal unity of body and soul, and the importance of accepting one’s sexed body as a gift from our Creator. Consequently, the Catholic Church opposes all interventions intended to facilitate the individual’s rejection of his or her biological sex, or to facilitate the individual’s assertion of an identity at odds with biological sex. The Diocese of Arlington cannot support or accommodate any aspect of what is commonly known as a “gender transition,” including social transition, medical transition (puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones), and surgical transition. (Note: This does not apply to necessary medical care to address rare cases of true genetic or physical anomalies.)

Other Situations/Additional Support:

For situations that are not specifically discussed in this document, the general policy of the Diocese of Arlington is to respect the immutable reality of each individual’s biological sex and treat each person in a manner consistent with that reality.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

Catholic Schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school administered programs.

This policy does not preclude the existence of single sex schools, nor does it conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the

school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions, any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS

The presence of students from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic students in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- a. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- b. Non-Catholic students must participate in liturgies (except for reception of the Eucharist), retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.
- c. Non-Catholic students may be exempt from formal co-curricular or extra-curricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.
- d. Students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents/guardians must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this manual. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take action in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents/students of the effective date of any changes. Any section headings are for convenience of use, and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to take action in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver, or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

New students are accepted on a probationary status and must successfully complete a full trimester to be considered fully enrolled.

II. ACADEMICS

CURRICULUM

Curriculum encompasses the sequentially ordered learning experiences which the school provides for its students virtual and in person. The total curriculum includes the development of Catholic values and attitudes, as well as the attainment of knowledge and skills necessary for the student's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical development.

The basic curriculum for the school (but not necessarily for each grade level) includes the following subjects: Religion, Reading, Language Arts (English, Spelling, Handwriting), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts (Art and Music), Health and Safety, Physical Education, Technology, Library and World Languages.

The following path is outlined for those students capable of completing High School Geometry in the eighth grade.

GRADES FIVE TO SIX

For Placement in Pre-Algebra in the sixth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in 5th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. End of year diocesan comprehensive grade-level test: 93 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 5th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

GRADES SIX TO SEVEN

For Placement in Algebra I in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in Pre-Algebra: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 85 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 6th grade year).

- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

Because the Algebra I course incorporates numerous word problems that students need to solve, a teacher's recommendation should take into consideration the reading comprehension standardized test score when making a final decision for placement in Algebra I.

GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT

For Placement in Geometry in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in Algebra I: 93 or above.
- c. Scoring 77% on the Diocesan Algebra I exemption exam.
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

The following path would be followed by those students identified as capable of completing High School Algebra in the 8th grade.

GRADES SIX TO SEVEN

For Placement in Pre-Algebra in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in 6th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. End of year diocesan comprehensive grade-level test: 93 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 6th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT

For Placement in Algebra I in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in 7th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 80 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 7th

- grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

The Algebra I course incorporates numerous word problems that students need to solve. As such a teacher's recommendation should take into consideration the reading comprehension standardized test score when making a final decision for placement in Algebra I.

Eighth grade students must satisfy the following criteria to receive credit for Algebra I instruction and placement in the next level of high school math instruction:

- a. Pass the Algebra I course
- b. Score 77% or above on the Diocesan Algebra I exam
- c. Receive teacher recommendation for placement in the next level of high school math instruction

If a student does not score 77% or above on the exam, a compelling case made by the teacher through the use of the Teacher Recommendation Form (*Appendix X*) can be forwarded to the high school. The decision of the high school will be final.

VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION

- 1. Maintain effective communication between teachers, students and families about the virtual learning plan.
- 2. Teachers should be available throughout the day for questions and feedback even if the day is fully asynchronous.
- 3. Feedback is paramount and students should be accountable for their work. Assignments shall be assessed in a timely manner to provide feedback to the student.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Since religion is the distinctive mark of every Catholic school, systematic religious instruction is provided daily at Aquinas. Religious principles permeate the school and are an integral part of everyday living. The student will show a deep interest in religion by diligent study and by taking an active part in religious exercises.

Sacramental Preparation: First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation are received at the respective parishes. Parents are strongly urged to attend the Parent Sacramental Preparation meetings given in the parishes in order to be apprised of the various details involved in the student's reception of these important sacraments. (The parish may require certain mandatory meetings with parents of students receiving the sacraments.) Communication with the parish religious education office is very important.

ADVANCED SCIENCE AND MATH

St. Albert the Great Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

(STEM): The purpose of the St. Albert the Great Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program is to provide the opportunity for academically able students in grades five through eight to participate in advanced courses in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math.

Key elements of the STEM Program include:

- Online learning in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth (CTY) for fifth grade math, earth, life, and physical science.
- An advanced math track enabling students to enroll in geometry in eighth grade
- A bi-weekly lab with a Johns Hopkins instructor at Aquinas in sixth and seventh grade
- A robotics course using the Lego-Mindstorm platform.

Co-Curricular Activities:

- STEM students are encouraged to participate as part of the Aquinas Science Olympiad team or other outside team competition at least once during their enrollment in the program
- A special STEM field trip will be planned during the year
- Once a month, STEM students will be required meet with their mentor to review progress in courses.

Admission Qualifications: Prior to applying to the STEM program students take the SCAT test. Parents attend an informational meeting normally scheduled the week after Easter break.

Rising 5th grade students:

- must maintain a 93% or above in Aquinas math courses
 - must score at or above the 90th percentile on the math composite section of a nationally recognized standardized test.
 - must qualify for "summer programs" on the quantitative section of the SCAT administered by CTY
 - must achieve a 80% or above on the 5th grade math placement exam
 - must have a positive teacher recommendation
-

Rising 6th grade students in the STEM program in 5th grade:

- must maintain a 80% or above in STEM math course and successfully complete the courses
- must score at or above the 90th percentile on the math composite section of a nationally recognized standardized test.
- must achieve a 80% or above on the diocesan pre-algebra placement exam
- must have a positive teacher recommendation

Rising 6th grade students not in the STEM program in 5th grade:

- must maintain an 93% average in Aquinas math courses
- must score at or above the 90th percentile on the math composite section of a nationally recognized standardized test.
- must qualify for “summer programs” on the quantitative section of the SCAT administered by CTY
- must achieve a 80% or above on the diocesan Pre-Algebra math placement exam
- must have a positive teacher recommendation

Rising 7th and 8th grade students:

The STEM program is designed as a progressive curriculum with a substantial portion of the diocesan curriculum requirements being covered in sixth grade. Therefore, rising seventh or eighth grade students are not eligible for the STEM program.

Course Offerings:

5th Grade:

- CTY Math online. Should complete course 5/6 and test into Pre-Algebra at the end of fifth grade.

6th Grade:

- Pre-Algebra. (taught at Aquinas)
- CTY Earth Science online with bi-weekly lab (1st trimester)
- CTY Life Science with bi-weekly lab (2nd trimester)

7th Grade:

- Algebra (taught at Aquinas)
- CTY Physical Science with bi-weekly lab (1st trimester)

8th Grade:

- Geometry (taught at Aquinas)
- Robotics (taught at Aquinas)

The STEM program is an academically rigorous program which requires both parent involvement and student effort. Students should be productive during class time and should also complete at least 30 minutes of work each night for each class. Parents should actively monitor student progress and help the students to maintain an acceptable pace in their work.

Our STEM students are assigned a mentor. The students meet with their respective advisor once a month to monitor course progress. Parents are asked to review the monitoring sheet with their child, sign, and return the form in acknowledgement of the progress made. Please be mindful that Aquinas deadlines supersede CTY course end dates which are at the end of the semester.

The Application and Admission Process:

Application for Current Fifth Grade STEM students and Rising Fifth and Sixth Grade Students New to the Program:

Fifth Grade is an introductory year providing the foundation for the accelerated math curriculum in the years to come. Participation in the STEM program is highly recommended by the school. The fifth grade year provides the school, student, and parent the ability to assess a given student's aptitude for the STEM program before engaging in the rigor of the middle school program. Students currently enrolled in the STEM program in fifth grade must re-apply for admissions to continue with the middle school STEM program. Determination for continued admittance will be based on the criteria given below.

Rising 6th grade students currently in the STEM program:

- Complete and submit the STEM application to the school office
- Submit a teacher recommendation form to the students current math teacher

- Admissions is determined according to the qualifications listed above

Rising 5th or 6th grade students new to the program:

- Register to take the SCAT test through CTY (see deadlines listed on the program calendar)
- Fill out the St. Albert the Great STEM program application and submit it to the school office
- Submit a teacher recommendation form to the student's current math teacher
- Admissions is determined according to the qualifications listed above

Acceptance and Admission:

Admission decisions will be made in July and parents will receive notification by mail as well as information regarding enrollment fees.

Enrollment and Re-Enrollment:

Rising 5th/6th grade students:

- After the admissions process is completed, parents will receive notification of admissions decisions regarding the STEM program along with an enrollment form and fee.
- Parents should complete and return the enrollment form by date specified.

Rising 7th/8th Grade Students already in the STEM program:

After receiving the enrollment packet, parents should complete and return the enrollment form and fee by date specified.

About Testing

- **SCAT (and Advanced SCAT)** - The School and College Ability Test (SCAT) is a CTY assessment used for admissions to their online and summer programs. Since students in the STEM program also participate in CTY online courses they are required to take the SCAT through CTY. For enrollment in the STEM program, students must have a score on the quantitative section that makes them eligible to participate in "summer programs". Parents are responsible for registering for individual testing at

a testing center and sending a copy of the score report to Aquinas by the date indicated on the calendar of dates. Our registered school name with CTY is St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School. Our school code is: 2219160. Please see their website for more information about the test, testing registration and locations, as well as practice tests.
<http://cty.jhu.edu/talent/testing/>

- **Placement Exams** – the Diocese of Arlington has developed placement exams for students entering pre-algebra, and Aquinas has developed a placement exam for fifth grade students entering the STEM program. A practice packet will be sent home by the Aquinas math teachers before the exam and it will be administered in school at the end of May. A student must make a qualifying score on the placement exam in order to be considered for the STEM program.
- **Standardized Tests** – Students must score in the 90th percentile or above on the math composite score. If a student is new to Aquinas and another standardized test has been taken, an equivalent score determined by the school will be used to determine eligibility.
- **Algebra and Geometry Exemption Exams** – At the end of seventh grade, students will take the Algebra Exemption Exam at one of the diocesan high schools. The successful completion of the exemption exams is necessary in order for students to receive high school credit at the diocesan Catholic high schools. STEM students who do not pass the Algebra Exemption Exam in seventh grade must repeat Algebra the following year or successfully complete an intensive algebra course offered by one of the Catholic high schools over the summer. At the end of eighth grade, students will take the Geometry Exemption Exam at one of the diocesan high schools.

ADVANCED LANGUAGE ARTS COURSE

The purpose of the Advanced Language Arts program (ALA) at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School is rooted in fulfilling our school's mission to teach faith and reason. This philosophy is based on the fundamental principle that all truth comes from God and that academic excellence finds its purpose in Him. To allow students to pursue excellence, we provide the opportunity for academically capable sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students to participate in an accelerated program in the areas of literature, writing, and grammar. ALA is a three year program of study beginning in sixth grade for students who are academically motivated and desire a more rigorous course of study that keeps them challenged and interested. The demanding program of study requires a high level of academic performance, discipline, and appropriate maturity for each student participating. Consistent parental support is also required for the

student's success. The following methodology is used for all Language Arts students at Aquinas, with added expectations that are key elements of the advanced program.

Grammar will be introduced through daily analysis of sample sentences. Students will be able to recognize, internalize, and utilize traditional grammar terminology and concepts through application. Grammar will be integrated into writing because this is the natural way students see the value, purpose, and function of grammar, which is essential to any good writing.

Spelling and Vocabulary will utilize a spiral approach, introducing words weekly, with a particular focus on etymology, while also addressing the complexity of word meanings and the importance of context. Additionally, this will be integrated into their writing by requiring students to use and identify their vocabulary words in their written assignments.

Students will write daily. Assignments will include short personal responses, short evidenced-based essays, poems, longer essays (expository and persuasive) using our literature program, *Excellence in Writing*, to inspire, model, and cultivate their writing skills. Each grade will also write a cross-curricular research essay.

In *literature*, students will develop their ability to see how stories embody truth and the ability to identify and choose virtue over vice. To achieve this purpose, our students will incrementally expand their vision by exploring and appreciating the good, the true, and the beautiful in literature. They will examine the various techniques authors employ to convey thematic concepts, using them as models for excellent writing. We will guide our students across the bridge between faith and reason by teaching units such as short stories, novels, poetry, non-fiction, and speech writing and presentation.

Key elements of the ALA program include:

- ALA Students will answer higher level questions in guided discussions
- ALA Assessments will have higher level requirements and will require a deeper level of analysis
- ALA Students will choose from a prescribed book list to ensure an appropriate level of challenge.
- ALA students will have an independent reading menu and rubric designed to challenge students to engage in higher order thinking
- Even during the research trimester, ALA students will still read a book from their prescribed list (non-ALA students' research takes the place of their independent novel).
- ALA students should employ rigorous logical reasoning in their persuasive and argumentative writing
- ALA students will complete an additional writing project

Admission Qualifications

The ALA program requires a serious commitment from students and parents. It is an embedded class that requires independent completion of additional requirements (such as longer essays) in addition to more advanced analysis and writing techniques. Thus, there is a specific set of criteria for placement in the ALA Program. For placement in ALA, students must score in the 85th percentile or better on both the MAP Reading test score and the MAP Language Usage test. Students must also have 93% overall average grade in English, Reading, and Spelling/Vocabulary classes and must score at least 8 in each category on the ALA Placement Exam. Teacher recommendations are based upon the quality of work completed and class participation during the year.

Once in the program, if a student has a grade in Reading or English below an 85 in the first trimester, they will be moved to the grade level class. ALA students must maintain an average of 85 or higher to remain in the program.

SPANISH FOR HERITAGE SPEAKERS PROGRAM

The purpose of the Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) Program is to provide the opportunity for seventh and eighth grade students with experience in Spanish at home or in their families to participate in an accelerated course of Spanish in accordance with the Diocesan Spanish Language Curriculum Objectives.

The SHS program is a two year program of study beginning in seventh grade for students who are academically motivated and desire a more rigorous course of study that keeps them constantly challenged and interested. The demanding program of study requires a high level of academic performance, discipline, and appropriate maturity for each student participating. Consistent parental support is also required for the student's success.

Key elements of the SHS program include:

- An accelerated reading, writing, and grammar track in Spanish, enabling students to further their Spanish language skills.
- Rapid paced and rigorous classes, covering significantly more material than the standard class.
- Small class size (the class size is limited to 18 students)

Admission Qualifications

Rising seventh and eighth grade students must:

- Demonstrate appropriate Spanish fluency through the Spanish STAR Reading test, a writing sample, and an oral interview
- Receive positive recommendation from current Spanish teacher

Once a student is in the SHS program, the appropriateness of the class will be reconsidered if the teacher and the administration feel that the student is not demonstrating the maturity or dedication that this course requires.

Applicants will be considered based on their Spanish reading level, writing sample, oral interview, application, and the space available in the class. For current Aquinas Students, the reading level test and the oral interview will take place during the school day.

GRADE LEVEL CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Pre-K: The Pre-K developmental program offers students who are 4 years old on or before September 30 a full range of spiritual, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical opportunities for growth. Currently, there are two Pre-K sessions that meet daily (Each group meets with one certified teacher aided by one instructional assistant):

Half Day Session meets from 8:00 to 11:00 AM (Monday - Friday)

Full Day Session meets from 8:00 AM to 2:45 PM (Monday - Friday)

Noon Dismissal:

Half Day Session meets from 8:00 to 11:00 AM

Full Day Session meets from 8:00 AM to 11:45 AM

The curriculum is not just the goals of the program and the planned activities but also the daily schedule, the availability and use of materials, transitions between activities and the way in which routine tasks of living are implemented. Young children are expected to learn through active and positive manipulation of the environment and concrete experiences that contribute to concept development.

Without limiting the rights of the school under section VIII of this handbook, modifications may be made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs.

The daily schedule is intended to provide a balance of activities with attention to the following dimension of scheduling:

- a. Daily outdoor play, weather permitting
- b. Alternating periods of quiet time and active play
- c. A balance of large muscle and small muscle activities is provided.
- d. Various small group or large group activities through most of the day
- e. A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity is provided. The amount of time spent in staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.

Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment that project heterogeneous, racial, gender and age attributes are selected for use.

The school will use media, such as television, films, videotapes and computers, that have been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available. No child is required to view or interact with the program; and the staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Technology is incorporated as an integral part of the day.

The goal of the school is to emphasize concrete experiential learning and to achieve the following goals:

- a. foster positive self-concept;
- b. foster spiritual development;
- c. encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment;
- d. develop social skills;
- e. encourage language development;
- f. enhance physical development and skills;
- g. encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices;
- h. encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts;
- i. respect cultural diversity.

Staff provides materials and time for activities, but children choose from among several activities that the teacher has planned or the children initiate. Staff respects the child's right to choose not to participate at times.

Children are not always required to move from one activity to another as a group. Unregimented transitions are also used as a vehicle for learning.

Planned or routine activities may be changed according to the needs or interests of children, and/or to cope with changes in weather or other situations that affect routines without unduly alarming children.

Routine tasks such as toileting, eating, dressing and sleeping are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help and social skills. Through complimentary actions at home, parents are expected to assist and cooperate with staff to make feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.

Kindergarten: The full-day (8am-3pm) kindergarten curriculum program provides an atmosphere conducive to building a solid educational foundation and love of learning. It is a preparation for first grade. Each child should be allowed to make choices, build responsibility, work with others cooperatively, and express ideas verbally and non-verbally. The children grow in learning to work independently, follow directions, and lengthen their attention span. Through the conscious development of carefully planned instruction, the child is

introduced to the fundamental areas of religion, language, math, social studies, science, fine arts, library skills, computer, and physical education. The kindergarten provides a developmentally appropriate, hands-on approach to learning. Readiness skills focus on the joy of learning which prepares the child for continued success.

Elementary

(Grades one through five): The students work through a challenging curriculum in religion, reading, English, composition, math, social studies, science, handwriting, spelling and vocabulary. Each student is personally enriched by music, art, computer, Spanish, and physical education classes. Grades one through three are self-contained classroom settings, while grade four and five are partially departmentalized.

Middle School (grades 6th, 7th, and 8th): In grades six through eight, the basic subjects continue to be taught, but all classes are departmentalized. Students attend classes in the core subject areas: Religion, English, Literature, Math (including the possibility of Algebra I in eighth grade), Science, Social Studies, and Spanish. Our middle school Spanish program provides the opportunity for students in the eighth grade to take the Spanish placement test and potentially begin Spanish II in high school. Middle school students also participate in weekly art, music, technology, and PE classes.

Handwriting: Students in grades 4-8 should write all work in cursive. Students in Grade 3 should begin writing all work in cursive by the beginning of the third trimester or as soon as the skill has been mastered.

Physical Education: As part of the curriculum all students are required to participate in regularly scheduled physical education classes, unless they have a written note from a physician stating they are physically unable. Students are required to wear the St Thomas Aquinas Regional School P.E. uniform to school on the day of their scheduled P.E. class.

Music: Students in grades K-8 attend music class weekly. Included in the curriculum is music for singing and appreciation. Students in the grades 4 through 8 may participate in the school choir. Students learn liturgical music for participation in the weekly school Mass and other devotional activities. (In the event a music teacher is unavailable, music classes will not be held.)

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The curriculum is enriched with a variety of academic and spiritual activities. These consist primarily of the following:

Athletics Grades 6-8

- Fall- Boys Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Cheerleading
- Winter- Boys and Girls Varsity Basketball, Boys and Girls JV Basketball, Girls Cheerleading
- Spring- Boys Baseball, Girls Softball, Girls Soccer and track.

Clubs Elementary-Middle School

Club availability varies from year to year. Examples of recent clubs are: Chess, Apologetics, Robotics, Life Skills and Year Book.

Fine Arts

Choir Grades 4-8, Middle School Musical grades 6-8, Band and Strings Grades 4-8. Students may take instrumental music and participate in the school band or string program. Additional fees are required to participate in these programs. *St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School is not responsible for instruments left in the building.*

Class Parties

In order to provide the appropriate academic time, the number of class parties is carefully planned. The following parties are permitted for all grades: A Christmas party and an end of the year party. Parties for the following holidays are permitted for grades PK-3: Halloween and Valentine's Day. Parties should allow students down time to socialize and celebrate with classmates. A small snack or drink may be provided. Lunch or elaborate treats are not appropriate. Other parties are generally not allowed, but may be allowed with the express permission of the principal. Class parties are at the discretion and direction of the teacher.

Birthday parties are not permitted; however the "Birthday Club" gives parents an opportunity to order ice cream for their student's class through forms that are available on the Parents page of the school website.

Party Invitations

Students may **not** distribute party invitations at school. The school office will not provide student addresses or labels. The family Directory may be used for the purpose of obtaining classmates' addresses for the intention of mailing party invitations.

ASSESSMENT

The school's program is intended to assist staff and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the program, to diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses and to aid in the revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

PROGRESS REPORTS(PRE-K)

Evaluation of the child must be based on teacher judgment, observation, daily performance, class participation and effort.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM

Catechesis in Sexuality is an important and sensitive component of a comprehensive program of catechesis. According to the Second Vatican Council, "As they (children and young people) advance in years, they should be given positive and prudent sexual education." Education in sexuality includes all dimensions of the topic: moral, spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical. Its goal is training in chastity in accord with the teaching of Christ and the Church, to be lived in a wholesome manner in marriage, the single state, the priesthood, and religious life.

Students in grades 6-8 participate in a human sexuality course provided by the Diocese of Arlington.

TEXTBOOKS/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Book Rental

Textbooks/supplemental materials are rented from the school. Textbooks will be assigned to students and assessed for condition by the teacher. Periodic textbook condition checks may occur during the school year.

If a student loses a book, he/she will be charged a \$50 (textbook) / \$15 (workbook) replacement fee. Marked or damaged books are subject to \$10 extra rental charge. Hardback books will be covered at all times. School approved book covers will be used to cover all student textbooks.

Students in Grades 3-8 are issued paperback novels periodically. If a novel is returned unusable the student will receive an invoice for the replacement cost (\$5) along with the novel.

Fines for library or textbooks must be paid in full. Additional textbook rental may be available through the recommendation of a resource teacher.

School Supplies

The school purchases initial school supplies on behalf of each student from funds collected as part of the Student Fee. Additional supplies will be provided throughout the year to the extent the entire class needs replenishment. The replacement of individual supplies that have been lost or destroyed is the responsibility of the individual student's parents. Each student is expected to arrive to class prepared and ready to learn. Parents are asked to make sure lost or broken supplies are replaced promptly.

TECHNOLOGY – RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

There is no expectation or right to privacy or right to freedom of speech when using the school's computer resources, which are the school's property. Any use of the school's computers and Internet access must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools.

Using school facilities for Internet access and e-mail is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use which includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized transmittal or improper use of copyrighted materials or materials protected as trade secrets; transmission of threatening or obscene materials; vandalism of computer files; and violation of computer security as determined by the school administration can result in a cancellation, denial, suspension and/or revocation of those privileges by the school administration and also subject the student to other disciplinary action.

Electronic and/or digital communications with students should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and employ only school sanctioned means of communication.

Users must adhere to local school policy that may further define uses of mobile devices. Access will be determined by the administration of the school. If a particular mobile device is to be used for an educational purpose, the school administration and/or teacher will provide parameters for this use.

Additional responsibilities for use of school facilities for the Internet and e-mail are:

- a. When using networks or computing resources of other organizations, students must observe the rules of that organization regarding such use.
- b. Users should not reveal their personal addresses or phone number(s), and shall not reveal the personal address or phone number(s) of others without their authorization/permission.
- c. Users are reminded that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Operators of the network/system have access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of illegal activities, may be reported to the authorities.
- d. Students shall immediately notify the system administrator/school administration if they suspect that a security problem with the system and/or the Internet exists.
- e. Any attempt to log onto the Internet or the school's network/system as a systems administrator will result in a loss of user privileges at the school. Any user identified as a security risk by the school administration/systems administrator due to a history of actual or suspected unauthorized access to other computer(s), network(s), or system(s) may be denied access to the school's computers, networks, and/or systems.
- f. Users shall abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette, which include but are not limited to:
 - i. Messages to others shall be polite and shall not be abusive.
 - ii. Messages shall use appropriate language and shall not use obscenities, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language.

- iii. Use of the network shall not disrupt use of the network by others.
- g. The Diocese/school makes no warranty of any kind, whether express or implied, for Internet service. The Diocese/school will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence, user errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.
- h. Examples of Unacceptable Uses – Users are not permitted to:
 - i. Use technology in sexting or cyber bullying: to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
 - ii. Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
 - iii. Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any student or employee without express permission of the individual, individual's parent/guardian, and the principal.
 - iv. Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual, individual's parent/guardian, and the principal.
 - v. Attempt to circumvent system security.
 - vi. Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives.
 - vii. Violate license agreements, or other protected media.
 - viii. Use technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
 - ix. Breach confidentiality obligations of school or school employees.
 - x. Harm the good will and reputation of the school or school employees.
 - xi. Transmit any material in violation of any local, state, or federal law. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material, and threatening or obscene material.
- i. Users must immediately report damage to the appropriate school officials.
- j. The school has the right to monitor student use of school computer, computer accessed content, and social media. Social media refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction through the use of words, images, video, or audio tools. Examples include, but are not limited to, social websites, blogs, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image and/or video-sharing sites, live webcasting, and real-time communities. Because this is a constantly evolving area, this policy applies to all new social media platforms whether or not they are specifically mentioned in this policy.
- k. Violation of the above policy will be dealt with by the administration of the school. Violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:

- i. Loss of use of the school network, computers, and software including Internet access.
 - ii. Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.
- l. The school retains the right to discipline students for their actions, regardless of when or where they occur, when those actions negatively impact the school's image, reputation, and/or the safety and well-being of the school community. This covers inappropriate behavior in cyberspace including but not limited to messages, chat room commentary, comments/pictures, videos, postings on social networking sites, blogs, wikis, gaming chats, digital transmissions, and other technology related activity

Aquinas General Technology Responsible Care and Use Guidelines for Students

Whether in school or at home, students are prohibited from accessing sites that are inappropriate and/or are not related to curriculum activities. While the school's internet filtering limits students' ability to access harmful internet sites through the school's networks, parents/guardians will cooperate and help the school in monitoring the student with use of the device. Students should only share passwords with parents/guardians.

The parent/guardian will be responsible for monitoring their child's Internet access when using an Aquinas technology device at home. Students are expected to bring the device fully charged and ready for use when attending school on campus. Repair/replacement due to excessive damage of the technology device and/or its power cord is the responsibility of the parent.

Aquinas accepts no responsibility and will not be liable for damage to any home network or home computing device that results from the use of an Aquinas device.

When used outside of the Aquinas building, Aquinas technology devices will still have filtered Internet access. Students are permitted to use an Aquinas device to learn the Aquinas curriculum. Uses unrelated to our educational program (including but not limited to personal email, games, music, use of social networking sites, and installing extensions or apps) are prohibited. Students are responsible for bringing school issued technology device fully charged and ready for use when attending school on campus.

Aquinas has the right to recall and review the contents of school devices at any time including any personal information that may be stored on or accessible by the device. Students will take good care of their school issued device and protect it at all times.

Specific Care and Use Requirements for Students

1. While at school, the technology device will be used only at the discretion and direction of the teacher. Each teacher has the right to approve or block the use of the technology device in the classroom. Student use of the technology device against the express wishes of a teacher will result in the loss of the technology device.
2. The technology device should be used only in conjunction with projects relating to the educational programs of Aquinas. It may not be used as a personal or social device for the student while at school or outside of school. Student use of the technology device for other than teacher-required curriculum use will result in some loss of privileges and/or other disciplinary action.
3. When using the technology device, it is essential to practice responsible digital citizenship as outlined in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy stated above.
4. The technology device will not be shared with another student while at school without the permission of the teacher.
5. The technology device should never be left unattended in a public place. Unattended technology devices will be turned into the Technology Office where they may be reclaimed after presenting a note from the homeroom teacher.
6. Any damage necessitating the repair or replacement will be billed to the family, including, but not limited to:
 - a) The technology device should not be used near water, household chemicals, or other liquids that could damage its electronic components. There should be no eating or drinking near technology devices.
 - b) When carried outside, the technology device should be protected in such a way that rain, snow, ice, excessive heat, and/or cold will not damage it. While in the backpack, the technology device must be kept in a protective pouch/case. Care should be taken to prevent heavy or excessive pressure on the device as it may result in damage (ex. cracked screen)
 - c) The technology device is a valuable object and should be treated appropriately. It should not be thrown, dropped, or hit. It should not be left on the floor where it can be stepped on or crushed. Evidence of abuse that results in permanent technology device damage will require replacement by the parent/guardian.
7. The technology device is the property of Aquinas. No permanent decoration or personalization (stickers) may be affixed.

8. Aquinas strongly recommends the technology device be used in common spaces in the home or in an area designated by the parents or guardians and not isolated behind closed doors.

9. Lost technology devices must be immediately reported to the school office and the school's Technology Office/Mrs. Fitzgerald (email: afitzgerald@aquinastars.org).

TESTING

The school's testing program is intended to assist teachers and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the academic and religion programs, to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, and to aid in the revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

In addition to academic tests for grading purposes, the school will administer standardized religion and achievement tests according to the diocesan testing program. All eighth grade students take the high school placement test used in determining placement in diocesan high schools. Eighth grade teachers are encouraged to review only the format and style of the high school placement test with their students.

All students take standardized tests during each academic year. Kindergarten and first grade students take the Dibels Test at various time points throughout the year. Students in grades 3-7 take a computer based Scantron assessment in the fall, winter and spring to monitor academic growth. Students in grade 8 take the High School Spanish and Algebra/Geometry Placement Tests in May. In addition, students in grades 5 and 8 take the ACRE religion assessment test in April.

For Middle School Grading Only: All middle school students may have cumulative exams once or twice a year. Students must be present for all middle school exams.

HOMEWORK

In order to reinforce daily work and develop good study habits, the school promotes specific homework policies.

Although homework has different purposes at different grades, homework is required at all grade levels. The amount of homework a child may have on any given day will vary depending upon the nature of the assignment, the amount of work the child completes in school that day and the speed at which the child completes his/her work at home.

SUGGESTED TIME ALLOTMENTS

Pre-K	0 minutes
Grade K	10-15 minutes (parental help suggested)
Grades 1&2	10-30 minutes

Grade 3	10-30 minutes
Grade 4	30-60 minutes
Grade 5	30-60 minutes
Grade 6	30-60 minutes
Grade 7	60-120 minutes
Grade 8	60-120 minutes

HOMEWORK POLICY

Students in grades 1-8 will be held responsible for writing all homework assignments in their assignment books daily. The Teacher's OnlineClass page, *is* not a substitute for the use of the assignment book. These books are provided by the school. These are the only assignment books that will be used in these grades. It is necessary for each student to have an assignment book with them for each class.

Assignments are expected to be turned in on time. If an assignment is turned in one day late, the grade is reduced. Parents and students should not expect that homework will be counted for credit if it is late by more than one day.

At the teacher's discretion, students may still be required to submit assignments. The first 0 homework grade for each trimester is dropped at the end of the trimester.

Parents may not fax or email to school their child's homework. Homework that is dropped off in the school office will not be delivered until the end of the school day and will, therefore, be counted as a late assignment.

Homework is assigned on a regular basis. Since achievement cannot be attained without study and attitude is connected to successful study, parents are urged to help the child realize that study and the review of assignments are as vital as any written work and are an important part of character building. Parents must not do their children's homework.

Daily homework time does not include long-range assignments/projects. In most instances, students will need parental guidance with time management skills. *These time allotments for homework must, of necessity, be flexible.* All children vary in their abilities to perform any task. Parents should provide proper conditions in the home, and, as far as possible, a specific time span in which work for school can be done. Parents should notify the teacher if a child is spending excessive amounts of time on homework. Parents may request exemptions and should be open –to assessing the student for a special learning need.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers are expected to be reasonably available to parents/guardians throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the students. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should first privately contact a teacher with any concerns about a student or class concerns before seeking intervention by the school administration.

SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Parent-teacher conferences are formally scheduled once a year. Parents are encouraged to inquire and discuss the progress of their child at any time during the school year. To make an appointment with a teacher, a parent should leave a message on their voicemail or send an email requesting an appointment. The teacher will return the call or email within 48 hours.

Email Communication Policy for Parents

Email may be used as a form of communication between parents and administrative staff for business purposes as deemed appropriate by the administration. The school uses email as a form of communication of school news and events.

- Abuse of this email policy can result in your email address being blocked by the school administration.
- Parents should not use email for solicitation purposes.

Below are the guidelines and expectations to follow when using electronic communication. Parents are asked to respect instructional time and the teacher's supervision of the students placed in his/her charge.

Parents may send email to teachers under these circumstances:

- In reply to a teacher's email
- Asking a question that does not need an immediate response
- Setting up an appointment for the future, either in person or via the phone
- Advance notice of a student's absence or tardiness. Please make sure you email by 8:00AM the day of the absence to ensure the email is received.

Parents should not email teachers under these circumstances:

- In response to a disciplinary measure
- To ask a question that needs an immediate answer

- To express disagreement with a classroom policy, procedure, activity, etc.

Additional Notes for Parents:

- Expect a minimum 48 hour response time to an email.
- Email is not the forum to hold lengthy discussions requiring explanations.
- Teachers reserve the right to respond to an email with either an email or a phone call, as they see appropriate for the subject matter.
- If you, as a parent, prefer an email response, please say so. If email is not the proper method of communicating on the subject, an email reply requesting a phone call or face-to-face meeting may be sent by the teacher.
- Include a phone number, as well as a good time to reach you, should the subject matter be deemed inappropriate for email.
- Parents will not email teachers during the school day and expect an answer to their question or a response to their email that day.

GRADING/REPORT CARDS

Overall evaluation of the student is based on teacher judgment and observation of the student's daily work, class participation, effort, and performance on teacher prepared tests to include but not be limited to projects, portfolios, and other tools of assessment.

The purpose of report cards is to alert the parents/guardians and present to them an assessment of their child's achievement in his/her academic studies.

Students with identified disabilities who have a current IEP or Student Assistance Plan should receive an asterisk on their report card grade when modifications have been made to the curriculum. A modification changes the content, instructional level, or student work load of subject matter or tests. Conversely, accommodated programs should not be denoted.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grades 1-2

- | | |
|----|---|
| M | Meets Grade Level Standards – Child consistently meets skills |
| P | Progressing Towards Grade Level Standards - Child is in process of developing skill |
| NI | Needs Improvement – Child is not demonstrating skill |

ACADEMIC PROGRESS SCALE

The letter M, P or NI is indicated in the appropriate box for each subject area.

* (asterisk) indicates modified curriculum

Grades 3-8 use numeric (percentage) grades. Below 70 is designated by an F.

INDICATORS FOR EFFORT, SPECIALS, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

3	Very Good
2	Satisfactory/Good
1	Needs Improvement
X	Unsatisfactory

M: Meets Grade Level Standards – Child consistently meets skill

- Consistently meets established goals for achievement and contributions
- Consistently understands, transfers, applies and expands learned skills
- Consistently applies problem solving and critical thinking skills across the curriculum
- Consistently shows original, creative and intuitive thinking beyond standard expectations
- Consistently remains self-directed in his/her assignments
- Consistently finishes assignments within time limits
- Earns 85-100 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

P: Progressing Towards Grade Level Standards – Child is in process of developing skill

- Progressing towards expected goals for achievement and contributions
- Transfers learned skills with teacher direction
- With teacher direction, applies problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Progressing towards demonstrating original, creative and intuitive thinking
- Requires appropriate teacher direction to complete his/her assignments
- Progressing towards finishing assignments within time limits
- Earns 75-84 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

NI: Needs Improvement – Child is not demonstrating skill

- Does not meet established grade level goals for achievement and expectations
- Is inconsistent in transferring, applying, or expanding learned skills
- Is inconsistent in applying problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Is inconsistent in completing his/her assignments

- Needs additional teacher direction to satisfactorily complete his/her assignments
- Earns less than 75 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

Grades 1-2 Primary Report Card. Specials, Effort, and Personal Development Criteria.

The below criterion is used for subject skills under the main academic portion and for effort, specials, and personal development portions of the progress report for grades 1-2.

3 VERY GOOD

- Goes beyond established goals for achievement and contributions
- Understands, transfers, applies and expands learned skills
- Applies problem solving and critical thinking skills across the curriculum
- Shows original, creative and intuitive thinking beyond standard expectations
- Consistently remains self-directed in his/her assignments
- Consistently finishes assignments within time limits
- Consistently earns 90-100 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

2 SATISFACTORY/GOOD

- Meets expected goals for achievement and contributions
- Transfers learned skills with teacher direction
- With teacher direction, applies problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Demonstrates originality, creativity and intuitive thinking
- Requires appropriate teacher direction to complete his/her assignments
- Finishes assignments within time limits
- Earns 76-89 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

1 IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Does not meet established grade level goals for achievement and expectations
- Is inconsistent in transferring, applying, or expanding learned skills
- Is inconsistent in applying problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Is inconsistent in completing his/her assignments

- Needs additional teacher direction to satisfactorily complete his/her assignments
- Earns 70-75 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

X UNSATISFACTORY

- Is not meeting the above criteria
- Earns below 70 on tests, assignments, participation, projects, reports, etc.

Grades 3-8 Academic Progress Criteria. Grades 3-8 will use numeric (percentage) grades. Grades below a 70 will be designated as a “F” on the report card automatically by the administrative software. An * (asterisk) indicates a modified curriculum. The Diocese of Arlington does not equate percentage grades to A, B, C, D, etc.

Grades 3-8 Specials, Effort, and Personal Development Criteria. The below criteria should be used for effort, specials, and personal development portions of the report cards for grades 3-8.

3 VERY GOOD

- Goes beyond established goals for achievement and contributions
- Understands, transfers, applies and expands learned skills
- Applies problem solving and critical thinking skills across the curriculum
- Shows original, creative and intuitive thinking beyond standard expectations
- Consistently remains self-directed in his/her assignments
- Consistently finishes assignments within time limits
- Consistently earns 90-100 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

2 SATISFACTORY/GOOD

- Meets expected goals for achievement and contributions
- Transfers learned skills with teacher direction
- With teacher direction, applies problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Demonstrates originality, creativity and intuitive thinking
- Requires appropriate teacher direction to complete his/her assignments
- Finishes assignments within time limits
- Earns 76-89 on tests, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

1 IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Does not meet established grade level goals for achievement and expectations
- Is inconsistent in transferring, applying, or expanding learned skills
- Is inconsistent in applying problem solving and critical thinking skills in other curriculum areas
- Is inconsistent in completing his/her assignments
- Needs additional teacher direction to satisfactorily complete his/her assignments
- Earns 70-75 on tests, participation, assignments, projects, reports, etc.

X UNSATISFACTORY

- Is not meeting the above criteria
- Earns below 70 on tests, participation assignments, projects, reports, etc.

Power School

PreK progress reports are issued in January and June. PreK-8th grade parent teacher conferences occur in November.

Report cards for students in grades K-8 are issued at the end of each trimester. Parents and students have access to student grades through Power School. Since parents and students have access to grades through Power School, interim reports will not be sent home. Power School is the official school Student Information System for grades and attendance.

Teachers will update grades every week throughout the school year. Parents should review their child's progress regularly throughout each trimester so that no parent is unaware of a low grade or a low conduct or effort mark at the time of the report card. Teachers may also reach out in communication to parents with concerns about grades or conduct. Notification to parents during the trimester can prevent most academic failures and correct undesirable traits in conduct and effort, as well as help the teacher with developing a rapport with parents.

Corrected papers for students in grades 1-5 will be sent home in the weekly folder will reflect the student progress, which is reported on Power School.

All teachers will annotate * missing grades with standard codes available through Powerschool, as follows:

- m absent, missing work
- l late, missing work

Teachers use the follow indicators to communicate status of grades for assignments that are missing:

- ex student is exempt from this assignment
- 0 final zero –

For grades 1-2 students will only receive an effort grade in Spanish. Students in grades 3-8 receive an academic grade in Spanish.

For Middle School Grading Only: Middle School assignments will be weighted with 40% for tests, 35% for quizzes, and 25% for homework assignments. All middle school students may have cumulative exams once or twice a year. Students must be present for all middle school exams.

HONORS

Students in grades 3-8 may receive honor roll ribbons at the end of each trimester with the distribution of their report cards. The following criteria are used for the St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Honor Roll. Specials refer to art, music, and PE.

Angelic Doctor Honors: All 93's or better; all conduct, study and work habits, specials, and effort grades between 1-3 with no more than two 1's in any area; no X's in any area.

St. Dominic's List: All grades must be equal to or greater than 85, with at least 5 grades equal to or greater than 93; all conduct, study and work habits, specials, and effort grades between 1-3 with no more than two 1's in any area; no X's in any area.

St. Cecilia's List: All grades must be equal to or greater than 85; (or any combination of numeric grades which do not meet the St. Dominic List criteria) all conduct, study and work habits, specials, and effort grades between 1-3 with no more than two 1's in any area; no X's in any area.

The last report card may be mailed to parents after school closes. Please note that report cards can be held for outstanding balances, any violation of school policy, practice, and/or behavior contrary to the mission of the school.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Membership in the National Junior Honor Society is reserved for 7th and 8th grade students. Five ideals are considered as the basics for National Junior Honor Society selection. No student is inducted simply because of a high academic average. The National Junior Honor Society strives to recognize

the student who excels in the areas of **Leadership, Service, Character, Citizenship,** and **Scholarship**. These qualities are demonstrated by activities and teacher recommendations. Based on the above criteria, a faculty council makes selections for membership.

Academic Qualifications

Grades from the first trimester of the current year along with the previous year's final grades are averaged to determine those students who qualify academically. The student must have a cumulative grade of 92 percent or higher. Induction will be held during the second trimester.

Students who serve suspensions or repeated detentions will not be considered for admission into the Society. Likewise, current members will forfeit membership if they must serve repeated detentions, suspensions, or if there are any other behavioral concerns that are not in compliance with the mission of the school.

Additional Qualifications

Based on the application, teacher recommendation, and the faculty council evaluation, a student who demonstrates Leadership, Service, Character, Citizenship, and Scholarship, especially within the school community, will be considered for membership.

PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT POLICY

A major goal of the school is to assist students to complete each academic year satisfactorily. The repetition of a grade is recommended when it is deemed by the school to be necessary and advantageous to the particular needs of the student.

- a. The final decision to promote or retain a student is based on the student's academic performance and best interest as determined by the principal.
- b. Teachers will notify parents/guardians if their child is not progressing satisfactorily toward a passing grade in the course.
- c. Elementary students failing one or two academic areas must successfully complete a remediation program approved by the principal in order to be promoted to the next grade. If a student fails three or more core academic subjects, the student will not be promoted to the next grade.
- d. Students who have not successfully completed summer school or another program approved by the principal but would not benefit from being retained in the grade may be "placed" in the next grade level; however, the school must prepare and implement an "Academic Intervention Plan" for the student as a condition of placement.

Middle school students who are retained may not repeat a grade at this institution

Kindergarten Readiness

The following are some of the criteria used to determine if a student is ready to enter kindergarten:

- Actively and interactively participates in preschool activities, games, songs, etc.
- Follows 2 to 3 step directions.
- Recognizes printed first and last name.
- Prints first name.
- Demonstrates number recognition.
- Knows basic shapes.
- Demonstrates a familiarity with alphabet letters.
- Displays adequate attention span.
- Demonstrates self-discipline.
- Demonstrates an effective pencil-holding position.
- Displays positive social interaction.
- Exhibits independence in appropriate situations.
- Demonstrates a level of maturity that is indicative of success in kindergarten.

FAILING GRADES

If a student is failing any class they will not be allowed to participate in any extra curricular activity including sports, band, school musical, and choir.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

School counselors are available to confer with students in areas which may extend beyond academic matters. While the conferences are generally confidential, the counselor may need to disclose certain information to parents/guardians, school administration, or other authorities.

<h2>III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES</h2>
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ADMISSIONS

DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the age, health, academic, and behavioral requirements are eligible for admission* to the school.

The school sets registration procedures and admission policies. The availability of space and the order of preference for admission is determined by the school according to the following general criteria:

- a. Children from the parish
- b. Children from parishes without schools
- c. Children from parishes with schools (for sufficient reason)
- d. Children from non-Catholic families

If approved by the pastor, and where practicable, siblings may receive special consideration.

*All new students are accepted on probationary status and are considered fully enrolled upon successfully completing a full trimester.

AGE FOR ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN

Under Virginia state law (Code of Virginia 22.1-254) school attendance is compulsory for children who have reached their 5th birthday on or before September 30th of any school year. Readiness testing (fine/gross motor, speech, and language screen) is required for kindergarten entry and within 60 days of school admission for new students in grades 1 – 3. Additional school readiness testing may be conducted at the discretion of school officials. In those cases where the school has sufficient reservations regarding the potential for success, those students may be admitted on a conditional basis with dates and criteria of evaluation established in writing; however, the decision of whether to extend or remove conditional admission status should be made by school officials at their discretion.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION: PRESCHOOL – GRADE 5

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Current report card and previous academic years' report card as applicable
- e. Current standardized test scores and previous years, if applicable
- f. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- g. A non-refundable application fee
- i. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school
- j. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to

the student beginning school:

- i. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
 - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even though it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening)
- k. For Admission to the STARS Pre-K program, children must be able to use the restroom independently.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO GRADES 6 – 12

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of exact dates of immunization with signature of licensed healthcare provider
- d. Records from previous school, including standardized test scores
- e. Proof of custody where applicable
- f. Completed Diocesan Elementary or High School Application Form (Appendix J)
- g. A non-refundable application fee
- h. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
 - iii. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
 - iv. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even though it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening)
 - v. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

A student is admitted to the school on the premise the student intends to learn the Catholic religion and be educated in a Catholic environment. In certain cases, students may be admitted on a probationary basis subject to the student successfully completing one or more subsequent interim evaluations. Students with academic or other needs (i.e., behavioral), which cannot be reasonably addressed by the school, may be denied admission.

School application forms may request disability-related information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not prohibit a school from asking questions about a student's disabilities provided that information does not discriminate (automatically prohibit a student from applying).

F-1 (NON-IMMIGRANT)

1. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who apply for admission to a Diocese of Arlington Catholic school will be considered for admission, upon meeting the following conditions:
 - a. Meets Diocesan admission requirements as stated in Policy 601.2;
 - i. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
 1. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia with signature of licensed healthcare provider.
 2. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even though it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening.)
 - ii. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who enroll in a school in the Diocese for the first time must provide documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis.
 - b. Currently holds or is in the process of obtaining an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student visa;
 - c. Resides at the same U.S. address as the guardian;
 - i. Guardian cannot house more than two international students. Policy may be amended if requested in writing from a guardian in certain situations. For example, if international students are related to one another and/or related to the guardian.
 - d. Pays tuition in full upon school admission;
 - i. There is no refund given for registration, tuition or other related fees. The Diocese of Arlington does not provide healthcare insurance for international students.
 - e. Carries applicable healthcare insurance, including for emergencies, that may be needed while in the United States;

- i. The Diocese of Arlington does not provide healthcare insurance for international students.
2. Students meeting the above criteria and accepted for admission must complete the Diocese of Arlington *I-20 Application Form* and return the form to the school the student will be attending. The school must forward the Diocese of Arlington *I-20 Application Form* to the Office of Catholic Schools with the original signature of principal or admissions director.
3. When a student is transferring *from* another school outside the Diocese, the originating school must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the Diocese of Arlington. A Diocese of Arlington *International Student Transfer Report* must be completed by the originating school and returned to the Office of Catholic Schools along with the *I-20 Application Form*. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the originating school within 15 days of leaving that school to have the I-20 transferred;
 - a. A student must maintain status by attending classes until the transfer release date. Lack of attendance before the transfer date would be a violation of status and the student's SEVIS record should be terminated;
 - b. The student must report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school;
 - c. When a student is transferring *to* a school outside the Diocese of Arlington school system, the Diocese of Arlington must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the new school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Office of Catholic Schools within 15 days of leaving the Diocesan school to have the I-20 transferred.
4. In order for international students to maintain F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student status, the Department of Homeland Security requires ongoing accounting. In that regard, schools are responsible for ensuring the enrollment status of all F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students is reported correctly. Reports for elementary school international students will be accessed through the Student Information System district database. Specifically, the school shall:
 - a. Create and update elementary F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student record in the Student Information System, ensuring all fields pertaining to international students are completed. All F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student records must be completed and/or updated within 15 days of the beginning of every semester;
 - b. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the *Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form if an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student has been accepted by that school and fails to report to the school within 30 days of their Program Start Date;
 - c. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the *Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form within 15 days when an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student transfers to another school or departs the United States;
 - d. Report via the *Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form any legal change in the name, address, or guardianship of an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student within 10 days.
5. For students who hold a visa other than F-1, refer to Appendix AJ (*Visa Types*);

- a. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status cannot begin their studies prior to approval of their change to F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student. Obtaining a change of status is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
 - b. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status may be enrolled to audit classes at the discretion of the principal for a limited time (generally not more than two months) but must still meet Diocesan admission requirements pertaining to the MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form and provide documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis.
6. Any student applicant whose passport, United Nations travel document or other United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documents indicates that the student is a refugee, asylee, parolee, lawful nonimmigrant or legal permanent resident may be admitted to the schools of the Diocese of Arlington under normal requirements for admission. This policy would also include undocumented children.

CLASS PLACEMENT

The principal/administration and faculty reserve the right to place students in a class which is consistent with the results of the student's prior academic records and any admission testing.

Parents may not request a particular teacher for their child. The child's present teacher and the principal work together to place students in the most favorable learning environment possible to accommodate their individual learning styles. Twins are placed in separate rooms.

ATTENDANCE

DIOCESAN POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the curriculum, regular attendance by the student is mandatory.

The school (K-8) is normally in session not less than 180 days per academic year or the length of time as required by the Virginia Catholic Education Association.

Once a child is enrolled in the school as a student, it is the duty of the principal and teachers to insist on regular attendance in order that the school can progress successfully through the curriculum. Neither the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, the school, nor any of its employees are, however, responsible for ensuring actual attendance. This is the responsibility of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Students in grades kindergarten through grade eight who miss ten or more days of the school year, whether excused or unexcused, and who have not satisfactorily completed the required work, may be considered for retention. Certification of absence by a physician is an exception to the ten-day limit. However, satisfactory completion of required work is still required.

If efforts to work with a family to improve a student's attendance are unsuccessful, a school should

not continue to enroll who is not attending classes. Relatedly, schools should not continue to collect tuition from a family whose student is not regularly attending school.

ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL

In order to ensure continuous progress in school, regular attendance and habits of punctuality are essential. The school defines proper procedures as:

- a. A written excuse, explaining the reason for absence and signed by the parent/guardian, must be presented upon a student's return to school.
- b. Persistent absences may cause serious academic problems (including but not limited to course failure) and could result in the dismissal of the student. The administration or the class teacher will normally review the matter with parents/guardians before a decision is made by the administration. Persistent absences may also result in the student being subject to appropriate administrative action.
- c. Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/administration and/or a faculty member (as applicable or necessary), a student may only (a) be released from school with the prior written authorization of the student's parent/guardian, or (b) leave the school grounds with the prior authorization from the principal/administration.

TARDINESS

The tardy student will normally be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the school administration or by the class teacher. A student who is tardy, as determined by local policy, should report to the principal's office or attendance office. A student who arrives late with an excused reason (i.e. doctor's note) is counted tardy. The student who is tardy due to unexcused reasons may be subject to appropriate administrative action. Frequent cases of tardiness should be brought to the attention of the principal so that the parent/guardian may be contacted.

ABSENCES FOR OTHER REASONS

When parents wish to take their student out of school for several days for personal and/or medical reasons, the parents should discuss the student's progress with the teacher. However, the school is under no obligation to provide a tutor, make-up work, or special testing schedules for such a period of absence. The administration has the sole discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.

ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURES

The school day begins at 8:00 AM with prayers and announcements. All students should be in their classrooms by the first bell at 7:57 AM.

ABSENCE

Verification of Absences: Parents must notify the school office by 8:30 AM each day a student is absent. Parents may call the school office, email attendance@aquinastars.org or submit an absence form via the school

website and can be found on the *Quicklinks* section or under the *School Life* tab. If a student is absent and the school has not been notified, the office will contact the parents. In addition, students must bring a note from parents explaining any absence from school when they return. Any absence not explained by a note will automatically result in an unexcused absence, and all unexcused absence policies will apply (see below). Reporting an absence by any of these 3 reporting methods does not automatically record the absence as excused.

Excused Absences: Absences will be excused for the following reasons after verified contact with the parent or guardian, to include a written explanation of the absence:

- student illness
- medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during school hours
- student participation in school-sponsored activities taking place during school hours (no note necessary)
- death in the immediate family
- emergency conditions in the student's home which require special help from the student in caring for the sick or injured

Excused Absent Work Policies:

- Work will not be provided in advance of the absence.
- Teachers will not instruct again
- All assignments and assessments are to be completed upon return
- The number of days absent are the number of days given to complete the missed work (ex. If a child is absent for three days, he has three days to complete the work)
- Assignments NOT turned in by the required date will be given a grade of zero
- Make-up assignments are the student's responsibility. Upon returning to school, students should check the master assignment book or follow the teacher's directives. In the case of extended absences, exceeding two days, parents may request books and homework by emailing the student's teacher(s) by 8:00AM the third day of absence to ensure the email is received. Items may be picked up between 3:00–3:30PM from the school office. Middle school students are responsible for scheduling with their teachers any missed quizzes and tests. For students in graded K-5, teachers will schedule missed quizzes and tests.

Unexcused Absences: Absences other than those mentioned above, or any absences without a written explanation from parents, will be considered **unexcused**. Absent work policies are applied at the principal's discretion for unexcused absences. In the case of an unexcused absence, the following policies apply:

Unexcused Absent Work Policies:

- Work will not be provided in advance of the absence.
- Teachers will not instruct again
- All assignments and assessments are to be completed upon return
- The number of days absent are the number of days given to complete the missed work (ex. If a child is absent for three days, he has three days to complete the work)
- These assignments will be marked as "exempt" in PowerSchool once they are turned in
- Assignments NOT turned in by the required date will be given a grade of zero.
- Make-up assignments are the **student's** responsibility. Upon returning to school, students should check the master assignment book or follow the teacher's directives. In the case of extended absences, exceeding two days, parents may request books and homework by emailing the student's teacher(s) by 8:00AM the third day of absence to ensure the email is received. Items may be picked up between 3:00–3:30PM from the school office. Middle school students are responsible for scheduling with their teachers any missed quizzes and tests. For students in graded K-5, teachers will schedule missed quizzes and tests.

TARDINESS

A student not in his/her homeroom by 8:00 AM is considered late/tardy. A student who is tardy should report to the office.

The student will be issued a late pass, and the student will then proceed to class. The student will present the late pass to his/her teacher, and the student's name will then be removed from the absentee list. Students who arrive after 8:15AM must be accompanied by an adult, who will then sign them in at the receptionist's desk.

Late arrival at school will be excused for the following reasons:

- situations arising from unusual weather conditions;
- unusual delays due to major traffic congestion;
- medical, eye, and dental examination and/or treatment of the student.

Although these late arrivals are considered excused, students must still report to the school office, and all tardies will appear on the student's report card.

Students receiving special services that leave school early or arrive late are not marked absent or tardy.

Due to the detrimental impact of tardies on the instructional program, more than **16** unexcused tardies in one school year may result in the student being retained. Five tardies in a trimester is considered excessive. Parents should make every effort to be on time for each school day. Arriving at 7:50 AM is ideal, giving the students time to put their things away and get ready for their day.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

Parent or guardian must send a written explanation of an absence for

- student illness
- medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during school hours

Students may be required to bring a note from a physician if they are absent for more than three days.

ANTICIPATED ABSENCE

Work is not issued ahead of time for students who anticipate being out of school. Work that is missed can be obtained and made up upon the student's return. Students will follow the directives for make-up work as previously stated.

Vacation: Parents are asked to plan family vacations during the scheduled breaks from school. Parents are asked not to extend the school's scheduled breaks by leaving early or returning late. Vacations are not permitted outside of scheduled breaks, and are considered **unexcused** absences (see above). The 3rd Trimester will end the last day of school. Parents should honor this when planning vacations.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Parents Going to the Classroom: Parents coming to school for dismissal of a student are to go to the office to sign the student out. **THEY SHOULD NOT GO TO THE CLASSROOM**, since no student may be released from school when proper procedures are not followed.

The office staff cannot call any student for early departure within 30 minutes of dismissal including early dismissals and special programs. Since the school day ends at 3:00 PM each day, no child will be picked up later than 2:30 PM for an early release (1:30 for a 2pm dismissal and 11:30 for a 12 noon dismissal). The end of the school day is busy for teachers and staff. If a student has an appointment after school, pick-up will be made before the above stated time. In addition, no student will be pulled from a school wide program, including Stations of the Cross or Grandparents Day.

Siblings and students who ride to and from school with Aquinas sports players may not leave school early to attend a sporting event. Parents must make other arrangements for transportation for their children.

Parent /school cooperation is critical to ensure constant supervision of children. The school will be informed of individuals who are forbidden access to a student. While only parents or persons authorized by parents and made known to the principal have access to students in our care, there are circumstances when written custody/court documentation must be on file. Please speak directly to the principal concerning these sensitive areas.

Any change in plans for the student leaving school must be in writing and bear the signature of the parent for all students. This is for the students' protection, for the legal protection of the school, and the peace of mind of all concerned. Cooperation and patience are requested when the school asks for clarification of plans. At all times the school will be overly cautious in releasing a student when circumstances appear unusual.

TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

The school must be notified in writing by the parent(s) of a student regarding a decision to transfer a student to another school, including the last day the student will attend classes at school. All school-owned materials such as textbooks and library books must be returned to school and all fees paid before leaving. Scholastic information will be sent to the new school upon a "Release of Student Records Form" from the new school. All fees and tuition **MUST BE PAID** prior to the release of the student's records.

All records of student progress will be sent to the office of the next school a child will be attending. They may not be hand-carried by parents. A record release form must be signed by a parent or legal guardian before the school will transfer academic records.

STUDENTS NOT RETURNING

If a student is not returning for the upcoming school year, parents must notify the admissions office **in writing** no later than **March 1**. Likewise, parents must send written notification if they are withdrawing their child during the

school year. Tuition payments may be adjusted only after written notification is received.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Teacher recommendations are written in good faith by the teacher and are not permitted to be read by the parent. The teacher will mail the recommendation directly to the applicant's perspective school. Parents need to allow 2-3 school days for recommendations for student to be completed.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Each school should formulate a policy of traffic, pedestrian, bike, and bus safety for its students and communicate this policy to all school personnel, students, and their parents/guardians. Older students in elementary schools and secondary school students may serve as traffic/pedestrian safety patrols at the discretion of the school principal. Within the scope of this designation, the students shall work under the supervision of and in cooperation with the school principal and the local police liaison for safety issues.

MORNING DROP-OFF: The school is not responsible for students brought to school before 7:30 AM. Parents who must leave their child before 7:30 AM must make arrangements with Extended Day or with another day care facility.

Students arriving before 7:30 AM will not be allowed to enter the building. If children are left at school before 7:30am they will be directed to Extended Day and families will be charged accordingly at the RATE OF \$15/Hr if they are not registered in Extended Day.

DISMISSAL FROM MORNING ONLY PRE-K SESSION

Please park your car in the church's large parking lot and proceed to the faculty entrance. The Pre-K teacher and instructional assistant will call and personally hand off each student to the parent/guardian. Parents will collect their children from the teacher or aide and escort them directly back to their car. Students and siblings may not run or play in the pick-up areas due to safety and noise concerns.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL: On a regular dismissal day students are dismissed immediately following 3:00 PM closing prayers and announcements. Pre-K students leave the building at 2:45 PM. The faculty and staff supervise all dismissals. **Parents are requested to cooperate with them to make dismissal as safe and efficient as possible.**

Students may not remain at school after dismissal unless they are registered at Extended Day or are participating in a school activity starting immediately after school. Students left after 3:20 PM will be supervised by the designated late pick up staff and will be charged accordingly AT THE RATE OF

\$15/HOUR/PER CHILD.

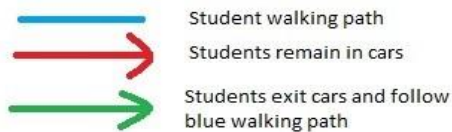
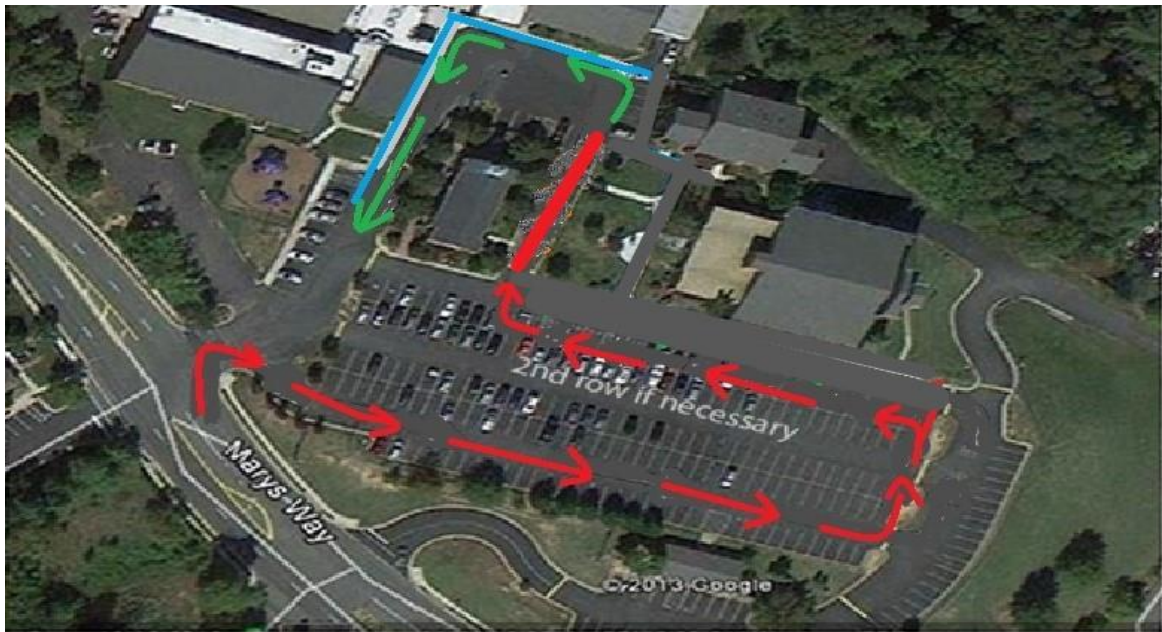
AM DROP OFF AND PM PICK UP PROCEDURES

Please read and follow the following drop-off and pick up procedures. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that anyone who drives students to school or collects them at dismissal is familiar with the following arrival and dismissal procedures. Parents are expected to adhere to the drop-off and pick up procedures as outlined in this handbook. Repeated departures from the policies outlined here will result in fines and your student being held in the school building until after normal procedures have been completed.

MORNING DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

Morning Drop off does not begin until Carpool Staff are in place and indicate that drop off procedures should begin. Please respect the directions given by the Carpool Staff.

- Enter school grounds from Mary's Way and immediately follow the sharp right turn.
- Drive to the far end of the parking lot following route closest to St. Vincent de Paul building.
- At the end of the parking lot, bear left until your car is parallel to the sidewalk adjacent to the church.
- Vehicles will be given a signal to begin a second row.
- Please wait for direction before turning right onto the street between the church and the chapel.
- Cars should not stop in the lane between the church and the chapel and no student should disembark from vehicles in this area (area indicated by orange lines in the picture below)
- Follow the street and bear left at the front of the school staying as close to the curb as possible.
- Continue around the circle (always driving close to the curb) stopping at the end where the carpool duty person is standing – beginning of faculty parking.
- When the car in front of you stops to allow students to disembark, you should do the same. Students may only exit and walk in areas adjacent to the student walking path indicated in blue below.
- Exit the parking lot to Mary's Way always following the car in front of you. If passengers from the car in front of you are not finished disembarking, but yours are, please wait. Do not pass any cars to exit.

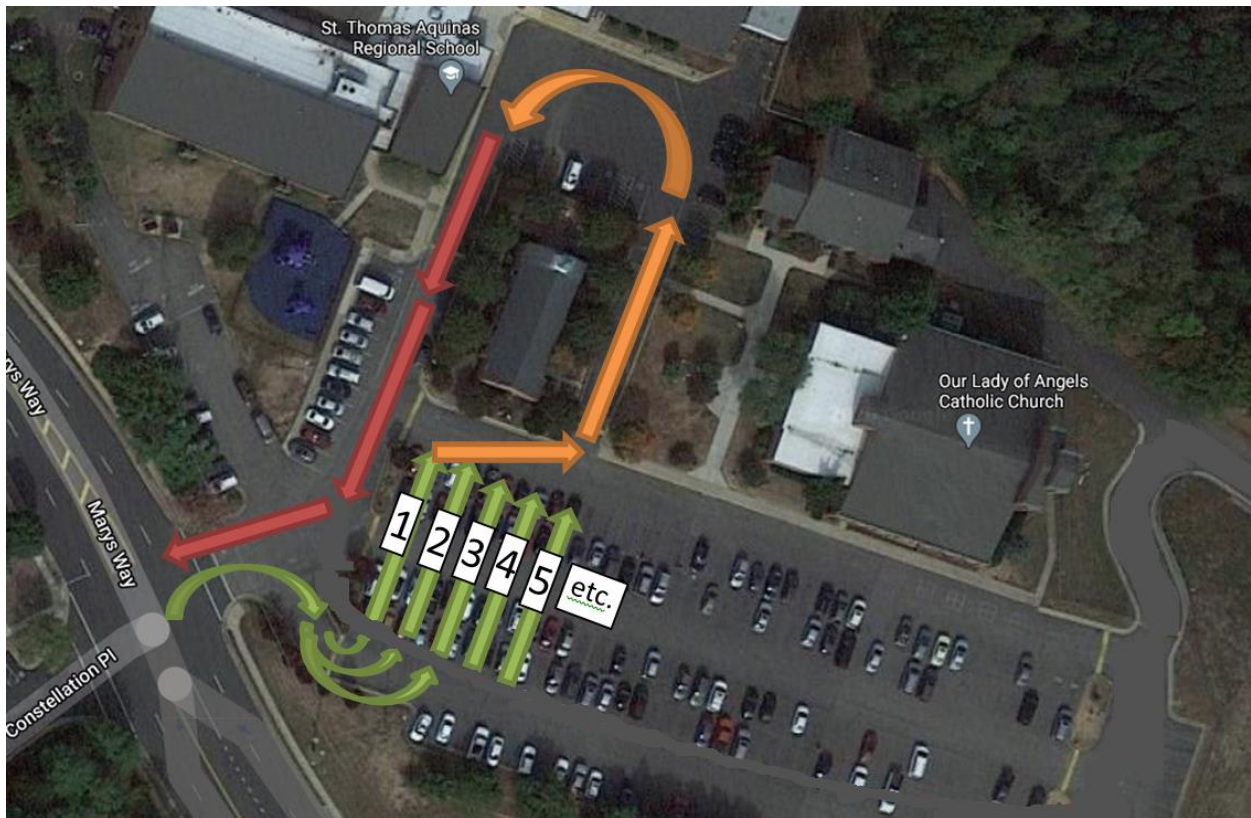


All students will come into the school by themselves. If it is necessary for you to come into the building, please drop your child off following normal drop-off procedures, park your car in the parking lot, and come into school. Do not enter or exit the parking lot by any other route other than Mary's Way.

AFTERNOON PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Dismissal does not begin until Carpool Staff are in place and indicate that dismissal should begin. Please respect the directions given by the Carpool Staff.

All families are issued a carpool number unique to their family. Each family will receive 2 laminated copies of their family carpool number. One copy of the number should be placed on the passenger side of the dashboard next to the windshield of the vehicle picking up students.



- As cars arrive, they should fill in the first row front to back, then the second row front to back and so on. (green lines) (Row 1 starts closest to the entrance of the parking lot and rows move down toward exit to Easy Street)
- Cars should place their pick up number in the front passenger side of the windshield. A monitor will record your carpool number in the daily google log for regulated dismissal.
- Monitors will call students to be dismissed in row order, beginning at 3:00pm after prayers.
- Please wait for a monitor to direct your row into the circle drive near the entrances to the school. (orange lines)
- Students will exit the building and monitors will help direct them to their car using the carpool numbers assigned.
- Once students have filled the cars in the circle, the drivers will be directed to exit onto Mary's Way. (red lines)

Pets. Even if restrained on a leash, pets of any kind are not permitted outside of cars in the parking lot or in the school.

Lunch Program

Aquinas has a five day a week optional hot lunch program available to students in grades PK-8. Menus for the current month and previous months are available through links on the school website. The ordering window is open the first of the month through midnight on the 28th. ***No late orders will be accepted.*** Current policies for refunds, snow days and absences are also located on the School LifeTab/Lunch Menu. The meals are pre-ordered and the caterer will provide the quantity requested. The program is run by a coordinator and a staff of volunteers.

Students bringing lunches from home may purchase juice, ice cream, and other snacks at school during lunch periods.

Students bringing lunches from home are not allowed to bring soda, energy drinks, or Gatorade to school for lunch. Water bottles are encouraged. Parents may also send in juice, milk, and drink pouches.

Pre-K snack and Lunch

Each family is responsible for providing their child's snack/lunch for each day, Monday through Friday. Our Pre-K program falls under the Virginia State Guidelines and Regulations listed below. Your compliance with these guidelines is essential and will insure for the ongoing health and safety of your child.

- The snack is provided by each individual child's family. Please note: Our Pre-K program does not provide snack
- The child's Name and Date must be clearly written on the food bag, food package, food container, can, cup, etc. Snack and Lunch must be labeled separately.
- Pre-K families must notify the Pre-K program of any child food allergies.

Important Note: Every year we have several children with serious peanut allergies. *** Please do not send any peanut butter or peanut products with your child as the children all sit together during snack time.***

IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMINISTRATIVE

STUDENT CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

At the time of school entry or at any other time where a change in custody status/arrangements occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the principal/administration with a true and correct copy of the legal document for any student for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any student not residing with his/her parent.

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

- a. Custodial parents should identify, in writing, other adults who may have access to information regarding their child.
- b. Non-custodial parents may receive information (when requested) regarding the child unless specific documentation to the contrary is provided in the legal custody agreement.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents/Guardians have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection of the educational records (cumulative and confidential) of their child during school hours. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

If the education records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parents are limited to the specific information about their child only.

Student records shall be open to authorized school personnel only (principal, assistant principal, and those to whom they extend access within a given year.)

The school administration may elect to provide, at cost, photocopies of a student's educational records to parents, but documentation is to be stamped "unofficial."

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

Schools may disclose a student's cumulative record (i.e. Permanent Record card, attendance card, test results) to another school with legitimate educational interest provided a written request for such records is received, or when those individuals to whom the custodial parent/guardian has given written permission, have requested the child's records to be released. Parent signature is required for release of a student's confidential file (i.e. special education records, psychological reports, disciplinary records, anecdotal information, or reports by the school counselor).

Only copies of student records may be released. Original Cumulative Health Record and MCH-213 transfer with the student.

Parents/guardians may not hand-carry records to another school, except under extraordinary circumstances. If this occurs, the records are to be placed in a sealed envelope and marked "hand carried."

As a general rule, each school, at the discretion of its principal, shall have the right not to certify the student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to third parties such as other schools, colleges, or employers, or to issue a Certificate of Diploma to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the contract (i.e., failure to meet financial obligations, infractions against the school's code of conduct).

CONFIDENTIAL ACADEMIC RECORDS

Parents/guardians are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school.

Confidential records for dis-enrolled students are merged with the students' cumulative files.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

The following student records are to be retained indefinitely:

Permanent record card (to include transcripts, attendance record, and standardized test results)

The following student records are to be retained for 25 years:

- a. IEP/ISP or 504 Plan
- b. Student Assistance Plan
- c. Eligibility Minutes
- d. Student Assistance Team minutes

The following student records are to be retained for 7 years, or when the students reaches the age of 25, whichever is greater:

- a. Application
- b. Counselor notes
- c. Discipline notes
- d. Court Documents
- e. Psychological reports

SCHOOL VISITORS

All persons other than school staff and currently registered students must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds, sign-in, and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

Visitors or volunteers must sign in at the front office and wear the visitor nametag provided while in the building. Aquinas alumni will be permitted to visit former teachers only after 3:00 PM.

For the privacy of our students, it is our policy at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, that we do not allow visitors in the classroom, unless you are invited by the school or classroom teacher or the visit is for a purpose that serves all the students.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Each Tuesday* the *Crusader Connection* (weekly newsletter) link and school flyers will be emailed and a link posted to the Quick Links on the home page of the school website.

PRINCIPAL'S COMMUNICATION

Any communication from the Principal to parents/guardians can be in the form of writing, email, or a telephone call. If parents/guardians wish to speak with the Principal, please call the school office during regular school hours and an appointment will be made.

TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION

All materials prepared by parents/guardians for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the Principal or his/her designee.

A folder will be sent home on Tuesday for grades Pre-K through 5 and will contain graded tests, quizzes, papers, notes, etc. The folder will be signed by a parent and returned in a timely manner.

*On the weeks when there is a Monday holiday, the folder may be sent home on Wednesday.

Parents are encouraged to inquire and discuss the progress of their child at any time during the school year. To make an appointment with a teacher, a parent should leave a message on their voicemail, send a written note, or email the teacher. The teacher will return the call during a free period or after school hours within 24 hours. Teachers should return written communication within 48 hours.

Teachers will communicate a more specific communication framework at *Back to School* night.

TELEPHONE USE/MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

Students will not be called out of class for telephone messages. If the matter is urgent, the message should be given to the receptionist. The receptionist will then call the teacher who will give the message to the student. No student will use a cell phone during school hours. If an emergency arises and proper permission is granted from the office and/or from the teacher, students may use the phone in the school office.

Students will not call home for items they may have forgotten (books, lunches, assignments, musical instruments, etc.)

Messages and deliveries must be made through the school office. This includes lunches, books, and musical instruments. **No messages will be delivered to students after 2:30 PM, and only emergency messages** will be delivered at any time.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In addition to the traditional 180 school days, schools should add at least three extra days to the school calendar each year to accommodate days off due to inclement weather or other non-weather related emergencies. In the event these inclement weather/emergency days are not used, schools may dismiss for summer after completing the required 180 school days. If, however, during the course of the year, the school uses more than three inclement weather/emergency days, it is not necessary for the school to extend its school year beyond the 183 budgeted days, provided the school has surpassed 1038 hours of instructional time (as defined by the Commonwealth of Virginia).

If, during the course of the year, the school uses inclement weather/emergency days, it may be necessary to modify the published school calendar.

If school closes unexpectedly for a single day, there will be no academic requirements for that day. If, however, the school will be closed for an extended period due to weather or public health concern, the school will transition into on-line (virtual instruction) for the required duration and students will meet academic requirements.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School normally follows the directives issued for Prince William County (PWC) when road or weather conditions or other emergency situations are severe making it impractical to operate school. The school's website will also announce closings. Parents are asked to refer to the website when radio and TV stations do not broadcast the announcement.

It is to be assumed that Aquinas will follow PWC unless Aquinas makes an announcement to the contrary. To do so Aquinas will use the school messenger system.

In the event that the principal finds it necessary to announce an unscheduled closing of school or if Prince William County schools are closed and it is not a school holiday for St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, the school messenger system will be used, as well as a posting on the website.

The school messenger system will only be used to notify a decision that is contrary to PWC.

If the announcement for Prince William County is "to open two hours late" on a day that dismissal for St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School is scheduled for 12 noon, Aquinas will then open two hours late and have a **regular dismissal at 3:00 PM** that day. Another early dismissal day may have to be scheduled. Hot lunch will not be served on days when a 12 PM dismissal was originally scheduled. Milk and snacks will be sold as usual.

On days when the opening of school is delayed the half day Pre-K sessions will meet from 10:00-12:00 (on a 2 hr delay)

Extended Day: When school opens late due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, the morning session of Extended Day will delay opening, and will end when school opens. (For example, if school opening is delayed two hours until 10:00 AM, the morning session will delay opening for two hours until 8:00 AM.)

When school closes early for any emergency/weather situation, there will be **NO** Extended Day. Children must be picked up during the revised dismissal time.

The Diocesan Superintendent of Schools will publish annually a Diocesan school calendar for the following school year.

PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA

Parents/guardians may opt their children out of participating in videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography, or participation involving the Internet. When a parent decides to exercise this right, the school is required to use the *Waiver/Right to Object* form (*Appendix N*). All student or parental publications are subject to review and approval by the school administration prior to publication.

MEDIA CENTER

All books chosen for classroom reading in Diocesan schools must be appropriate for students, not only in age level and reading ability, but also for the moral development which we are working to foster. All books shall conform with Diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents, guardians or teachers who object to reading or multi-media/audio-visual/computer

materials used in the classroom must complete an Objection to Content Form (Appendix K) after they have read the book or viewed the media and then submit it to the school principal. Those objecting to materials obtained in the school medial center should complete Objection to Content Form for Library Materials (Appendix K-1). A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review. The Superintendent of Schools has the final say in any subsequent question of this review.

BOOK RENEWAL POLICY

- Students are given a one-day grace period to return library books without being assessed an overdue fine.
- Students interested in renewing a library book must have the book with them. If they do not have the book with them on the due date, they will be unable to renew and, or check out additional books.
- Fine and overdue notices will be sent home in the weekly folders. If your child receives a library notice, please resolve the matter promptly so they may continue to enjoy their library book privileges.

Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader is a school-wide (gr. 1-8) reading enrichment program. The program is computer networked for classroom, library, and computer lab use. Books for the program may be borrowed from the school library, public library, and classroom library. Program incentives, which are offered to students on an annual schedule are organized by the librarian. For further information, please see the librarian.

FIELD TRIPS

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance enhance the lessons of the classroom. Field trips, virtual or in person, are planned by teachers and approved by the school administration with educational purposes as the primary objective and in light of financial considerations.

Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct will apply.

A permission form signed by a student's parent(s)/guardian (s) must be obtained prior to a student participating in each activity (Appendix R, available in PowerSchool).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, parents, or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the principal/administration for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. Appendix R-1 must be used for this purpose. The principal/administration shall have the right to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting students on a field trip.

Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated in the front seat. Cell calls and texting are not permitted while driving.

Parents/guardians are to be furnished with detailed written information about the field trip, and must be given the opportunity to “opt out” their children from the field trip.

Teachers and other school employees should not drive students in their personal vehicles.

It should also be understood, in light of world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans, that it may be necessary to cancel school-sponsored trips due to world and national developments at any time.

School-sponsored ski trips are not permitted.

Alcohol shall NEVER be served to minors, regardless of cultural norms and/or parent permission while on a Field Trip/Experience.

All medications given on field trips must comply with medication administration policies. For a student with prescription medication and/or medically necessary health related procedures or treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on the field trip such as; a school nurse, parent/guardian, or designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency. If a trained individual of the school is unable to chaperone the student on a field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a trained individual to accompany the student.

Occasionally parents may accompany students on school-sponsored trips only as a designated chaperone. Individual classroom teachers will notify parents if additional chaperones are necessary. Parents designated as chaperones must be certified/compliant volunteers and may not bring additional children on field trips. Additional adults are not permitted to join the trip.

Daily medications, epi pens or inhalers will be sent on any fieldtrip for a child who has these medications and required paperwork on file in the clinic. Should the need arise, teachers / school employee will administer medications.

Even if parents accompany students on field trips, students must go and return from the trip with their class.

Parents will be notified of the departure and arrival times of all trips. If it has been predetermined that students will return from a trip later than normal dismissal time, parents will pick up their children at the time that the teacher has specified. Late charges will be levied on parents who arrive late to collect their children in accordance with the late fee policy as specified for normal school dismissals.

Pre-K classes do not usually go on field trips off school grounds. Most field trips take place on the school campus

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight trips are not permitted for elementary school children.

MARCH FOR LIFE POLICY

Students are offered varied opportunities to participate in activities that promote the sanctity of life.

Principals may permit students in grades 7 through 12 with permission of their parent/guardian to participate in the March for Life in a group sponsored by the school or the parish. Procedures detailed under "School-Sponsored Trips" must be followed. The principal is not authorized to permit students in grades K through 6 to participate as a group in the March for Life. Students with written parental permission may accompany their parents on the March for Life.

Students who accompany parents on the March for Life should not be marked as absent for that day. From time-to-time it has been the case that world or local events raise concern about the advisability of school-sponsored student participation in the March for Life and related events. When this happens, principals should use prudent judgment when deciding on attending the March and should consider appropriate alternatives that can be conducted at the school level.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/CEREMONIES

Students must earn their certificate of completion. The school does not guarantee the award of this certificate to students. In order to graduate, students must satisfactorily complete (by attaining a passing grade) all courses as required by the Diocese of Arlington and the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, students must comply with all school regulations and policies.

The principal shall have the right to withhold certification of a student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to other schools, or to issue a Certificate of Completion to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the contract (i.e., failure to meet financial obligations or infractions against the school's code of conduct).

Graduation ceremonies should be simple and dignified.

The Liturgy is highly recommended. Certificates signifying completion of studies may be given upon completion of 8th grade.

There will be an 8th grade field trip, a graduation party, and an 8th grade awards ceremony scheduled.

All 8th grade students are required to wear a graduation cap, gown and tassel supplied by St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School through the 8th grade student fee.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Parent-Teacher Organizations (and like-named entities) support the critical relationship between schools and parents, the primary educators of their children. These organizations help the head of school/principal advance the school's mission.

"...since parents have conferred life on their children they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, most parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and men that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs..." (Declaration on Christian Education – Vatican Council II)

All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents must be submitted to the principal/administration for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the pastor. In consultation with the principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the pastor and principal for approval

Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. An effective Parent-Teacher Organization helps the principal advance the school's mission. It can also help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education.

The PTO works to unify parents in an effort to raise funds each year for specific school events that benefit the student body. Fundraising efforts will be planned in advance with ample notification for parents to participate.

PTO Membership consists of all families and teachers. The PTO chairs shall have the responsibility for conducting the PTO business and for reviewing and acting upon PTO events.

Room Parents:

A function of the PTO is to coordinate the duties of room parents at Aquinas. Room Parents help plan and execute classroom events and religious observances. Sixth and seventh grade parents plan and host the Awards Ceremony and Graduation Reception for the 8th grade students and their families.

FUNDRAISING

Any program of generating additional revenue should have the approval of school leadership (pastor, principal, head of school). These activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted.

Students may participate in, and cooperate with, worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by a school or parish, provided such activities have been approved by the school leadership (pastor, principal, head of school).

Since tuition does not cover the entire cost of educating a child, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School balances its budget with an Annual Appeal Drive and other fundraisers each year. Each parent is expected to contribute to these efforts for the good of the students.

The Development Office oversees the annual fund-raising calendar. This calendar is created in the spring of each year. The addition of fundraisers during the school year is at the discretion of the principal.

SOLICITATION OF DONATIONS

All donation solicitations should be discussed with and approved by the Development Office. The Development Office will then submit the proposed solicitation to the Principal for approval. Donation solicitations must not be initiated prior to receiving final approval.

When soliciting for approved donation requests, please report back to the Development Office with the response to the donation request, including details about the donation (cash, gift in kind, etc.), a description of the donation, and who received the donation.

The donation solicitation requirements exist to protect the school's non-profit status, preserve existing relationships with outside resources, ensure a coordinated approach to donation requests, and fulfill financial details for audit purposes. If you are unsure whether a particular contact would fall under a donation solicitation, please contact the Development Office.

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

There are parent organized car pools transporting students. Inquire at the school office for more information concerning these car pools. Parents may make arrangements with private childcare facilities for the drop off and pick up of their children. The school office must be notified if these arrangements are made.

There is no school bus that services St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School students

V. FINANCES

DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

APPLICATION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

All school families participating in the program must submit the same application form (available in English and Spanish) along with all supporting tax documents as required and a processing fee payable to the private vendor.

To be eligible to receive funds from this program, students must satisfy all of the criteria described below:

- a. A baptized Catholic or convert officially received into the Church
- b. Family resides within the boundaries of the Diocese of Arlington
- c. Family is registered and an active member of the parish
- d. Student attends, or is accepted by, a Catholic school in the Diocese of Arlington

The deadline for submitting applications to the contracted vendor is determined annually. Applications received after the stated due date will be considered for tuition assistance if funds are still available.

Although students from families residing on local military bases are not domiciled in a Diocesan parish, those students are eligible for the Diocese of Arlington Tuition Assistance Program.

The funds from the program will be paid directly to the school that the qualifying student attends. Schools will credit the tuition accounts for those families who have been approved to receive aid for that school year.

SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

A family's tuition obligation continues even when the school shifts to a virtual model. The education of each student continues with teachers planning and delivering lessons and assessing student progress. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the principal should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

Financial Policies

- As part of the registration process, all Aquinas parents will sign the St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Tuition Contract. In signing this contract, parents make a conscious commitment to educate their children at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School and help to ensure their enrollment for the upcoming school year. The contract also helps the

administration with budget planning, class lists, and placing new students from the large waiting pool.

- **The first FACTS payment (or equivalent if paying upfront) for the upcoming school year, due in June, is nonrefundable.**
- For families who withdraw before the end of the current school year, the tuition will be pro-rated through the month of withdrawal to calculate the final payment or refund due. Student fees will not be refunded in any part.
- If the tuition payment is delinquent and an acceptable alternative arrangement has not been approved by the principal, the following will occur:
 - The student's continued enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School will be jeopardized.
 - records for students leaving St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School may not be forwarded
 - Middle school students may not be permitted to take exams in June.
 - A student may not be permitted to graduate if there is an outstanding tuition balance.
- The tuition payments must be current by January 20 in order for a family to register for the following school year. By registering for the following year, a family commits to the payment of the first month's tuition and fees, which are non-refundable.
- For families who enroll after September, the tuition payments are prorated, but the entire student Fees will be paid.
- There will be a \$10.00 charge for any checks returned by the bank. The amount of the returned check and the charge must be paid with a money order or cashier's check. Any payment made after May 25 may require a money order or cashier's check. Personal checks may not be accepted.

2023-2024 TUITION AND FEES

Number of PK-8 students	PARISHIONER Parish pays subsidy per student <i>Our Lady of Angels, St Elizabeth Ann Seton, Sacred Heart</i>	NON- PARISHIONER	NON-CATHOLIC / NON-ACTIVE
One	\$7,651	\$8,781	\$9,410
Two	\$14,536	\$16,684	\$17,878
Three	\$19,509	\$22,391	\$23,995
Four	\$22,952	\$26,343	\$28,229

Pre-K Tuition (FULL day) see rate schedule above

Pre-K Tuition (1/2 day) \$4,705 per year not including fees (Please note: Pre-K tuition is not eligible for tuition assistance)

FAMILY SERVICE HOURS

10 hours per family per school year (5 required each semester) A cash fee of \$20 may be substituted for each service hour. Unfulfilled service hours will be charged at the end of each semester.

FAMILY APPLICATION FEE

\$150 per new family. \$75 for current family Sibling application Paid when the application is submitted. (non-refundable)

FAMILY REGISTRATION FEE

\$100 per family. Paid after acceptance. Due with registration paperwork. (non-refundable). Current families – registration fee will be processed through FACTS agreement February 19, 2023.

LATE FAMILY REGISTRATION FEE

\$250 per family. Current families who register after **February 19, 2023** will be charged the Late Registration Fee (non-refundable)

STUDENT FEE

\$160 per student (non-refundable). The Student Fee is assessed per student for PTO dues, field trips, classroom events, Youth Rally, testing materials, and initial school supplies including composition books, pencils, crayons, scissors and other necessary items.

8th GRADE FEE

\$75 per 8th grade student (non-refundable). This fee covers the cost of the cap and gown, a yearbook for each student and money towards graduation events.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School tuition and fees may be paid in full by June of the current school year

OR

Payments may be made monthly for up to 12 months from either a checking or savings account beginning in June and ending in May for each school year through FACTS Tuition Management Company.

An annual \$45.00 **FACTS** registration fee will be charged to your bank account by FACTS Tuition Management Company.

The monthly FACTS payment is calculated by adding the tuition amount and

the applicable fees and prorating the payments over 12 months, if beginning in June and ending in May. All monthly payments must be completed by May of the current school year.

When registering parents, must sign the St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Tuition Contract. In signing this contract, parents make a conscious commitment to educate their children at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School and help to ensure their enrollment for the upcoming school year. Tuition may be paid in full by June 1, 2023 or in monthly payments through enrollment in the *FACTS Tuition Management Company*. The first FACTS payment (or equivalent if paying in full) for the upcoming school year, due in June, is nonrefundable. If the tuition payment is delinquent and an acceptable alternative arrangement has not been approved by the principal, the student's continued enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School will be jeopardized. The family will be invoiced from the Business Office based on the completed and signed Tuition Contract and Parish Confirmation form. Registration is not complete until the non-refundable Family registration fee of \$100 is paid and you have established an active FACTS agreement, unless paying in full. Registrations may be voided if an active FACTS agreement or payment of full tuition are not complete by June 1, **2021**. Families with pending applicants and newly accepted students, please refer to your admission paperwork for specific deadlines.

Outstanding balances may result in suspension of your access to PowerSchool or prevent registration for extracurricular activities. Please make prompt payment of any outstanding balances including Extended Day, Lunch or Unfulfilled Volunteer Service Hours.

Incidental billing will be processed through your FACTS agreement, including Extended Day, lunch, damaged book fees and unfulfilled Service Hours. You may contact the Business Office to request processing of other charges as well. If you prefer to elect out of Incidental Billing through FACTS contact the Business Office.

Classroom Money (Collection / Reimbursement and Purchase) Guidelines

In an effort to simplify and streamline the money handling process, strengthen our internal controls, and satisfy our auditors, the following Aquinas money handling guidelines and procedures have been established:

Collections and Deposits:

- All monies collected at the school are sent to the front office to be accounted for by a designated person
- All deposits are made by the business office

Check Requests:

- Parents may submit an itemized check request to your homeroom teacher for initial approval and a check directly to the vendor prior to the purchase using Class account funds or submit receipts with a check request form obtained from your teacher for reimbursement.
- Checks are requested by Tuesday at noon and cut Wednesday afternoon

Class Accounts:

Each grade level will have an account for the school year. There is only a notational separation between homerooms. Funds are allocated each year from the student fee to cover planned classroom events and field trips. Each teacher is responsible for their homeroom budget and is the primary contact for funds usage. Teachers will coordinate with their Room Parents regarding the budget and planned events. All communication sent to parents, either from the teacher or the room parent, must have administration approval. We do not request any money from parents for classroom events. Small donations of specified snacks or drinks or paper products may be requested for a classroom party if approved by the teacher/administration.

Information or check requests made directly to the Business Office will be referred to the classroom teacher for their approval which may cause a delay.

8th grade Class account

8th grade students will pay an additional \$75 Graduation fee. In addition, the 8th grade would be permitted to participate in additional fundraisers to supplement their funds with the principal's approval.

Field trips and experiences include:

- Team building experience
- March for Life
- Bishops Vocations Mass
- Capstone trip

Graduation expenses include:

- Graduation awards, including pins and certificates
- Cap and Gown
- Yearbook
- Graduation party
- Evening Graduation reception including roses
- 8th grade t-shirts

VI. CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION

In order for sportsmanship to be rooted in Catholic values, it is expected that coaches, athletes, and fans display respect, civility, and responsibility in words and actions before, during, and after all athletic contests and/or practices. These policies are developed to assist the schools in accomplishing their goal of providing a Catholic education which is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic faith, especially the practice of respect for each person. The policies outlined in this section exist to ensure good sportsmanship and fair play.

Participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who successfully meet the school's academic requirements and adhere to the code of conduct may participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

When possible, separate athletic teams will be offered for each sex. Young people will participate on teams consistent with their biological sex and may not participate on teams offered for the other sex. When (for example, in swimming or track) a team may include both sexes, individuals will participate in events consistent with their biological sex. In the case of golf, if separate male and female teams are not offered, members of both sexes may participate together on a single team in the same events. Girls are not allowed to participate in boys football and/or wrestling activities.

Students participating in school-sponsored team athletic activities must have proof of an annual physical. Submission of a pre-sport participation physical examination form and consent form for elementary- and middle school-based athletic program participation is required, excluding parish CYO.

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents/guardians are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician that states any activity restrictions with regard to participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific time frame for the activity restrictions.

TRANSPORTATION OF ATHLETES

Students participating in a school-sponsored sport who wish to drive to and from practice and games in a privately owned vehicle must have a written permission from their parents/guardians. This approval does not permit a student to transport other passengers, under any circumstances, unless that passenger is a member of the carpool as permitted by the parents and administration.

Although CYO athletic teams are separate and distinct from parish/school activities, the pastor/principal retains the right of possible intervention by the school in the event a significant incident would bring the reputation of the parish and/or school into question within the community.

STARS ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The Athletic Program is an extracurricular program sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School through the work of volunteer parents and teachers. The program is self-supporting. It is an athletic program open to St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School middle school * students who meet the eligibility criteria set by the teachers and school administration.

The program exists for the students of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School in order to foster positive school spirit, good sportsmanship, character formation, positive experience in team participation and, most importantly, an enjoyable time for the students. The program emphasizes skill development and honest hard work. Although winning is enjoyable, it is not the primary focus of the program. The school administration, Athletic Director (AD), and volunteer coaches emphasize this. However, in order to effectively manage large teams, students may be placed according to skill level on a team. Every student is guaranteed some playing time.

Aquinas parent volunteers support the program by coaching, volunteering time at the games and practices, and concession stands. Volunteers are a very important part of the program. It is necessary for parents to give of their time as well as their presence at different functions. If volunteers do not come forward, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School will not be able to furnish a sports program for the students.

Aquinas sports functions are self-supporting. Parents will be charged per sport according to what it costs to participate in, outfit, and run the sporting event. A family's financial obligations to the school must be current in order to participate in the Aquinas Sports program.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School participates in the following sports* throughout the school, year:

Cheerleading (Girls)	Fall, Winter
Soccer (Boys)	Fall
Volleyball (Girls)	Fall
Basketball (Boys & Girls)	Winter
Soccer (Girls)	Spring
Softball (Girls)	Spring
Baseball (Boys)	Spring
Track (Boys & Girls)	Spring

*If there are not enough students to fill the team from the eligible grades, the AD reserves the right to choose students from lower grades.

STUDENT ATHLETE RULES AND OBLIGATIONS

The student athlete will be at all practices, games, and team meetings. Permission from the athletic director to be absent will be granted only for an approved reason. If a student misses practice, he/she cannot expect to play in the following game. A student who misses **three** or more practices may be asked to leave the team.

The student athlete needs to see that he/she has a good diet, adequate sleep, and proper warm-up before and after each practice and contest. Any student who uses, possesses, or buys alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance during the season will be referred for evaluation before he/she is considered eligible for continued participation in athletics. Any suspected or reported use of alcohol, tobacco, and other illegal substances will be investigated by the principal and AD who will determine the appropriate course of action. Depending upon the situation, the action may include a temporary or permanent suspension from athletics.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The Aquinas athlete is expected to perform to the best of his/her ability at all times while also extending courtesy to all coaches, officials, opponents, spectators/fans, and school employees during the contest and outside of the event. Clothing worn to athletic events must adhere to the out of uniform dress code policy. Athletes will not use offensive language or gestures at any time. If a student chooses to indulge in such behavior, they will be suspended for **two** games. If they repeat the behavior for a second time, he/she will be asked to leave the athletic program for the remainder of the season.

CARE FOR UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Please follow care directions on the labels of uniforms. Uniforms are to be returned on time, washed, and in good condition. If a student fails to return the athletic uniform, he/she will be charged the cost of the uniform (\$50).

RESPECT FOR FACILITIES

Students must leave Aquinas or other schools' facilities clean and free of damages. Students will not play in the foyers, or in other areas not designed for sports. Inappropriate sports' equipment or other items should not be in the buildings; i.e., no cleats in the building, no food in the gym. All areas will be kept free of cups, food, items of clothing, etc. Athletes and unauthorized persons are not permitted in the Physical Education Office. Students who need to use a phone will speak to the AD or one of the coaches.

FOLLOWING GOOD SAFETY PRACTICES

Athletes must be supervised during athletic events. They are not to be

running or rambling around facilities before, during, or after games.

Athletes must immediately report any injury, illness, or incapacitation to the coach or parents in charge.

Athletes will not use facilities unless coaches are present.

Students who have been absent for more than half a school day will not participate in an Aquinas athletic function that day. This includes both games and practices. If a student is too sick to be at school, it is presumed they are too sick to be in a game or practice. The only exception to this would be if a student left school for a medical appointment, was in good physical condition, and not restricted from participating for any other reason.

SCHOOL DETENTION

Athletic events do not come before school discipline. Students who need to serve a detention cannot use athletics as an excuse not to serve detention. If a student receives a detention or is serving any other disciplinary action and must miss a practice or contest, it is up to the student to inform the coach about the absence. Athletes who attend an athletic event rather than serve a detention or fulfill any other disciplinary action will be suspended from the next **two** contests and will fulfill the disciplinary obligation.

AWARDS/REWARDS

Trophies, plaques, ribbons, any type of athletic award, or athletic wear will not be given to students without the expressed permission of the Athletic Director and school administration. Banquets, parties, and athletic gatherings must have the approval and permission of the school administration. Student awards and recognition are given after consultation with the Athletic Director, school principal, and coaches of the team.

PARENT OBLIGATIONS

Parents support the St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Athletic Program in the following ways:

- Completing and submitting to the Athletic Office all registration, emergency, carpool forms, and required fee.
- Insuring that students have a proper physical examination prior to the beginning of the athletic season.
- Supporting proper student behavior at all athletic events.
- Giving positive and appropriate example to student athletes at all athletic functions. Parents will not be loud or disrespectful to referees or coaches; they will not heckle players from St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School or from opposing teams. They will not use

profane language toward coaches, students, referees, or other parents. Parents should have control of their emotions and tempers at all times during practices, games, and athletic events. Parents should not be surprised if they are asked to leave a contest or practice at which they have displayed inappropriate behavior.

- Siblings of athletes and other student riders in carpools may **not** be dismissed early to attend sports competitions that are away from Aquinas. Parents must make other arrangements for the transportation from school of non-athletes.
- Setting a good example by obeying all rules. Any parent who violates these rules will be suspended from attending the next contest. A parent who consistently violates regulations will be suspended from attending any athletic contest for the remainder of the season.

STANDARDS OF ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

All students participating in any Aquinas athletic function must meet the following criteria during the academic year. Eligibility is based on academic standing, effort, and conduct.

Grades will be reviewed every four weeks.

In addition to the student's maintaining an **overall average** of a 76 **with no grade 70 or below**, the middle school teachers, in consultation with the AD, will evaluate the student's effort and behavior. Evaluation will occur every four weeks or as needed.

If a student is placed on athletic probation for academics, effort, or behavior, the following will take place:

- The AD will notify the student, parent, and the coach.
- The AD and the coach will counsel the student in the area of concern.

If no improvement occurs during the first week after notification, the student's playing time will be limited for the following week.

Thereafter, any lack of progress will result in the student being suspended from participating in games. If this has not been resolved by the time that report cards are issued, there will be a minimum 2 week suspension before reevaluation.

Middle school teachers and the AD will meet weekly to assess student progress until the next formal report (interim or report card) is issued.

While the administration, the AD, and the coaches understand the importance of athletics in developing the total child, it is the primary goal to ensure that each student reaches full academic potential. With this in mind, parents should assist in monitoring student progress on a regular basis. Serious discipline infractions may result in indefinite suspension from participation in sports. The final decision rests with the administration.

A student on academic probation is not eligible to participate in any contests during the academic probation period. Parents are strongly encouraged to limit student attendance (even as spectators) at athletic activities during periods of suspension from sports. The extra time should be used for class preparation

SPORTS PHYSICALS

All students participating in a school sponsored team athletic activity must have an Aquinas Sports physical and meet the following requirements:

- Submit a copy (not the original) of an Aquinas Athletic Participation / Parental Consent / Physical Examination Form completed and signed by a physician. (This form is specifically for sports and specifies the participation level that the physician deems appropriate. School entrance physical forms and Prince William County forms will **not** be accepted.)
- The completed physical must be dated on or after **June 1st** of the upcoming school year.
- A new sport physical is required at the beginning of each new school year.

For Students Not Meeting Requirements:

- Students may not practice, exercise, or physically participate in a school-sponsored sport until the required physical form is received in the office.
- Students may sit on the sidelines and receive verbal instruction, but at no time participate in the physical aspect of that given sport.

Once the physical form is completed and meets the requirements, full participation will be granted. The sports physical is valid for any sport that a student may participate in during a given school year.

No form will be accepted that does not meet the above criteria.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

Parents are obligated to inform school officials of **any** injury that may occur outside of school hours. A decision will be made on an individual basis for consideration to participate in practice or games for the safety of the student

athlete.

A student who has a fever of 100 degrees or greater, diarrhea, or is vomiting may not participate in any sport practice or game for 24 hours.

Head Injury: Symptoms of bleeding usually occur within the first 24-72 hours. The patient should be checked every two hours during the first 24 hours, every four hours during the second 24 hours, and every eight hours during the third day.

Signs and Symptoms

- Loss of alertness
- Unequal pupil size after injury
- Vomiting
- Ringing in ears
- Visual problems
- Bleeding from eyes, mouth, or nose

Students that have any head injury will not be allowed to participate in any practice or game for three days or until cleared by a physician.

If a suspected head injury occurs during a game or practice the coach has the responsibility / authority to pull the player from the game / practice.

Dehydration: Dehydration occurs when the body is depleted of water and electrolytes.

Signs and Symptoms

- Marked thirst
- Infrequent urination
- Dark yellow urine
- Dry mouth
- Sunken eyes
- Loss of normal elasticity of the skin
- Bloody vomit
- Severe abdominal pain
- Lethargy and marked irritability

If any of these symptoms are observed, the student will not be permitted to participate in practice or games until cleared by the school nurses, coaches, or physician.

Sprains/Strains/Fractures: Any student who has had an injury with swelling or marked pain to joints or bones will not be permitted to participate in practices or games until cleared by the school nurses, coaches, or physician.

After an Injury: Before an athlete may return to an athletic activity after any injury that requires a physician's attention, he/she must present the signed approval of his/her physician and parents to the Athletic Director.

Please note that no exceptions will be made to these policies, and that they are intended to ensure the safety of the student athletes.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The administration of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School reserves the right to amend, adapt, or suspend any of the above policies if it is deemed necessary to do so in the best interest of the school community.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

The school is not responsible for providing supervision for students who remain on school property after the conclusion of the instructional day, unless the student is enrolled in an extended day/after care program, or participating in a school-sponsored activity (such as athletics or theater)

VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends parents/guardians, faculty, and students work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

- a. Teachers have a right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
- b. Students have a right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, students:

- a. will be honest and committed to integrity.
- b. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. will use appropriate language.
- e. will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
- g. will respect all school and personal property (see *Care of School Property*).
- h. will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
- i. will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
- j. will comply with the Internet Responsible Use Policy.
- k. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extra-curricular activities.
- l. will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
- m. will adhere to the dress code (see *Dress Code*).
- n. will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes, or assignments.
- o. will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/administration.
- p. will not bring to school, nor possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result (see *Substance Abuse/Weapons* and *Inappropriate Materials*).
- q. will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug-free environment at, or near, school and at all school sponsored functions/activities with the understanding

- that possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous and forbidden to include drug paraphernalia will result in suspension or expulsion from school (see also *Substance Abuse/Weapons*).
- r. will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
 - s. will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the Catholic values and principles of the school.

All of the conduct expectations include student use of the internet.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic social teachings. The role of the principal/administration, staff, and faculty is to work with the students and parents/guardians to assist the students in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Honor Code

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School students will contribute to the Christ-like spirit that is at the heart of the school community. Therefore, Aquinas students will exhibit honorable conduct at all times promoting the dignity of all human persons.

The following honor code applies to **all** Aquinas students. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, stealing, forgery of signatures on test/documents, failure to respect school property or persons, including bullying and harassment of any kind are serious breaches of the honor code. Cheating is giving or receiving help on a test or assignment, including the following:

- communicating in any way with another student during a test;
- sharing information about a test with another student who has yet to take the test;
- having in one's possession materials or information not approved in advance by the teacher which would indicate intent to give or receive help;
- using a computer or any form of technology to falsify information or to gain access to information to which the student has no right;
- copying homework.

Violations of the Honor Code are detailed in the Discipline Policy.

All middle school students will write and sign the following honor code on all tests and quizzes; ***“As a child of God, I promise that I have not given nor received help with this test or quiz”.***

Honor Code Violations:

All Honor Code violation are defined in the curriculum section of this handbook and will result in the following:

- First offense: The student will receive a zero on the test or work, the student will serve a detention, the parents will be notified, and the student will meet with the principal or designee. The parent must sign the forged test or document.*
- Second offense: The student will receive a zero on the test or work, the student will serve an in-school suspension, and there will be a conference with the student, principal or designee and a parent. Curtailment of extra-curricular activity if a document* is involved.
- Third offense: Student subject to expulsion.

*Examples of a "document" are permission slips needed by the sponsor of an extracurricular activity, test/quiz papers or detention notices sent home for a signature, etc.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/WEAPONS

The school makes every effort to make students aware of the dangers and consequences of the unlawful use of substances.

It is unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell, give, or distribute any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon any public property or any property open to the public use within 1000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity.) If a student knows or suspects that any of the foregoing activities are occurring, he/she must immediately report the matter to the school administration/faculty so the appropriate law enforcement agency may be contacted.

If a student is suspected or is discovered to have (a) violated the foregoing policy with respect to any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance or marijuana or (b) used, possessed or distributed alcohol, tobacco, or e-liquids while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon public property or any property open to the public use within 1000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity), the student will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. In the event school officials believe that a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, the parents/guardians will be notified, and the student will be removed from class. School officials reserve the right to require that the student be taken for drug testing within 24 hours and that the results of the testing be shared with the appropriate school officials. If, however, a violation of the law has occurred, the proper law enforcement agency will be contacted.

A student shall not possess or use drug paraphernalia, including, but not limited to, e-cigarette delivery devices, e-cigarette accessories, vaping devices, water pipes, cigarette paper rolling machines, and miniature scales on the property of the school, on any school bus and/or at any school-sponsored activity, whether discovered in an authorized search of his or her private property or on school property (e.g., lockers). Any student who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including, expulsion.

A student shall not possess, use or threaten to use on the property of the school, on any school bus; and/or at any school sponsored activity, any weapons (including but not limited to any pistols, revolvers, rifles or other firearms, stun weapons, tasers, knives, flailing instruments [which may sometimes be known as nun chucks or fighting chains], sling shot, metal knuckles, any type of pointed metal throwing disk or dart, mace, pepper spray, or other similar propellant or any type of explosive, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade or rocket) or any facsimiles thereof, or any object that can be used with the intent of threatening or harming an individual, except when expressly authorized by a member of the school administration/faculty for authorized school purposes (such as knives for use only in food preparation activities in family life/home economics class; chemicals solely for use in instructional lessons as part of the school's academic curriculum; etc.). Any student who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion. If there is reason to believe a violation of law has occurred, parents as well as the proper law enforcement agency, will be immediately contacted.

DISCIPLINE

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal/administration of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student, the nature of the infraction, and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to, and including, suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

The following are some approved disciplinary measures:

- a. Counseling and/or conference with the student and family
- b. Assignment of special tasks
- c. Denial of privileges
- d. Detention
- e. Probation
- f. Suspension
- g. Expulsion

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

The entire school adheres to main rules which are all encompassing:

1. Be Reverent – the student is reverent during prayers, Mass, and any other pray service or time when referring to God.
2. Be Respectful – the student is respectful to self and others through using kind words and actions.
3. Be Responsible – the student uses materials, textbooks, books, and the facility responsibly.
4. Teachers and administration routinely investigate a disciplinary issue with a child without the parent present.

Teachers and administration routinely investigate a disciplinary issue with a child without the parent present.

The Principal reserves the right to judge the seriousness of the behavior and the ultimate consequences, and has the right to suspend a student from school.

Pre-K through 2nd grade:

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School discipline recognizes that children who have not reached the age of reason (the years before receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation) necessitate a form of discipline that is unlike that system applied for older students. Teacher/parent communication for students in the foundational years – PK-2 is necessary for helping children to grow in virtue and good behavior. All disciplinary actions taken with Pre-K children will be age-appropriate. Consequences for students in grades PK-2 may be timeout, call home to parents, and other appropriate consequences.

Grades 3-8:

The discipline system for students in grades 3-8 is based on a progression of minor offenses, major offenses, suspension, and dismissal/expulsion which refer to different levels of responsibility.

Minor Infractions:

Minor infractions against classroom or school rules/policies may be addressed as follows;

- Warning to the student by the teacher
- Verbal or silent reprimand
- Denial of privileges
- Restricted school-related activities
- Assignment of a special task
- Report of the offense (**Demerit**)

When a student receives a written minor infraction (**Demerit**), it is to be taken home, signed by the parents and returned to school the next day. When a student receives a third written minor infraction (demerit) in a trimester, the student will be issued an after school detention slip and will be required to attend a Tuesday after school detention from 3-4pm. If two more demerits are received in the same trimester lunch detentions having been served, a Saturday detention will be assigned from 9-10 am and the student's eligibility for extra-curricular activities will be at risk at the discretion of the administration.

3rd demerit = Tuesday after school detention

5th demerit= Saturday detention

7th demerit = 1 day in-school suspension

The following are examples of minor infractions/violations:

- Minor violations of classroom rules
- Arriving late to class
- Failing to keep textbooks covered
- Excessive noise in the halls
- Failure to obey instructions
- Running, loud talking, fighting, or roughhousing
- Littering
- Writing on hands, face, body or uniform
- Impulsively arguing after receiving a demerit
- Minor classroom behavior problems
- Horseplay
- Public display of affection
- Violation of dress code
- Writing or passing of notes
- Gum chewing/candy
- Students entering the faculty room without permission.

Major Infractions:

Major infractions/violations of the rules and regulations as outlined by St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School may result in a Tuesday or Saturday Detention without prior warning. A third major violation or a third Saturday detention resulting from major and/or minor violations in any given trimester will result in an automatic suspension. Detention notices will be sent home with the student who gives it to their parent. The parent signs it and returns it the next day to the classroom teacher or appropriate adult.

Examples of major infractions/offenses are as follows:

- Disrespectful behavior at Mass/Church
- Disrespect to a teacher, staff member, or agent of the school-talking back and/or arguing
- Cheating/irregular behavior during testing/plagiarism
- Impulsive behavior that is harmful to another person
- Harassment (bullying/cyber-bullying/sexting)
- Forgery, lying, skipping class
- Stealing
- Vandalizing or defacing school property or personal property- etc. – textbooks, writing on walls, desks, etc.
- Deliberate physical harassment
- Disruptive behavior at assemblies
- Major classroom disruptions
- Profanity or obscene gestures directed toward any person
- Unauthorized accessing of computer programs, data or message capabilities, internet
- Using another person's password to access computer network or programs
- Use of cell phone, pager, or other unauthorized electronic / media device
- Students may not leave the school property: a classroom (cutting class), the lunchroom, Extended Day, or any other part of the school building without a teacher's permission.

DETENTION: Three demerits equal 1 detention:

After School Detentions are held only on Tuesdays, after school from 3-4pm.

- No extra-curricular activity supersedes detention. An athletic or extra-curricular event is not a reason to miss after school detention.
- Failure to report to an after school detention will earn an additional after school detention.

Additional Detentions and Major Infraction Detentions are usually held on specified Saturdays from 9:00-10:00 a.m. and are supervised by two members of the faculty/staff.

- The student will report in uniform.
- The student will serve the detention on the assigned Saturday.
- Failure to report to a Saturday detention will earn an additional Saturday detention.
- No extra-curricular activity supersedes detention. An athletic or extra-curricular event is not a reason to miss Saturday detention.
- Parents are required to sign the student in and out of the detention.
- If a student misses two detentions, he/she may be suspended.
- The student needs to be on time for drop off and pick up. Parents who are unduly late in picking up a student from detention will be charged a late fee (\$15 per hour or fraction of an hour).
- Detention is subject to inclement weather and may be canceled*.

* If this is the case, the monitoring teacher will call the parents and the student when the decision is made. The student will serve the detention at the next assigned Saturday.

Consequences of multiple demerits/detentions: Any student that earns **seven** demerits or **three** detentions during one trimester will serve one full day of in-school suspension.

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/administration. Once the principal/administration suspends a student, parents/guardians may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to execute the above referenced agreement shall preclude the student from returning to the regular instructional program. This policy applies to in-house and out-of-school suspensions.

A Tech Suspension is the inappropriate use of a school device will result in suspension from the device for one week, with a written apology required from the student and a mandatory principal meeting with the parents in order to review the expectation that school devices are for *assigned schoolwork only* and to discuss practices to ensure supervised use of school devices in the home. A student will not be permitted to resume use of a school device until after this meeting takes place. A second suspension (tech or otherwise) in the same trimester puts the student's enrollment in jeopardy.

Types of suspension: There are two other types of suspension- *In-school suspension* and *Out-of-school suspension*. Ordinarily, suspension is in-school unless the student is seen as a threat to the welfare and safety of others. Suspension will be used for serious infractions at the discretion of the

administration. Suspended children are also placed on disciplinary probation.

The utilization out-of-school suspension is determined by the principal for serious circumstances. Students who are given an out-of-school suspension will earn a 0% on all grades /assignments that day.

(On the day of suspension, the student may not participate in any school function or extra-curricular activity including athletics, drama, band, etc.)

Suspension is a serious consequence used when all other methods of discipline have failed to change a child's inappropriate behavior.

- The student will serve the in-school suspension on the nearest school day after having earned it and after it has been communicated to the child's parents.
- During an IN-SCHOOL-SUSPENSION, the student will be assigned work-study for the allotted time and will take any tests or quizzes that his/her class is taking that day.
- A student may arrive at suspension in two ways:
 1. Through accumulation of demerits as noted above.
 2. When a student's behavior becomes harmful to the physical, spiritual, or academic welfare and progress of the other students, he/she will be suspended from school. A serious infraction/violation of school policy is cause for suspension.

Examples of serious infractions/violations that may result in a suspension:

- Persistent disobedience or violation of school regulations
- Blatant disrespect to a teacher, a staff member, or an agent of the school
- Stealing
- Fighting
- Harassment (bullying, cyber-bullying, sexting)
- Failure to meet Behavioral Contract
- Taking medication in violation of the school medication policy
- Threatening to hurt another child or to do damage to the school
- Possession of distribution of obscene, profane, or pornographic material.
- Possession of materials that threaten school and student safety
- Leaving school without permission
- Providing, selling, or possessing any unauthorized or harmful substance
- Smoking or possession of tobacco, cigarettes, or marijuana

- Possession, handling, or transmitting any object that can be considered a weapon or other dangerous object
- Possessing, receiving, buying, using, or transmitting drug, alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, medication, inhalant, or look-alike drug
- Possession of fireworks, matches, or lighters
- Damaging/defacing school property or personal property (restitution must be made)
- Unauthorized modification and / or deletion of computer programs or data
- Inappropriate use of social media may result in disciplinary actions if the content includes defamatory comments or pictures regarding the school, the faculty, other children, or the parishes

Action taken for a suspension:

- The Principal or the teacher will schedule a conference to notify the parents that their child is to be suspended and to discuss the misbehavior.
- The student cannot participate in extracurricular activities.
- Students who are suspended may lose the privilege of participating in such activities as field trips, class parties, assemblies, etc.

Note: A student with two suspensions in a year seriously jeopardizes his/her enrollment in St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School.

BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS

The Behavioral Contract is a plan formulated for a student who has earned suspension due to major infractions or an accumulation of minor infractions. The plan is put in place after a meeting of an administrator, teacher(s), parents, and student to review that student's behavioral record and determine a plan for a specific period of time. If these parties cannot agree upon a plan, the principal shall formulate a plan for compliance by the student. During the time a behavioral improvement plan is in effect, any violation of school policy may result in dismissal/expulsion.

PROBATION

Probation occurs when a student is given an agreed upon Behavioral Improvement Plan that must be followed. A parent, teacher, and student meeting is conducted, so that all support one another for the good of the student.

EXPULSION

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all of the following are present:

- a. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;
- b. the student has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual;
- c. the student's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community;
- d. a parent/guardian repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers, school, parish, or diocesan staff.

If the principal/administration believes it necessary to expel a student, the principal/administration will notify the student and the student's parents about the student's action and provide them with an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's disciplinary hearing process before making any final decision on the matter.

A parent/guardian whose child is expelled may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 working days from the time of written notification.

During the pendency of any appeal, the expelled student shall be removed from the school community in compliance with the expulsion notice unless otherwise directed at the discretion of the principal/administration.

Students who have been expelled from any Diocesan school may not apply for admission to that school or another Diocesan school for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of expulsion.

STUDENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Privacy of individual students must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare, and safety of other members of the school community.

STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY SEARCHES

The principal/administration or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property on school property (e.g. automobiles, etc.) or at school activities may be conducted by the school principal/administration or other designated officials. It is only necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school rights in these regards. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS

Unless provided with a court-issued warrant, the pastor (or principal if Diocesan high school) or the Office of Catholic Schools must first be consulted before law enforcement authorities are allowed to speak to any student for interrogation purposes of alleged illegal activities. This policy does not apply

to Child Protective Services (CPS) officers, who are by law entitled to interview children.

The questioning by police officers of students in school or on school grounds about alleged illegal activities shall meet the following conditions:

- a. The principal, the assistant principal, or the principal's designee shall be alerted.
- b. The police officers shall report to the principal's office.
- c. Permission from the student's parent/guardian must be acquired, either by phone or in person, prior to questioning.
- d. The principal or a school representative shall be present.
- e. The questioning shall be conducted in a private room where participants cannot be seen or heard by students and/or other school personnel.

The police officers, under unusual circumstances, may take legal actions that they deem necessary.

STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY

Students are solely responsible for their own personal property. The school accepts no responsibility for items left unattended in the common areas of the school. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in wallets, watches, and other valuables to the physical education teacher/coach when participating in athletic events away from school. Items of personal property or clothing not directly related to academic or athletic events sponsored by the school should not be brought to school.

SCHOOL LOCKERS AND DESKS

Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school authorities to protect the safety of all. A student to whom a locker or desk has been assigned, has vis-a-vis other students, exclusive use of the locker or desk but has no proprietary rights versus the school.

Teachers and school administration will perform regular locker "checks" to look for appropriate organization, content, and respect of school property.

AQUINAS CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

For safety reasons and to protect instructional time, students will not use their cell phones or other electronic devices during the day and this includes practice times for extra-curricular activities, and Extended Day. For a legitimate reason, students may ask permission from their teacher and get a pass to use the office phone. Students may turn their phones on once they are in their car for their ride home.

Cell phones/electronic devices should be turned off once the student enters the school building and placed in their backpack which is kept in the homeroom classroom. Cell phones are not carried on their person to classes. Unauthorized use or possession of a cell phone/electronic device may result in the item being confiscated for a period of time determined by the administration, and a fine of

\$10 for EACH time the cell phone/electronic device is confiscated. The second time and anytime thereafter the student has their cell phone on during school or extra-curricular activities the cell phone will be confiscated, and a detention and a fine of \$10 will issued. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen phones.

Parents are asked to help enforce this rule by not texting or calling students during the school day. If a parent needs to get a hold of their child, please call the school office.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles lost by students are kept in a designated area located behind the stage in the School auditorium/gym. Articles not claimed after a reasonable length of time will be given to charitable organizations. Parents will **mark all articles with the child's name**. Students will not bring valuable items or large sums of money to school.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Students who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution. If library books are not returned, students will be assessed an amount equal to the value of the book or its replacement, whichever is greater, as determined by the principal/administration.

Textbook fines will be assessed for excessive wear on textbooks. See *Textbooks/Supplemental Materials*

DRESS CODE

The dress code provides a standard for our students, which fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior.

Final decisions regarding the school uniform rest with the principal/administration.

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

Aquinas has the regular school uniform with options for the Fall/Spring. The regular uniform may be worn all year. The Fall/Spring uniform is optional to wear and can only be worn from the first day of school until November and again from the beginning of April until the end of the school year. Boys in grades fifth through eighth will wear Aquinas blue plaid ties. All socks must be at least two inches above the shoe. No sports or ankle socks are allowed.

Leather dress shoes in a solid color (black or dark brown), either buckle (Mary Jane's) or Oxford (lace-up). All shoe styles must have a distinguishable heel of no more than one inch in height. Boots, moccasins, deck, ballerina, Velcro, or slip-on type shoes are not permissible. Shoes must be kept in good condition: leather shoes should be cleaned or polished regularly, and lace-up shoes should have laces replaced as soon as they become frayed or torn. Lace-up shoes must be kept tied at all times, and all shoe styles must be worn properly (i.e., fully tied or closed; foot fully inserted into the shoe.) Students are encouraged to change into sneakers for recess.

The PE Uniform will be worn on the student's assigned PE day. Elementary students should wear their all white sneakers for PE. For Middle school students may wear all white sneakers or all black sneakers or sneakers with a white/black combination. No other colors are allowed and no high top sneakers allowed. No sparkles, light up shoes or wheeled shoes are permitted.

Uniform apparel should be in good condition. No ripped or ill-fitting clothing. Uniform apparel should be purchased from Flynn O'Hara at www.flynnohara.com or by phone at [1800-441-4122](tel:18004414122), or at the Fair City Mall Store located at 9650 Main Street, Unit 20, Fairfax, VA 22031, [\(703\)503-5966](tel:7035035966).

Boy's hairstyles are expected to be simple, clean cut, evenly trimmed, and should not cover any part of the ears, eyebrows, or touch the shirt collar. Boys should have no facial hair. No unusual haircuts are permitted. Hair may not be dyed, bleached, tinted, tipped, or highlighted.

Girl's hair should not hang down in front of the face and bangs should not touch the eyebrows. No unusual haircuts are permitted. Girls may wear a small hair ribbon or barrette. Hair may not be dyed, bleached, tinted, tipped, or highlighted.

Spirit wear may not be worn in place of the PE uniform.

Only uniform sweaters may be worn over the uniform. No other jackets, hoodies, sweaters, or coats may be worn.

All uniforms items with a logo must be purchased from Flynn and O'Hara.

Uniform Requirements

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PK-4 GIRLS UNIFORM

- Blue, navy, and white plaid drop waist jumper. **Length of jumper is below the knee**

- White blouse with Peter Pan collar with long or short sleeves
- Navy cardigan sweater with Aquinas crest (optional all year)
- Navy or white knee socks, navy or white opaque tights, or plain white socks with cuffs two inches above the edge of the shoe; **no ankle socks** may be worn
- Black lace up dress shoes or Mary Jane's (PK students may wear sneakers or school shoes)
- PE shirt and PE shorts during Fall/Spring uniform. PE sweatshirt or PE shirt and sweatpants for the regular uniform with all white sneakers. (sweatshirt optional)

PK-4 Girls Uniform Fall/Spring Option

- Navy twill walking shorts
- Light blue short sleeve polo shirt with Aquinas logo (same as above)
- White calf socks
- All white sneakers

PK-4 BOYS UNIFORM

- Navy twill pants purchased from Flynn and O'Hara
- Light blue polo shirt in long or short sleeves with Aquinas logo
- Navy V-neck sweater or vest with white trim and Aquinas crest (optional in Fall/Spring)
- Navy blue socks
- Black or Navy belt (not required for PK or K students)
- PE shirt and shorts for Fall/Spring. PE sweatshirt or PE Shirt and sweatpants for the regular uniform with all white sneakers (sweatshirt optional).
- Black buckle or lace up dress shoes with distinguishable heel (PK students may wear sneakers or school shoes)

PK-4 Boys Uniform Fall/Spring Option

- Navy twill walking shorts
- Light blue short sleeve polo shirt with Aquinas logo (same as above)
- White calf socks
- All white sneakers

GRADES 5-8 GIRLS UNIFORM

- Blue and White Aquinas plaid, kick pleated skirt, **length of skirt is below the knee**

- Blue Oxford shirt with button-down collar, long or short sleeves (short sleeved with logo).
- Navy V-neck sweater or vest with white trim and Aquinas crest
- Navy or white knee socks, navy or white opaque tights, or plain white socks with cuffs two inches above the edge of the shoe; **no ankle socks** may be worn
- Black buckle or lace up dress shoes with distinguishable heel
- PE shirt and shorts for Fall/Spring. PE shirt or sweatshirt and sweatpants for the regular uniform. (Sweatshirts optional). All black or all white sneakers or a combination of both colors for all PE days. No other colors allowed. No high top sneakers.

Grades 5-8 Girls Fall/Spring Options

- Blue Oxford, short sleeved, with Aquinas logo and plaid skirt
- Black buckle or lace up dress shoes with distinguishable heel
- No sneakers

GRADES 5-8 BOYS UNIFORM

- Navy blue twill pants from Flynn & O'Hara only
- Blue Oxford shirt with button-down collar, long or short sleeves. Short sleeved with Aquinas Logo.
- Navy V-neck sweater or vest with white trim and Aquinas crest
- Aquinas blue plaid tie
- Navy blue socks only
- Black or Navy belt
- Black buckle or lace up dress shoes with distinguishable heel
- PE shirt and shorts for Fall/Spring. PE shirt or PE sweatshirt and sweatpants for the regular uniform (sweatshirts are optional). All black or all white sneakers or a combination of both colors for all PE days. No other colors allowed. No high top sneakers

Grade 5-8 Boys Fall/Spring Options

- Blue Oxford shirt with button-down collar, short sleeves, with Aquinas logo
- Tie optional in the Fall/Spring
- Navy blue twill pants
- Black buckle or lace up dress shoes with distinguishable heel
- No sneakers

ACCESSORIES:

- A. Plain, white T-shirts (without any design) may be worn under shirts or blouses. No colored clothing may be worn under shirts or blouses.

- B.** No pajama bottoms may be worn. On very cold days, girls may wear their P.E. sweatpants under the uniform skirt or jumper during recess only.
- C.** All shirts and blouses must be tucked into the waist so that the belt or the waistline of the skirt is visible.
- D.** No body piercing, tattoos or colored contact lenses.
- E.** FITBITs or other combination watch and technology devices may not be worn.

(GIRLS) A single pair of small, post earrings to be worn in the earlobe (no hoops or dangling earrings), one simple ring, a watch, and a religious medal, cross, or crucifix on a chain may be worn.
Make-up, colored nail polish, or artificial nails or tips may not be worn.

(BOYS) A simple watch, one simple ring, and a religious medal, cross, or crucifix on a chain may be worn; no earring.

On or before special holidays (only as designated by the principal) students may wear colored (related to the occasion) accessories as listed below:

- Socks, ribbons, sweaters, nice sweatshirts, ties, hats, colored nail polish, or jewelry (excessive jewelry is not permitted).
- NO OTHER ACCESSORIES MAY BE ADDED TO THE UNIFORM.
- Teachers may ask for distracting accessories to be removed while in the classroom.

OUT OF UNIFORM DAYS

Out of uniform days may be *Casual* or *Dress Up* days. The following guidelines are to be followed:

Dress up days (Picture Day)

- Skirts will not be worn shorter than the uniform length **(to the knee)**.
- All dress pants will be worn at the waist.
- Skorts (skirt/shorts combination) are not permitted.
- No tennis shoes, flip-flops, or ballerina type shoes
- No T-shirts or spaghetti strap tops
- No jeans
- No shorts
- No hats
- No shoes with over 2" high heels
- No make-up will be worn.
- All clothing will be worn modestly. No bare midriffs, low-cut tops, or excessively tight clothing will be permitted.

- Dresses with spaghetti straps may be worn if a jacket or sweater is worn over them or dress straps must be at least 4'' wide.
- Colored bracelets may not be worn.
- No leggings may be worn as pants. Leggings may only be worn under dresses or skirts that are knee length.
- No backless shoes

Casual Dress Day

On days when students are permitted to dress casually, tennis shoes may be worn. All clothing must be worn modestly. All casual pants must be worn at the waist.

- No bare midriffs
- No low-cut tops, or excessively tight or revealing jeans or tops are permitted.
- Shorts and skorts are permitted on casual dress day only during the time when the summer uniform is allowed to be worn.
- Shirts must be appropriate for school. (ex. No reference to bands, inappropriate cartoon characters or slogans etc.)
- No spaghetti strap tops are allowed.
- No leggings may be worn as pants. (Leggings may only be worn under dresses or skirts that are knee length.)
- No sweat pants or athletic pants may be worn.
- No backless shoes

SPIRIT WEAR DRESS

Spirit wear days are distinct from out of uniform days. Spirit wear days are special days designated by the principal when the students, faculty, and staff may come to school dressed in official Aquinas spirit wear. These days usually fall on the last Friday of the month, may be on a spirit night or any day designated by the principal. All spirit wear days will be listed on the calendar. Spirit wear days are optional, and if a student does not choose to dress in spirit wear on these days, he/she should come to school in the regular school uniform. The following are guidelines for spirit wear days:

- Students should wear an official Aquinas spirit wear shirt*/ sweatshirt /t shirt.
- Any other official Aquinas spirit wear can be worn on these days with the exception of hats which may not be worn inside of the building.**
- Blue jeans should be worn to school on these days (denim leggings are not allowed). However, jeans with rips, holes, or that are too tight are not permitted. Colored jeans are not allowed.
- Students may wear Bermuda style (length) shorts within the time frame that the Fall and Spring options for the uniform are allowed. Shorts may not be shorter than 2'' above the knee.

- Students may not wear athletic shorts.
- Temporary colored hair is not allowed. No nail polish.
- No alterations should be made to the spirit wear resulting in tank tops, or shortened tops revealing bare midriffs.
- Excessive jewelry should not be worn, as it can be a distraction in the classroom. No make-up may be worn. No face painting.
- Sneakers are preferred. Shoes with heels higher than 1", sandals, or flip-flops **may not be worn.**
- No Backless shoes

* Examples are: youth rally t-shirts, school produced Aquinas and Crusader t-shirts, Non-uniform Land's End items, athletic t-shirts (but not game jerseys), or Aquinas uniform polo shirt.

**When the weather turns cold, spirit wear should be visible. For example: it would be unacceptable to be wearing an Aquinas t-shirt which was covered completely by a Virginia Tech sweatshirt. The student would then appear to be wearing Virginia Tech spirit wear instead of Aquinas spirit wear.

If a student is improperly dressed on any out of uniform day, they will be given alternate clothing to wear or their parents will be called to take them home or bring a change of clothes.

AQUINAS EVENTS OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

Whenever students are representing St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, they are expected to dress modestly and appropriately, whether at school or at a different venue.

Students who abuse any of the guidelines stated above will lose the privilege of coming out of uniform or wearing accessories on designated days. The spirit of the uniform policy is to be maintained and students are required to abide by what the administration deems appropriate when not expressly identified in the above lists.

INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS

Students are not permitted to possess the following items on school property or at school functions:

- All portable sound systems, including CD players, MP3 players, Ipods personal computers or tablets, and similar devices are not allowed at

school. Likewise, cell phones, fitbits, watch/ technology combination devices, walkie-talkies, game-boys, cameras (excluding yearbook members), and any other audio or visual equipment are not appropriate at school, at Extended Day, or at any other school activity. The school will not accept responsibility for damage or loss of any valuable articles brought to school. (Cameras may be brought on field trips with the permission of the teacher in charge).

- Permanent markers (Sharpie) pens are not permitted.
- Laser pointers are prohibited.
- Rolling backpacks are not allowed without a Note from a healthcare provider specifically requiring the student be allowed to use one.

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

PLAY AREA

- Pre-K student splay in the enclosed playground area surrounded by fence.
- Play within the area that is coned off.
- Do not play near the St. Vincent building.
- Do not play on the fence or grass in front of the church and St. Vincent de Paul.
- Do not play on the side ramp/wall of the church.
- Do not leave the area without permission of a playground supervisor.
- Do not play on any part of the brick in front of the chapel.

BEHAVIOR

- No fighting or arguing.
- No food or drink.
- Do not chase a ball out of the coned area without notifying a playground supervisor.
- Be respectful to all the playground staff.
- No **physical contact** whatsoever; i.e., hitting, inappropriate display of affection, pushing, etc.

RULES

- When the whistle blows, all students will stop what they are doing immediately.
- When the second whistle blows, all grades should line up in assigned places.

- Students will report any problem or injury to an adult supervisor on the playground.
- All students will **STOP** if a car enters the area. There will be no movement until the vehicle is out of the play area.
- Students will always ask permission to return to the building for any reason.
- Students will wear appropriate clothing depending on the weather.
- Students will immediately report strangers or trespassers on the school property to a playground supervisor.
- Students may not go to the chapel.
- All students will go to recess, unless they are directed by their teacher or a lunchroom monitor not to do so.
- Students will not bring toys from home to play with at recess. (This does not apply to extended day recess times. Toys brought for extended day recess times must remain in the student backpack during the regular school day until the student is in extended day.)

Primary Playground Facilities Safety Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School faculty and staff are dedicated to providing a safe playground facility and equipment. The playground will be utilized according to school policy and regular expectations for discipline and behavior.

- The playground is for the use of Aquinas students from grades Pre-K to third. Children must be supervised by authorized school personnel at all times.
- Hours of operation: Regular school and Extended Day hours only.

The school playground committee will make regular inspections of the grounds and play equipment.

LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS

Given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited in grades preschool through grade 5. Student meals provided by parents/guardians must not be heated in microwave ovens by school personnel and/or school volunteers.

The school administration can determine if middle school students may use a microwave oven.

PreK students eat in their classroom and not in the lunchroom.

Regulations:

- Students will be polite and respectful to each other and to the lunchroom monitors at all times.
- "Grace Before Meals" is said before each lunch period in the classrooms or after lining up at recess.
- Tables are assigned by grade level. Students may not visit at different tables, or eat with parent volunteers in snack or hot lunch areas.
- Students will not throw food.
- Students will not save seats for other students.
- A signal will be given to encourage students to finish their lunch. This will be given 2 minutes before prayers at the end of lunch.
- Ice cream will not be sold in the last 5 minutes of lunch.
- When a lunchroom monitor blows the whistle to signal the end of lunch, all students will stop talking immediately.
- All students will stand and fold their hands for prayer. Students will recite "Grace After Meals". Students will not hold or eat food during prayers.
- After prayers, all students will clean up his/her area.
- Students will remain in their seats unless they are throwing away trash.
- When told to do so by a lunchroom monitor, students will throw away trash and line up for recess.
- Tables will be dismissed for recess by table number according to table behavior and cleanliness of eating areas

If a student does not have lunch, he/she should see a lunchroom monitor.

Students or parents should alert lunchroom supervisors and school nurses concerning any food allergies or other medical concerns. If a student must leave lunch early, he/she must submit a signed teacher's note to one of the lunchroom supervisors.

Names of those on clean-up duty will be posted weekly. Table cleaners for the day will stand and go to the end of the table to lead prayer. Table cleaners will clean tables before attending to other special activities.

Parents may join their child for lunch at a designated table separate from the class. No other students may join them.

SHOW & TELL(PRE-K)

Children are allowed to bring toys from home for the purpose of Show and Tell only. Weapons (whether real or toys) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items, and shall not be brought to school for any reason. If weapons of any kind are brought to school, the child shall be subject

to immediate disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, expulsion.

VIII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the health of the students.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse generally applies to all clergy, all employees and all volunteers.

It is the policy of the Diocese that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse while performing any work or activity under the auspices of the Diocese is contrary to Christian principles and outside the scope of any authority, duties, and/or employment of any clergy, employee, or volunteer.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal (who in turn will call the Vicar General). The school principal should complete Attachment B found in Appendix G, which must be sent to the Vicar General. The school principal must inform the superintendent as well. At that point, confidentiality must be respected.

Virginia law imposes upon school personnel the legal responsibility of reporting to the local child protective services agency any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect.

In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2–118, “Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent/guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in *loco parentis* or school personnel.”

WELLNESS POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition, and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain, and evaluate the local wellness program.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the principal/administration or the principal/administration's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority

of providing assistance to the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the principal, the school and/or its staff are authorized to render reasonable basic first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion of the school, serve to minimize the severity of the injured person's condition. As an example, staff should initially resort to using only ice, band aids, soap and water when treating cuts and/or scrapes to avoid any possible known or unknown allergic reactions to salves or creams. In addition, staff may secure a professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such action, in the opinion of the school, appears to be reasonably warranted. The school and school officials shall be expressly held harmless from any liability costs or expenses associated with the professional diagnosis and/or any treatment or first aid provided (including but not limited to the cost of transportation), such costs or expenses being the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents.

There is an AED located in the school foyer outside the gym. AED's are portable devices used to induce electrical stimulation to the heart muscle in the event of a potential cardiac arrest. Early access defibrillation has been recognized as a significant factor in survival from incidents of sudden cardiac arrest. Adequate preparation for responding to a life-threatening emergency can save lives.

ILLNESS

Each school will provide a health office or comfortable space, apart from the student population, where children who become ill or injured can be cared for following *Virginia School Health Guidelines*.

Children with fevers, contagious, or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school, afterschool, and extracurricular activities.

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician which states any activity restrictions with regard to participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific time frame for the activity restrictions.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

All school clinic, administrators, and staff are required to administer medication within the framework of the procedures outlined in Diocesan policy and summarized here.

Parents and guardians must provide and transport medications to and from the school.

All prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications may be administered during the school day under the following conditions:

- a. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
- b. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
- c. When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant or a senior member of the school administration;
- d. When there is a licensed health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school administer the medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication;
- e. When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage and method of administration prescribed by a licensed health-care provider. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;
- f. When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been completed, signed by the parent/guardian and accompanies the medication.
- g. For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets in order to achieve their child's proper dosage.
- h. Herbal and homeopathic medications will not be given in Diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan.
- i. Under no circumstances are medications to be shared with other students.
- j. Picc Lines, Heparin/Saline Locks, and Central Venous Lines may be present in students with specialized health care needs. Dressing changes, heparin flushes, and other medication administration via these lines are to be done at home and should not be done at school.

When the medication is epinephrine, trained school employees are permitted to administer Epi-pen injections when:

- a. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an Epi-pen may need to be administered (e.g., symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the Epi-pen with a suitable demonstration);
- b. parents of students requiring such injections provide a licensed health-care provider letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;
- c. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the Epi-pen.

All diocesan schools will maintain naloxone, an opioid antagonist, to be available for use if opioid overdose is recognized in any individual on school campus. Any student receiving naloxone will be transported via EMS to the local emergency room and cleared to return to school. All staff will be trained in how to recognize opioid overdose and administer naloxone.

All OTC and prescription medications are to be kept locked in the clinic/school office and be administered by the school nurse, clinic aide, principal or trained designee. No student is to carry/possess medications, without appropriate medical authorization. No medication will be administered unless the school has received a signed copy of the Medication Authorization Form (Appendix F-6). OTC medications do not require a health care provider's signature unless the medication is required for four (4) or more consecutive days.

It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the clinic/school office at the appropriate time for medication unless a health care provider or parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

Students are NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medications taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to carry and self-administer emergency lifesaving medications (e.g. inhaler, Epi-pen).

Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order, or on the last day of school, the parent/guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within that period will be destroyed.

SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

The parent/guardian of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school principal/administration and identify, in writing, the student's supervising health care provider. If necessary, and with parental written consent, there may be occasions when the school needs to communicate with the health care provider regarding possible effects on the pupil's healthcare management, special emergency procedures, or behavior at school.

TOILETING/INCONTINENCE

Although the vast majority of school staff would assist in an emergency situation, as no child should be left in wet or soiled clothing, it is important to note that there is no expectation that routine and predictable incidents are to be dealt with by school staff.

Parents/guardians will always be contacted in incidents of soiling. The exception to this policy is the student with a prescribed health-related treatment or procedure plan obtained in writing from a LHCP, with proper authorizations in writing by the parent or guardian.

For preschool students, it is recognized that continence training is an area of development which is reached at different ages for all children and that every child has individual needs which are respected. The preschool director will determine age-appropriate protocols for the student population.

For admission to the STARS Pre-K program, children must be able to use the restroom independently. Repeat incidents requiring assistance will result in a request that the child be removed from the program for at least one trimester.

USE OF CRUTCHES

An order from a Licensed Healthcare Provider (LHP) is required to use crutches at school. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a licensed health-care provider order, the parent will be called to take the student home.

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY

Schools will utilize current resources and reputable materials such as; Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and the CDC's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs* to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications.

All schools must provide an annual in-service educating school faculty and staff about the policy. Training will include minimizing the risk of exposure to life threatening allergens in the school setting as well as anaphylaxis recognition, medical management, and incident reporting.

Schools will utilize the policy to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications. Schools will select and train staff to be utilized as anaphylaxis response teams responsible for managing an allergic crisis.

Parents/guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy must inform the principal and school health personnel of any allergies and provide schools with fully executed Diocesan documents. Parents/guardians are expected to supply schools with any emergency medications as prescribed and may additionally provide the student with "safe" foods for classroom celebrations involving food. Schools will utilize Diocesan documents to formulate an emergency care plan for the student and will share this care plan with those involved with the student including, but not limited to, teacher(s), food service, bus drivers, and janitorial staff.

CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE

Parents/guardians must notify the school within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a communicable disease. Parents must notify the school immediately if the disease is life threatening. Parents must pick up their sick or injured child in a timely manner when contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

The protection and welfare of each individual student is of importance in the schools of the Diocese of Arlington. In an effort to enhance the protection of students:

- a. No daycare/preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form MCH-213G (*Appendix F-2*).
 - i. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption form (*Appendix F-18*), which will be retained in the student health record.
 - ii. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for five months or more, where tuberculosis is common, are required to provide documentation, prior to school entry, of a negative tuberculosis skin test or chest x-ray result. All Diocesan schools are responsible for compliance with local health department regulations pertaining to tuberculosis screening and treatment.
- b. Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.
- c. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the *Virginia School Health Guidelines*, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
- d. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school-based vaccination clinics for children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the consummation of any contract for services.

LICE

All students determined to have an active case of lice will be excluded from school until they receive treatment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide appropriate and adequate treatment for the student and home environment as recommended by their health care professional. Readmission to school is determined by the school nurse/administration based upon re-inspection and the effectiveness of treatment. Follow up treatment is expected and verified by the school nurse/administration. Classroom contacts may be inspected.

When a case of head lice is reported, the parent will be called immediately to take the child home. Once a child becomes infected, he/she will not be readmitted to school until the following criteria are met:

1. Any student living in the same house as a student who is suspected of having head lice should be screened. It is also appropriate to screen students who come in close contact with a student suspected of having head lice through day care, bus, or after school and evening activities.
2. Any student who is suspected of having head lice shall be sent home with a written notification to the parent/guardian of the suspected lice infestation.
3. Students shall be excluded from school until:
 - A parent accompanies the child to the clinic before returning to class.
 - The child is examined by the school nurse and must be nit-free. If any nits are found, the child will be required to go home.
 - A letter is received stating that the student was treated with approved head lice shampoo.
4. Absences exceeding two days for lice treatment will be considered unexcused; however, extenuating circumstances may be considered and approved by the principal.
5. The school will recheck any student suspected of having head lice on the eighth-tenth day after initial treatment to verify that the child remains free of eggs (nits) and/or live lice.

The school nurses will address all questions or concerns involving OSHA requirements or procedures.

A strict NIT FREE policy will be enforced.

INFECTIOUS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICIES

No student who has a communicable disease will be permitted to attend school. If a child becomes ill during school time and needs special attention, the parent or guardian will be contacted. If the school is unable to locate the parent or guardian, one of the other names noted on the emergency sheet will be called. No student will be sent home without permission of the parent or one designated to take the place of the parent. A student suffering from any communicable disease will not be allowed to attend school during the contagious period. Students may be required to bring a note from a physician if they are absent for more than three days.

When a suspected case of chicken pox, measles, impetigo, hepatitis, mumps, conjunctivitis (pink eye), streptococcal infections, scarlet fever, head lice, or any other communicable disease is reported, the parent will be called immediately to take the child home.

BLOODBORNE DISEASE

The Christian community is called to respond to the sick in our midst with compassion and justice. The diocese recognizes its obligation to protect the rights of individual students infected with Hepatitis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and to provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and the public. Students who are infected with bloodborne Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), or HIV-related conditions must be provided the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education in a regular classroom unless the student's health interferes significantly with school performance.

Since it is known that bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV are not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is infected will continue education in a regular classroom assignment unless his or her health status requires otherwise. It is the intent of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health which state that most bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV-infected children be allowed to attend school in an unrestricted setting, and that decisions regarding school attendance be based on the medical condition of each child and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting.

Persons involved in the implementation and monitoring of this policy shall maintain confidentiality of records in compliance with federal and state law and diocesan policy. All diocesan schools shall also maintain a program of information and training for school staff members to ensure a consistent and accurate understanding regarding prevention of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This includes training related to the proper application of universal/standard precautions.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire Drill Procedures

- Exit routes are posted in each room.
- Teachers will accompany students outside the building to assigned places.
- Individuals instructing special classes (music, art, science lab, computer, band, library, etc.) are responsible for supervising the class during a fire drill. Students in a special class or assisting in another classroom at the time of a fire drill will remain with that particular teacher for the duration of the

drill. Classroom teachers will meet their students where they are assembled with the specials teacher.

- Students will exit and reenter the building in perfect order and in **complete silence**.
- All persons will exit the building.
- The last student out of the room closes the door.
- Teachers will bring their class roster for roll check.
- Teachers will report roll to appropriate staff as designated by the administration.
- An administrator will give an "all clear" signal allowing all to reenter the building.

In addition to fire drills, students participate in other drills for emergency situations – tornado, bomb, etc.

Shelter-in-Place

To prepare for the event of an exterior chemical or biological exposure to hazardous material, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School has adopted an extensive *Shelter-in-Place* plan. This procedure utilizes the school building structure and its indoor atmosphere to temporarily separate people from a hazardous outdoor atmosphere. When the school has entered into a *Shelter-in-Place* situation, parents cannot enter the school building.

Should a situation arise that delays the release of students at the end of the day, parents will be notified in the following manner:

- The school will use *School Messenger* to inform parents of changes to dismissal procedures
- Parents are asked to NOT CALL THE OFFICE. Phone lines must remain open to receive directions from county officials.
- Once the emergency situation has been resolved and the okay is received from county officials, students will be released as usual.

HARASSMENT

Harassment can take place in person or in writing and can be physical, verbal, or electronic. Regardless of its form, the Diocese prohibits it.

This policy applies to the school site itself, to all school-sponsored and affiliated activities and events, whether in school or out of school, including but not limited to special events, field/service trips, retreats and/or other overnight trips, sporting events and practices, to all forms of transportation used by school personnel and students to come and go to the school and school-affiliated activities, and to all forms/use of technology.

Furthermore, since student behavior, whether inside or outside of school, reflects on our schools and can have a significant impact on life at school, there are times when it is appropriate and

important for school administration to respond to incidents that occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Therefore, the schools reserve the right to discipline those in the community who engage in harassment of other school community members at any location and at any time if such harassment takes the form of obscene, libelous, slanderous language or incites violence, invades the rights of others, or contributes to a substantial disruption of the school community. Therefore, if such harassment originates outside of school and it comes to the attention of school staff, appropriate action will be taken to maintain a safe and respectful work and academic environment. As the primary educator of their children, parents have the responsibility to handle harassment issues not involving the school and are occurring outside of school.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Students, parents, employees, and service providers are responsible for reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation on campus. School principals will ensure that all illegal behaviors are reported to the appropriate local authorities and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools immediately.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR SEXUAL ABUSE – STUDENTS

No student is to sexually harass or sexually abuse another person. All reports of harassment or abuse will be thoroughly, and appropriately investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate, up to and including expulsion. Instances of sexual abuse, that has been investigated and confirmed, will result in suspension at a minimum. If it appears that a violation of criminal law may have occurred, the matter will be reported to law enforcement authorities. During the investigation of an alleged crime, alleged student may need to be asked to leave campus.

Any student who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or abused needs to immediately report such information to a trusted employee. If a student makes a report, the employee will report the information to the principal. A student who is uncomfortable for any reason with reporting such alleged harassment/abuse to a trusted employee, or is not satisfied in doing so, may report the matter directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Any information reported shall, to the extent possible, be treated as confidential.

No student will be subject to any retaliation or disciplinary action on the part of the school for reports of sexual harassment/abuse made in good faith.

Children under 17 years of age cannot legally consent under Virginia State Law to having sex or sexual contact with an adult. **Any sexual contact between a student under 17 and an adult is a crime. It must be reported to the police.**

In addition, any sexual or romantic conduct between a school employee or an employee of a contracted service provider and a present student of any age, even if 17 years of age or older, and even if consented to or welcomed by the student, is strictly prohibited by this Policy while the student is attending a diocesan school and for one year post-date of graduation, and will result in dismissal of the adult involved. As such, this Policy prohibits "sexting" between students and employees or employees of contracted service providers and the showing of pornography to any student by any such adult. Such activity will result in the dismissal of the adult involved and the reporting of such conduct to the appropriate authorities.

In an effort to minimize/address sexual harassment/abuse, students in grades 6 to 12 must receive appropriate age level instruction pertaining to harassment by September 30th (Appendix AB). The Validation of Sexual Harassment Instruction must be completed and submitted to the Office of Catholic Schools by September 30th (Appendix H-1).

HAZING

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, often humiliating, tasks as part of a program of rigorous physical training and initiation.

Hazing is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any hazing on Diocesan school grounds, in virtual school, or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of hazing to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incidence of hazing to report the hazing to school administration for further investigation.

In cases of reported hazing, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e., the aggressor(s) and the person being hazed) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting hazing may be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who engage in hazing shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. A parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s). The principal may also report incidents of hazing to law enforcement if appropriate.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the person being bullied; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and person being bullied; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyber bullying. Bullying does not include inappropriate developmental teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Physical intimidation or assault
- b. Extortion
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
- d. Malicious teasing
- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (Overt and Covert)
- i. Cruel rumors & false accusations
- j. Social Isolation
- k. Cyber bullying

Bullying is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying or cyberbullying to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying or cyberbullying to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the school principal for further investigation.

In cases of reported bullying, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e. the aggressor(s) and the person being bullied) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. Parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or Expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement, if appropriate.

RESPECT FOR LIFE

A fundamental tenet of our Catholic faith is that human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. In the event of a student pregnancy or participation in an abortion, the school may condition continued enrollment in the school upon the student's/family's compliance with the foregoing and other corollary tenets of the Catholic Church.

ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

School leadership at each individual school must install video surveillance cameras in order to maintain a safe and secure environment.

- a. At the discretion of the principal his/her designees, video surveillance cameras may be placed in public locations deemed appropriate. Such locations may include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
- b. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
- c. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms, and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

To the extent video images may be deemed appropriate to create student records or personnel records, the school shall comply with any applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention, and disclosure.

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations, codes of conduct, building rules, and other applicable laws or rules, including, but not limited to, use of such images in student disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement.

agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 60 days and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

IX. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Office of Catholic Schools recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the opportunity to provide assistance and services for students with disabilities according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents/guardians are considered an integral part of the process.

In order to accommodate a student who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school. A student may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. Students who have a documented disability, but do not qualify for services through the local public school, may be eligible for interventions through a Student Assistance Plan written at the Catholic school.

When a student qualifies for special education services through the public school and will not receive services, an Individualized Catholic Education Plan can be written following the information in the Guidelines for Serving Students with Disabilities.

Failure of the parent to sign the Student Assistance Plan or Individualized Catholic Education Plan does not prevent the implementation of the plan.

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the school's policies and honor code.

Aquinas has one full-time resource teacher, one full time nurse and one full time school counselor. Aquinas also hosts a part-time Title I teacher.

Students with identified learning disabilities receive priority in scheduling followed by students who are under evaluation for learning disabilities. That is, students under evaluation will be considered for placement in the Resource program if openings are available. However, there is no guarantee of placement in the Resource program, because a student is undergoing evaluation.

Students are considered to have an identified learning disability if they have an existing Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Service Plan (ISP) from a public school or a Student Assistance Plan (SAP) or Individualized Catholic Education Plan (ICEP) or equivalent from a public school along with supporting testing data.

A SAP is developed by the resource teacher in consultation with the parents and other appropriate individuals, i.e. Classroom teacher, counselor, administration, etc. The parents' signature on the SAP is considered permission for the student to participate in services. This permission remains in effect while the student is at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School.

Resource help can take many forms from monitoring of classroom accommodations to inclusion services in the general education classroom, to pull-out services in which the subject grades are provided by the resource teacher. The type and duration of services is determined by the resource teacher in consultation with the classroom teacher, school counselor, and administration as needed. Resource services may be limited due to professional availability.

Resource personnel are available to guide parents through the special education evaluation process in the public school system. However, if the parent would like assistance in this process, resource personnel must be contacted before contact with the public school is initiated. If resource personnel and the administration feel the student in question does not meet the criteria necessary to pursue an evaluation, resource personnel may decline to participate in the process. Please refer to eligibility criteria below.

If the school requests an evaluation as a means of meeting a student's academic needs, parents must begin the process by scheduling a student intervention meeting with the public school or scheduling an appointment with a private evaluator within six weeks of the request. If an evaluation is not pursued, school personnel will make a determination if they can continue to serve the student.

Eligibility for Special Education Services at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School

To be eligible for special education services at St. Thomas of Aquinas Regional School, a child must have a disability and must need special education services. Students determined eligible for special education services must meet all three of the following criteria:

1. The student must have a diagnosed disability or disabilities.
2. The student's disability/disabilities adversely affect educational performance.

3. The student's unique needs cannot be addressed through education in general education classes alone – with or without individual accommodations. The student requires specially designed instruction.

A diagnosis from a doctor or mental health professional alone is not enough to qualify for special education services. A child with a medical diagnosis does not automatically qualify for special education services. Eligibility is decided based on the type of medical diagnosis and whether the diagnosis affects the child's education. Information from a doctor or mental health professional is very helpful, however, and should be provided to the school.

Eligibility is based on a comprehensive evaluation, which parents can request through either the public school system or a private evaluator. The public school system has 10 days following the receipt of the referral to convene a Child Study Committee to determine if an evaluation is warranted. The Virginia public schools have 65 days from the date of the referral to the special education administrator to complete the testing, and hold the eligibility meeting to determine if the child qualifies for special education services. A comprehensive evaluation includes existing data gathered about the student through the referral process and any additional assessments needed to determine whether a student is eligible for special education. The initial evaluation report is used to determine what special education services are needed.

Children with disabilities enrolled in private schools by their parents have no individual entitlement to receive some or all of the special education and related services they would receive if enrolled in a public school. After an evaluation of a student and determining eligibility for special education, the school district where the private school is located will explain to you what services are available if the student remains in the private school and inform you that the school district where the child lives is responsible for providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) if the child leaves the private school and enrolls in public school.

X. EXTENDED DAY

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

The school offers an extended day program on days when the school is in session for students who are currently enrolled in the school's academic program. See Section IV, *General School Policies*, regarding fees to utilize this program. Parents/guardians must sign their child(ren) in/out when they are being placed in/released from the program at the beginning and end of the school day, respectively. All provisions in this handbook (except Section II, *Academics*, but including the section on *Technology*), apply to the Extended Day Program.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

LICENSING INFORMATION

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents/guardians that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems, and family day systems. The state may also voluntarily register family day homes, which are not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program, which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licensing may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.

Fairfax Licensing Office
3701 Pender Drive, Suite 125
Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 934-1505

Verona Licensing Office
Post Office Box 350
Verona, Virginia 24482-0350
(540) 248-9345

Northern Virginia Regional Office
320 Hospital Drive, Suite #23
Warrenton, VA 22186
(540) 347-6345

Piedmont Regional Office
Commonwealth of Virginia Building
210 Church Street, S.W., Ste. 100
Roanoke, VA 24011-1779
(540) 857-7920

Central Regional Offices
1604 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 130
Richmond, VA 23229-5008
(804) 662-9743

Abingdon Licensing Office
190 Patton Street
Abingdon, VA 24210
(540) 676-549

Eastern Regional Office
Pembroke Office Park
Pembroke Four Office Building, Suite 300
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-5496
(757) 491-3990

INSURANCE

The extended day program is covered by public liability insurance through the Diocese of Arlington and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America. Student insurance must be provided by the family through their own policy or purchased through an independent school insurance provider.

TAX INFORMATION

Because the Internal Revenue Service requires identification of care givers in order to claim a credit for child and dependent care expenses, the program staff will complete and return to the parent/guardian any W-10 that is sent in, provided Part II is already completed by the parent.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

In compliance with state regulations for state licensed programs, a custodial parent/guradian shall be admitted to any child day program. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program (63.2-1813 of Code of Virginia).

The following provisions are specifically applicable only to the extended day program at the School. These are in addition to the standards, policies, and guidelines previously set forth in this handbook. If any provisions in this section are clearly in conflict with the standards, policies, and guidelines in other sections of this Handbook, then the provisions in this section of the handbook will be enforced for the extended day program.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Extended Day Program is to enhance the Christ-centered atmosphere of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School and to support working parents of children enrolled in the school by providing the children with quality and consistent care and supervision beyond normal school hours. Emphasis of the Program is consistent with the school and home environment and conducive to creative play, respectful interaction among the children, independent study, and rest. The Program is operated on a not-for-profit basis. The Extended Day program is an extension of the school day and the same uniform, allowed devices, disciplinary and behavior policies that apply during the regular school day also apply during extended day hours of operation.

LICENSE/COMPLIANCE PLAN

The Extended Day program is regulated by the Department of Social Services Division of Licensing as outlined for religious exempt programs. The program adheres to all health, safety, and supervision requirements specified by the Division of Licensing under its standards for religious exempt programs. This program is exempt from licensure. We are permitted to serve up to 149 students.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

A criminal record check, as required by Criminal Record Checks for Child Welfare Agencies, is to be processed and maintained on file for each staff member.

SWORN DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

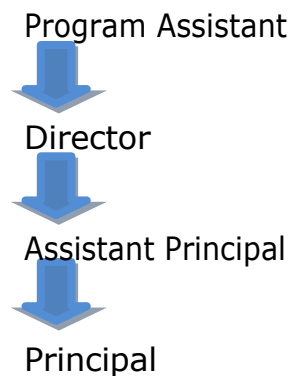
A signed sworn disclosure statement as required by regulation for Child Welfare Agencies is to be completed and maintained on file for each staff member.

REQUEST FOR SEARCH OF THE CENTRAL REGISTRY FORM

Child Protective Services requires a central registry search to determine if an individual has had any prior reported/founded complaints on file. All staff members of the program are required to have the appropriate documentation on file.

Chain of Command

Staff will follow the chain of command.



EXTENDED DAY STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Lead Staff

- Minimum 18 yrs. old.
- Previous childcare, education (not exclusive to academic) or supervision experience.
- Must successfully clear all required background check items.
- Must display Christian based values as they apply to interaction with children and parents.
- Staff shall be certified annually by a practicing physician or nurse practitioner to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Lead staff will be the primary supervisor in a room where they also have a support staff member on duty or in a room where they are the only supervisor. In the case where 2 lead staff members are in a supervisory role they will coordinate responsibilities and will not over ride or contradict their co lead staff member.

SupportStaff

- Minimum 16 yrs. old
- Must successfully clear all required background check items.
- Must display Christian based values as they apply to interaction with children and parents.
- Staff shall be certified annually by a practicing physician or nurse

practitioner to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Support staff will assist the lead staff member in the supervision and guidance of the students in their assigned room or on the playground. Support staff may be asked to provide individual supervision (escort students to restrooms etc.)

All staff will supervise the students in their care in order to insure that the students are safe and accounted for; this includes taking role, tracking students' locations, hand washing procedures...These duties may also include study hall supervisor, playground supervision and safety, emergency procedure supervision, guidance and instruction. All staff present will assist with cleaning and closing of rooms/playground after use.

Physical Facilities

The Extended Day program normally uses rooms 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The program may occasionally use the gym/auditorium for indoor recess if it is not otherwise reserved during inclement weather. An additional classroom may be used for study hall use and may vary during the school year. All rooms used are also used by St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School for regular school day classes and meet health and safety requirements. The program also uses the enclosed playground located next to the school building across from the Chapel. The parking lot directly in front of the building is coned off to create an enclosed play area for students after school.

ADMISSION POLICY

The program is open to the children in grades PK-8 who are enrolled in St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School on an available space basis.

SUPERVISION:

The director, assistant director, and other staff members have at least the minimum educational background and/or related work experience determined by the program director.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Program operates from 6:00 AM to the beginning of the school day and again from dismissal time to 6:00 PM on each day that the school is open. On early dismissal days, the afternoon program begins when school dismisses. The program does not operate during school vacations or on school holidays.

GENERAL PROGRAM PROCEDURES

DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning

5:45– 6:00 AM Staff member monitors doors and prepares sign in area for arrival of students

6:00-7:25 AM Staff greets parents and students upon arrival and supervises students until dismissal to class.

7:30AM Staff dismisses students and prepares room for use by classroom

teacher.

Afternoon

3:05 - 3:15 PM	Roll call
3:15 - 3:30 PM	Snack and cleanup
3:30 PM	Study Hall for any student who has homework
3:45 PM	Outdoor recess (weather permitting)
	Free play
5:30 PM	Begin closing and clean up
6:00 PM	Program closes

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF STAFF

6:00am/2:45pm: AM/PM Staff arrives and checks in with Director or Program Assistant

- Staff secures their personal belongings
- Staff prepares the room/area for the arrival of the students by assuring the following:
 - appropriate temperature
 - the previous users have cleaned up and removed their possessions
 - Staff may assist with the escort of students from their classroom to the extended day area

7:30 am/5:30 PM

- Staff begins to close down their classrooms/assigned areas
 - toys/games are cleaned up and put aside for cleaning
 - the tables are wiped down
- Staff ensures that all student belongings left behind are secured for the night.

6:00 PM

- Program closes - if all the students have been picked up
 - lights are turned off
 - temperature is adjusted for the night/day
 - sign out/ attendance clipboards are filed in the office
 - staff records their hours in DAYFORCE
- Staff checks out with the Director or Program Assistant

PRAYER

The Morning program should dismiss with a prayer. The afternoon program begins with Grace before snack.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Morning session attendance is maintained by the door attendant who tracks student arrival on role sheets.

Afternoon attendance is taken daily approximately 5 minutes after school is dismissed in order to insure the arrival of all students. Attendance sheets also serve as parent sign-out sheets.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF PROGRAM

The situation causing the closing is first evaluated. If it necessitates the moving of the students from their assigned areas in order to ensure their safety, this is accomplished immediately. Notice is posted for the parents detailing the move and location of the children. A *School Messenger* notice is sent out to parents.

Staff then begin calling parents to inform them of the situation so they may make arrangements to pick their child up immediately. The parents who usually pick up their children the latest are called first, working back to the parents who arrive the earliest. This often eliminates the need to make several phone calls due to the fact that many parents will have already picked up their children. In the meantime, staff members keep the children occupied with group games etc.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When school opens late due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, the morning session of Extended Day will delay opening. For example, if school opening is delayed two hours until 10:00 AM, the morning session will delay opening for two hours until 8:00 AM.

When school closes early for any emergency/weather situation, there will be **NO** Extended Day. Children must be picked up as soon as possible.

Billing Policy

Extended Day Invoices are calculated and emailed monthly according to the sessions the student is registered to use. All fees are processed through your family FACTS account unless other payment arrangements are made with the Business Office.

If a one time adjustment needs to be made to a student's registered schedule, notification must be made in writing (either via email or in writing) before the 1st day of the month. Please submit all changes to jmcnulty@aquinastars.org

OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the

manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

For all over-the-counter skin products:

- a. written parent/guardian authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- b. shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- c. does not need to be kept locked, but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
- d. any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;
- e. children nine years of age and older may administer their own sunscreen, if supervised.

When insect repellent is used, a record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application, and any adverse reaction. Manufacturer's instructions for age, duration, and dosage shall be followed.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A variety of daily activities for all age groups should be age and stage appropriate. These daily activities should also provide opportunities for staff directed, self-directed, and self-chosen tasks and activities, a balance of active and quiet activities, and individual and group activities.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Each classroom is supplied (or has access to supplies) with various age appropriate toys, games, etc. Craft supplies such as string, glue, colored paper, drawing paper, scissors, crayons, pens, pencils, erasers, colored pencils, markers, etc. are available to students. Each classroom has access to a means of viewing appropriate entertainment videos. Paper towels, tissues, and straws are available as needed. Reference materials for use with homework are available (dictionary, student desk reference, grammar reference, calculators, etc.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

ORGANIZATION OF STUDENTS

Students are divided among six rooms/areas depending on grade levels. Each room/area usually serves two consecutive grades. The exception is a middle school room/area which may serve three grades or be divided according to gender. Under certain circumstances a student may be

placed in a room that does not serve his/her age group. This decision is based on the best situation to serve the needs of that child.

ACTIVITY PLANNING BOOKS

No texts are used for activity planning. Activities are selected for their age appropriateness, availability of materials, time, and feasibility. Seasonal themes provide various opportunities to build activities. Some activities are applied to the entire program; others are applied only to particular age groups. Ideas are drawn from staff input, training sessions attended by the staff, and themes developed during the school day by different teachers, staff, etc.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Staff shall not leave unsupervised either a class, or an individual student, under his/her charge. It is the responsibility of the staff to know where their assigned children are at all times. Two staff members must be present at all times. Staff ratio must be maintained at:

1:10 for 3 and 4 year old children
1:18 for 5 to 8 year old children
1:20 for 9 – 12 year old children

PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT

ROOM ORGANIZATION

A classroom/area is organized according to the age group it serves. Storage is available for craft materials, toys, games etc. A smart board may be available for limited use. Students sit at either tables or desks.

ROOM MAINTENANCE

The cleaning company employed by the school/church cleans the classrooms. In addition, each staff member assures that all materials are stored away at the end of the day. She/he wipes down the tables/desks, sweeps the floor and removes debris.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards are the responsibility of the classroom teacher who uses the room during the school day.

EQUIPMENT

The staff members maintain equipment. If necessary, toys are

disinfected as needed. The staff member informs the Director or Program Assistant of any supplies she may need or would like to request. Materials are organized neatly to ensure that the students are able to make use of them.

LOST AND FOUND

Belongings left during the program are placed in a central lost and found location near the entry/exit doors to the program. Staff members remind students to check for lost items. After a reasonable period of time, items are moved to the school lost and found area.

STATE REQUIRED POSTINGS

CLASS SCHEDULE

Program Daily schedule is posted on the door of the Extended Day Office.

ALLERGY LISTINGS

The names/necessary information of students with allergies are available in the nurse's office and in the Director's office

FIRE DRILL ROUTES

Fire drill routes are posted in each classroom on the wall next to the door.

SNACK LISTING

The extended day program will provide an afternoon snack. Students with special food requirements will be required to provide their own snack. Snack listings are posted in the food preparation area in the Director's office

INSURANCE POLICY

The Extended Day and Pre-K Programs are covered by a liability policy through The Diocese of Arlington.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION POLICY

The Extended Day Program will administer medication to a student upon receipt of the appropriate documentation /request forms from the parent. All medications are administered by MAT trained employees only according to MAT standards.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN

PROCEDURES

When students arrive in the morning, parents drop their children at the extended day entrance to the building where a door attendant will admit the student and sign the student into the program.

AUTHORIZED PICKUP

If the parent will not be picking their child up from the program, they must provide authorization in writing for any party not already listed on their registration form as authorized to pick up their child. In emergency cases only, a parent may inform the Director and a second staff member over the phone or otherwise orally of such variances. These persons must be able to show identification. All parents will sign their student out of the program upon pickup.

LATE PICKUP PROCEDURES

If a parent arrives late consistently (after their registered pick-up time), their child's registered session will be changed to a later session and the parent will be charged appropriately. If a parent arrives after the close of the program (6:00 PM), they will be charged \$1 per minute for every minute after 6:00PM. Repeat offenders will be asked to make other daycare arrangements for their child.

Transportation Safety

The St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Extended Day Program does not transport students.

HEALTH AND SECURITY

INJURY PREVENTION

The director will review accident reports and the accident log every three months. The review will focus on the type of injury, where the injury occurred, and the appropriate action taken. If a pattern is discerned, appropriate measures should be taken to alleviate or correct the cause of the injury.

To help prevent accidents/injuries from occurring, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. Staff members will supervise children at all times.
- b. Children will be allowed to climb only on designated climbing equipment.

LOCATING LOST CHILD

Staff members must be familiar with procedures to follow in the event a child is suspected to be missing from their care.

When it comes to the attention of a staff member that they are unable to locate a child they are to alert the Director and Program Assistant immediately.

If a child is expected in the program and does not arrive, attempts to verify the child's location are made and staff will inform the Director/Program Assistant who will then:

1. contacting the child's teacher
2. speaking with someone in the school office to check for illness/absence
3. If verification cannot be made, the Director take over the process until the child is located.

ADDITIONAL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

IN-SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

In addition to first aid training and required orientation training, staff will annually attend 16 hours of staff development activities that shall be related to child safety and development and the function of the program.

SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS INFORMATION

All staff members must promote and convey a truly Catholic and Christ-centered message in all their interactions with the students, parents, and other staff members.

END OF YEAR PROCEDURES

At the end of the school year the staff reviews all their classroom materials and disposes worn and broken items. All materials are packed up and stored in either allotted cabinets or a central classroom not used by other groups during

the summer. All personal items are taken home.

OTHER INFORMATION/PROCEDURES

STAFF MAILBOX

The Director has a mailbox located in the school office in which all communications from the school may be placed. This is checked every morning and every afternoon. The Director relays to staff all necessary information and posts it in the Director's office. Staff have mailboxes located in the Directors office and should be checked daily

STAFF PERSONAL PROPERTY (VALUABLES)

Staff members are assigned a cabinet area in the Director's office in which they may store personal belongings. Ladies Purses must be stored in this assigned area and not brought into the classroom.

SUPPLIES/REPAIRS

The Director obtains all needed supplies and takes teacher requests. Anything out of the ordinary is reviewed by the Principal and/or the Business Manager. All repairs are done either by the Director or a work order is submitted to the maintenance crew.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Both the Diocesan and school Crisis Management handbooks are kept with lists of students, parents' work numbers, and emergency contact information. These are available at all times so that in an emergency when the building or area must be evacuated, they can be quickly grabbed and taken along. Parents are reminded to keep their student's files updated throughout the year.

Staff Emergency procedures are presented to each staff member and a copy kept in his/her file. Student Emergency information is recorded on the registration form in the areas provided.

MONEY REQUISITIONS

The school Business Manager maintains all financial files. Reimbursement requests are submitted on the appropriate form. Check requests for approved items are also submitted through the director on the appropriate form. The school Business Manager is responsible for processing billing, and maintains account records.

WORKROOM PROCEDURES

The Extended Day program does not have specific workroom procedures.

<h2>APPENDICES</h2>

School Forms

"[Insert School Forms here - Optional"]

Additional School Information

"[Insert Additional School Information here - Optional]"

Diocesan Forms:

- Permission for Emergency Care Form (Appendix F-1)
- Confidential Student Health History Update (Appendix F-1A)
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form (Appendix F-2)
- Asthma Action Plan with Indemnification (Appendix F-3)
- Nebulizer Treatment Log and Procedure (Appendix F-3A)
- Anaphylaxis Action Plan with Indemnification (Appendix F-4)
- Diabetes Quick Reference and Indemnification (Appendix F-5)
- Virginia Diabetes Medical Management Plan (Appendix F-5A)
- Diocese Medication Authorization Form (Appendix F-6)
- Student Injury Accident Report (Appendix F-7)
- Wind Chill Factors/Heat Stress Index (Appendix F-15)
- Certificate of Religious Exemption (Appendix F-18)
- Seizure Action Plan (Appendix F-20)
- Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (Appendix N)
- Parent Permission for School Sponsored Trip Participation.English (Appendix R)
- Permiso De Los Padres Para Excursiones Patrocinados Por La Escuela.Spanish (Appendix R-A)
- Use of Personal Vehicle (Appendix R-1)
- Elementary/Middle School Handbook Agreement Form (Appendix AG-1)

Signature Page

[Insert Signature Page here - Mandatory]