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ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

From the Pastoral Letter on Education, "To Teach as Jesus Did", written by the American Catholic Bishops:

"Of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic Schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the three-fold purpose: (message, community, service) of Christian education among children and young people ... A school has a greater claim on the time and loyalty of the student and his family. It makes more accessible to students participation in the liturgy and the sacraments, which are powerful forces for the building of community.

With the Second Vatican Council, we affirm our conviction that the Catholic School retains its immense importance in the circumstances of our times; and we recall the duty of Catholic parents to entrust their children to Catholic Schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children."

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL

Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education, the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action. Education at St. Thomas More, through systematic study of Catholic doctrine, is communal, faith-based in the Gospel, and person-centered. The St. Thomas More School is a community created to help each person grow to his/her fullest potential in faith, in expression of faith through worship, in skill development, in human interaction, in human interdependence, and in service to humanity.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More School provides a safe learning environment in which I, as a unique child of God, strive to become the person that God intends for me to be through academic achievement and acts of justice, love and service based in our Catholic religious beliefs.

SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More School will strive to develop life-long learners with global awareness through a life style of faith, service and rigorous academics enriched by technology.

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of St. Thomas More Parish is to provide a welcoming, inclusive and loving community by proclaiming and living God's Word through worship, education, and social justice.

From the Pastor

Families enrolled in our parish school are expected to be present as active participants at Sunday worship. STM is our parish school. Quite different from private or public schools, parish schools are rooted in parish life. Sunday Mass is the font and summit of our lives together. As both the foundation and the apex of our existence, the gathering of our community in worship on the Lord's Day gives meaning to our education as it does to all of our moral and intellectual pursuits. Because faith and knowledge intersect on our parish campus, we are reminded that Jesus is our first teacher in all things that matter; coming together as His children to acknowledge this, to offer our weekly prayer of gratitude, and to stand together as one in our common pursuit is the most important act that we can perform and teach our children.

Father Don

School Family Commitment

“And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old things have passed away.”
2 Cor. 5:17

I am committed to these agreements in support of our community at St. Thomas More School -

If I have an issue, I will take it to the source.

I will direct others' coming to me with an issue to go directly to the source.

I will not assume the motives of another person.

I will check my perceptions of the matter with the appropriate person.

I will communicate with respect, verbally and non-verbally.

I will be open to receive correction as gracefully as possible.

I will strive to trust and give others the benefit of the doubt to the best of my ability.

Christian Response to Conflict

1. GLORIFY GOD.
2. GET the log out of your own eye before pointing to the speck in another's.
3. GO and show your brother/sister the fault you see.
4. GO again and be reconciled with your brother/sister in Christ.

Seven A's of Confession

1. ADDRESS everyone involved.
2. AVOID "if", "but", and "maybe."
3. ADMIT specifically (not vaguely).
4. APOLOGIZE honestly.
5. ACCEPT the consequences.
6. ALTER your behavior.
7. ASK for forgiveness.

Four Promises of Forgiveness

I will not think about this incident.

I will not bring this incident up and use it against another.

I will not talk to others about the incident.

I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship or the relationships in our community of faith.

ADMISSIONS

The school is operated as a parish project and families with and without children in the school contribute to it through their parish offerings.

ADMISSION ELIGIBILITY:

- St. Thomas More School is open to qualified parish families. The parish defines a Qualifying Member as:
 - baptized Catholics
 - listed in our parish roster
 - residing in parish boundaries*
 - actively participating in the worship and life of the parish
 - pledging annual support.**

**Those outside the boundaries who register with the pastor's approval and have pledged two or more years are full members as well.*

***The norm for tithing is 5% of pre-tax income.*

As active members of St. Thomas More, parishioners are asked to tithe 5% of the combined income of both parents through their parish pledge. Annual support is maintained through a two-step process. A pledge for parish support is made by January. The maintenance of the pledge is expected. An additional registration fee to cover incidental expenses is required to complete registration. Any parishioner who finds this policy to be a serious financial difficulty may make alternate arrangements with persons designated by the pastor for this purpose. While everyone is expected to do his/her share, no one in the parish will be denied a place in the school because of financial constraints.

Beginning in April 2003, non-parishioners are invited to join our school where spaces are available. The tuition for 2011-2012 is \$5,350.00 for one student, \$10,040.00 for two students, and \$14,720.00 total tuition for families with 3 students or more. Registration and activity fees are in addition to tuition. Tuition is payable in advance of each month, and a discount is given to those paying the entire year in advance. Tuition paying students must be current with payments to re-enroll for the coming school year.

Families coming from Our Lady of Peace School will be asked to pay the established St. Thomas More School registration fee of \$525.00 for the first child, \$915.00 for 2 students and \$1,280.00 for 3 or more students. Further financial arrangements should be made with the St. Thomas More Parish Office to complete registration.

In addition to the Registration Fee, we will also require an Activity Fee from each school family (both parishioner and non-parishioner school families). The Activity Fee is intended to help defray costs and encourage participation in our school.

The administration will screen and review applications for admission to the school and make determinations about admission after reviewing past educational performance, disciplinary records, and recommendations. Social behaviors, respect for authority, and parental cooperation in past situations will be taken into account. Following a personal interview with the student and parents, the school administration may determine to take a child on probationary terms. Non-Catholic students are expected to take part in the full religious experience of the school. Those entering the school will take part in all parts of the curriculum including in-school sacramental instruction and practice.

RACE: St. Thomas More School does not deny admission to any qualified student because of race or color.

ENROLLMENT:

- **CURRENT STUDENTS:** Students currently enrolled in the school are asked to pre-register for the coming school year in the spring semester. (All conditions for qualifying membership will be verified at the time of enrollment.) Tuition costs, where applicable, will be determined for the coming year prior to enrollment. Enrollment cannot be complete until approved by the parish office and administration.
- **NEW STUDENTS:** Enrollment for preschool and grades K-8 will take place in the Spring Semester. **In compliance with Missouri law, a child must be five years old by July 31st of the coming year to enter Kindergarten.**

ENTRANCE:

New Students: To undertake and complete the registration process the following steps should be fulfilled:

- Contact the school secretary to make an appointment with the principal for a tour and introduction to St. Thomas More School. All entering 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students must complete this step. All students entering the school in grades 3-8 will have a probationary period of one quarter to determine if St. Thomas More School is meeting a student's needs and whether the school is an appropriate placement for the student.
- Make financial arrangements with the church office. This step will determine whether a tithing or tuition plan will be the basis for attendance at the school.
- Pay the initial registration fee for the number of *students* to be enrolled (1 student -\$525, 2 students - \$915, 3 or more students - \$1,280). This is a non-refundable fee. A late fee may be charged for registrations not completed by the determined date. The activity fee of \$350 per family will be due by August 26, 2011.
- Contact the resource room to make an appointment for testing. This step is necessary for proper placement and must be completed by all incoming students. The resource room teachers can be reached at 816.942.5581 ext. 4111 for the scheduling of the placement test and completion of permission forms for testing.
- Bring all records (immunization records, report cards, standardized testing, birth and baptismal certificates, and any special education information – IEP forms, 504 plans, etc.) from the previous school to the school office or complete a request for transcripts at the school office.
- Complete final registration (steps below).

Returning Students/Final Registration: To complete final registration each year the following requirements must be met before a student will be added to the final grade rosters:

- All tuition paying students must complete a contract for the coming year and be current in tuition payment for the previous year.
- Academic records must be complete and proof of current immunizations on file before final grade placement is made.
- The handbook must be read and the signature page signed by the student(s) and parent indicating that the contracted guidelines within are understood and agreed to by students and parents registering at St. Thomas More School.
- All requirements for qualifying member status must be met and verified by the parish office to complete registration for the upcoming school year.
-

FEES: In addition to membership in the parish, each child is expected to pay:

- **Registration/Incidental Fee** – The registration, book and incidental fees will be combined into one registration fee of \$525.00 per student. For families with 2 students, the registration fee will be \$915.00. Families with 3 or more students will pay a total registration fee of \$1,280.00. The first half of the registration fee is due at time of registration, with the balance payable no later than April 30th. A late fee may be charged for registrations not completed by the determined date.
- **Incidental Fee** - This fee covers the Diocesan assessment, some student supplies, agendas, pencil bags in designated grades, and a portion of the field trips and textbooks.

- **Activity Fee** – In addition to the Registration/Incidental Fee, we will also require an Activity Fee of \$350 from each school family (both parishioner and non-parishioner school families). The Activity Fee is intended to help defray costs and encourage participation in our school fundraisers. The Activity Fee will be paid in advance by each school family no later than August 26, 2011. In exchange for this Activity Fee, school families will receive 4 Auction car raffle tickets, 10 NFL raffle tickets, and membership to Home and School, Booster Club and give support to the Cultural Enrichment Committee. School families can “resell” the Auction car raffle tickets and/or the NFL raffle tickets to recoup their Activity Fee. (If the threatened lockout for the 2011/2012 NFL season occurs, we will modify the raffle ticket allotment to allow for more Auction car raffle tickets to be distributed and sold to recoup the Activity Fee.)
- If the Registration/Incidental or Activity Fee is not paid by August 26th, the child may not be allowed to return to class until arrangements with the office have been made.

FORMS AND RECORDS:

- **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE:** A *copy* of the baptismal certificate is to be submitted in August for children entering school for the first time
- **IMMUNIZATIONS: All students entering a Missouri school for the first time must present a record of immunizations on an official form.** These records are kept on file, and we request that further immunization information be supplied to the school in order to keep our records current. (A copy of the requirements of the state of Missouri for immunizations for children is found at the end of this handbook. Kindly refer to it to be certain that your child has the necessary immunizations.) If immunization records are not up-to-date, complete and submitted by October 1, the child will not be allowed to return to class until records are complete.

HEALTH POLICY ON HIV VIRUS: Students, faculty or staff personnel having evidence of HTLV-II virus infection, or symptoms associated with AIDS or AIDS related complex, will not be restricted from school or the work setting unless, after medical review, such action is recommended -- all in conformance with the Diocesan AIDS policy.

Students with AIDS who are enrolled or seeking enrollment should ordinarily be permitted to attend school in an unrestricted setting. They should be excluded from school only if exceptional conditions are evident, such as the inability to control bodily fluids or unusual physical aggression with a documented history of biting or otherwise harming others.

ATHLETICS

The athletic program at St. Thomas More School will operate in an environment that provides an absence of threat for the student participating in the sport. Just as St. Thomas More School provides a safe learning environment for academic pursuit, so in the athletic program supported by the Athletic Board, an environment that allows for the development of athletic gifts without peer pressure, mental or physical abuse, or other harassment by fellow team members or adults will be provided.

For additional information, please read the separate handbook for athletics located at the end of this booklet.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in attendance on all scheduled school days. Please attempt to make all necessary appointments with physicians outside of the school day or when the students are on vacation.

Students who walk to school are not to arrive before 7:30 a.m. Those for whom transportation is provided may arrive AFTER 7:30 a.m. and report to the school auditorium where they will be supervised until 7:40 a.m., at which time they will be dismissed to homeroom. All students arriving after 7:40 a.m. should go directly to homeroom. No

staff supervision is available before 7:30 a.m.

All students, preschool through 8th grade, are to enter the school in the morning through the designated front and school lobby doors. Doors will be open and attended until 7:50 a.m. After that time, students should enter through the school lobby. For student safety and school security, no entrances will be unlocked at any time during the school day. All visitors need to enter through the school lobby, check with the attendance desk, and obtain permission and a pass to enter the building.

Classes begin promptly at 7:50 a.m. Students are expected to be in their assigned places and ready to begin classes at that time.

- **Absence:** If a student is unable to attend school, please call the attendance line @ 816.942.5581 before 7:30 a.m. to report the absence. Your call will be recorded. An absentee mailbox is also available on the school website, www.stmcylones.org. If a call or written message is not received by 9:00 a.m., the parent will be contacted. Upon return to class, the child is asked to present a written excuse from his/her parent or guardian, stating the date and the reason for such absence. Each instance of non-attendance, excused or unexcused, must be noted on the pupil's permanent record.
 - Students arriving after 11:00 a.m. or leaving before noon for appointments or because of illness will be assessed a half-day absence.
 - Excessive non-related absences totaling more than 5 during a quarter will result in a conference with the parent, teacher and administration. If absences exceed 10 in number during a semester, additional administrative action will be determined.
- **Tardy:** Students arriving after the 7:50 a.m. start will be counted as tardy for attendance purposes. Tardiness either at the beginning of the day or during classes during the day results in a disruption of class. Students are expected to be in their assigned place and ready to begin classes at the start of class.
 - In the case of appointments or unexpected emergencies, parents are asked to *call or send a written excuse* with the student stating the reason for the tardiness.
 - Parents will receive notification of excessive morning or in-school tardiness.
 - Excessive morning tardiness will result in action by the administration. After six tardies, a conference with the parents will be called. Nine or more morning tardies will result in additional measures as determined by the administration.
 - All occasions of morning tardiness will be reflected on the report card as part of the student's permanent record
 - Students who are late to any class during the school day will be considered tardy. Students who must leave the classroom for forgotten materials will also be considered tardy. A tardy card is issued at the beginning of the quarter to students in the upper grades. Three or more tardies during the day, beyond those allowed and recorded on the student tardy card, will result in a detention with the homeroom teacher and written parent notification. Six or more in-school tardies will result in a conference with the parent, teacher and administration.
- **Late Arrivals:** All students arriving *after 8:00 a.m.* are asked to first **sign in at the attendance office** to obtain a tardy pass before proceeding to class.

Appointments/Leaving during the day: Parents are asked to proceed to the attendance desk to call a student from class and sign the student out of school during the school day. The student must sign back in at the attendance desk upon return to receive an admit pass to class.

Classes are dismissed for the evening at 3:00 p.m.

Students *are not to remain at the school unsupervised* at any time. Therefore, if an after school activity does not begin immediately after school, the child (and any sibling) must return home and the child participating in the scheduled activity be returned to school **only as the planned activity begins and appropriate supervisory personnel is on site to safeguard those present.** School personnel will not be responsible for the safety or supervision of children involved in activities that are not sponsored by faculty or staff of STM. Please contact the school office if special circumstances arise.

Children attending scheduled after school programs will not be released until a parent, or other appointed caretaker,

arrives at the school. Arrangements must be made for children to be picked up in a *timely manner* from these events. If the child is allowed to walk home, a note to that effect should be sent to the supervising staff, volunteer, or the school office.

Parents are reminded that students should be brought to school just prior to class starting time and picked up as soon as possible following the closing of school.

MAKEUP WORK FOLLOWING ABSENCE:

- Students who must miss classes due to illness are given an opportunity to make up the missed work within a reasonable time after they return. The time allotted for assignment completion will depend on the number of days missed and the extent of the illness. Normally, for each day a child is absent, a day will be afforded for completion of the assignment. Homework for short absences will be made available to the student **upon return. The student should contact the teacher in a timely manner after absence to ascertain and complete any missed in-class activities or homework. Failure to do so may result in a negative impact on the grade.**
- In the case of an absence exceeding 3 days, arrangements should be made with the teacher for a completion schedule. Work after absence must be submitted in a timely manner in order to fulfill the grade requirements. Loss of grade will result if the student does not complete the required assignments in a timely manner.
- **SHADOWING:** Eighth graders are to visit high schools only at times when St. Thomas More is not in session. If this does not prove feasible, students should consult their homeroom teachers for recommended dates.
- **VACATIONS:** Parents are strongly encouraged NOT to take their children from school for family vacation times or for other non-medical reasons. Removing students for vacations causes a disruption for the child and for the staff. There are a sufficient number of days throughout the school year when short vacations can be taken. **Teachers are not expected to give extra help to students who fall behind in their work due to travel or other non- medical reasons, nor are they expected to have material ready in advance of a travel period.** Parents must be realistic in the expectations regarding the child's grasp of the material completed outside the classroom without classroom instruction. Merely completing written work will not assure a child's success. Homework may be made up, but classroom instruction cannot be duplicated.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

It is the policy of the States of Kansas and Missouri and of St. Thomas More School to provide for the protection of children who have been subject to physical or mental abuse or neglect. The Child Protection Act, L.S.A. 38-716, et seq., makes certain requirements of every teacher, school administrator, or other employee of this school. If those persons have reason to suspect that a child has had injury inflicted upon him or her as a result of physical or mental abuse or neglect, **the employee is required to report the suspected child abuse or neglect to appropriate public officials.** A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years. "Physical or mental abuse or neglect" means the infliction of physical or mental injury or the causing of deterioration of a child and includes failing to maintain reasonable care and treatment, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or maltreatment or exploitation of a child to such an extent that the child's health, morals, or emotional well being is endangered.

The law requires that a report of suspected child abuse or neglect be made promptly to the proper authority. Any person making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect without malice is immune from civil or criminal liability. An employer is prohibited from terminating or taking any other disciplinary action against an employee because the employee made a report of suspected child abuse or neglect. However, it is a criminal offense for any employee of this school to knowingly and willfully fail to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Any school employee suspecting child abuse or neglect shall have responsibility to immediately report those concerns to 1-800-392-3738. The Children's Division staff this hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a

year. They will take information from you and respond to child abuse and neglect. If you live outside Missouri and want to report abuse or neglect of a Missouri child, call (573) 751-3448.

- **HAVE COMPLETE INFORMATION** - Children's Division needs specific information to be able to respond to a complaint of abuse or neglect. Be sure you have:
 - the name of the child
 - the name of the parent(s)
 - the name of the alleged abuser
 - where the child can be locatedYou will also be asked:
 - Is the child in a life-threatening situation now?
 - How do you know about the abuse/neglect?
 - Did you witness the abuse/neglect?
 - Were there other witnesses and how can they be contacted?

An employee may request the principal make the actual report but shall be responsible for ensuring that the actual report is made. Nothing shall be done by any person to restrict or prevent the making of the report of suspected child abuse or neglect. The results of any investigation shall be maintained in a confidential manner and released only to appropriate school or public officials.

Any questions concerning procedures in a particular case should be communicated immediately to the principal.

CLASS SIZE

An approximate 25 to 1 pupil to teacher ratio is our goal for classroom size. Within this overall goal, it is a further goal to keep kindergarten level to 23 to 1 and upper class levels to no more than 26 to 1.

COMMUNICATIONS

"Community is at the heart of the Christian education,
not simply as a concept to be taught, but as a reality to be lived."

To build community, relationships need to be formed. To maintain worthwhile relationships, communication is essential whether it is between parent and child, parent and teacher, teacher and child, or home and school. Some established means of communication at St. Thomas More include:

Day-to-Day Communications:

- **The administrative office is** open from 7:50 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily Monday through Thursday and 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Friday. Our regular phone line opens at 8:00 a.m. and remains open until the office closes. Attendance calls can be recorded before 8:00 a.m. by calling 816.942.5581 to leave a message. Please honor these hours.
- **Calendar:** A calendar of scheduled school events, including dates of vacations and other pertinent information, is given to the parents in the fall and updated monthly. Changes or unforeseen events will be made known to parents via notes with the children.
- **Instant Parent Contact through the SchoolReach** telephone service allows the school to notify families

of important programs or emergency announcements. Please make sure that the phone number on file at the school is current.

- **Parent letters** are published each Thursday and available on the school website, www.stmcyclones.org, to keep parents informed of happenings at school. Items for the newsletter involving school groups should be submitted to the school office in writing before 12:00 p.m. Wednesday. Notices sent as e-mail attachments are encouraged and should be sent to k_osullivan@stmcyclones.org by the deadline.
- **Phone calls:** A phone, found near the gym, is there for use by the public or in emergency situations that occur after school hours. During the regular school day, communications with parents will be made by the school health room staff person, the office, or by the student with permission from school personnel. Students who may need to call home for a ride after school are permitted to use the school phone after 3:15 p.m. for this reason. *Students may have a cell phone or pager on the premises for use before or after school **but will have the device off during school hours.** The phone or pager **will be kept in the backpack or locker.** All such items used during the school day without permission from school personnel will be confiscated, a consequence given, and the device returned only after conferencing with the parent.*
- **Student papers and class work** are sent home with each child in grades 1-6 on Thursday of each week in a student folder. Parents are asked to review and discuss the work with your child. Tests included in this folder are to be signed by the parent and returned to school on Friday morning. **Children are not admitted to classrooms to retrieve forgotten items after 3:45 p.m.**
- **On-line grades for students in grades 6-8, as recorded, may be accessed from the school website, www.stmcyclones.org, under the FOR PARENTS tab. Each student who has returned the verification sheet listing the user ID and Pass Pin will find grades listed under the schedule/progress section of the login page. ID and pins do not change from year-to-year. To access details regarding specifics of each class, press *progress* at the end of the class listing. You will be taken to a page detailing all class assignments and assessments. Please review the entire page for progress.**
- **Staff letters and notes** are sent to the faculty by the principal on a regular basis. A daily teacher bulletin is published to enhance in-house communication. Regular faculty meetings are held on Thursday afternoon.
- **School Organization Communication** will be distributed by the office on Thursday of each week if delivered to the office in sufficient quantities by Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Teacher-to-Parent Communication:

- **Parent Conferences:** Conferences are scheduled for **ALL** parents at the end of the first quarter. However, parents and/or teachers are encouraged to hold parent conferences any time there appears to be a need for them for the welfare of the child. Parents may call the office to set up an appointment with the teacher at a time that is mutually convenient. **No conferences will take place while the teacher is in the classroom with students present.** This takes away from the instruction time of an entire class. Either the parent or the teacher may invite the principal to any parent conference. The principal may also elect to attend a parent-teacher conference at his/her discretion. Conferences can be scheduled for before or after school. Teachers are in the building from 7:40 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on each regular school day. Conferences should be scheduled during those hours. Parents are normally asked to discuss problems with the teacher before bringing them to the attention of the principal.
- **Reporting to Parents:**
 - **Mid-Term Reports:** Upper grade parents will be sent written notification at mid-quarter if their child is receiving a grade of C- or below. Progress reports are due back the following day. Any student failing to present a *required* (C- or below) progress report with parent signature on the day after issue will be sent to the office to call the parent. Parent acknowledgement of the report may be required for the student to return to class.

- **Quarter Reports:** At the end of each quarter a grade report is issued. This report will indicate whether or not your child is doing satisfactory or unsatisfactory work. Specific areas of concern will be noted on the student report.

The grading scale to be used in grades 3-8 is:

<u>Regular Curriculum</u>			
99-100	A+	82-83	C+
96-98	A	76-81	C
94-95	A-	74-75	C-
92-93	B+	72-73	D+
86-91	B	70-71	D
84-85	B-	68-69	D-
		67 and below	F

The developmental skill scale to be used in grades PK - 2 is as stated on the grade-level card at each level. Parents are asked to remember that an "A" or and "S+" constitutes OUTSTANDING WORK. This means it *far exceeds* the norm. A grade of "C" or "S" is the norm, and indicates that the child is doing average work. *(In fourth quarter of eighth grade, satisfactory performance on the final exam is expected and required to maintain a grade of C or above. Failure to achieve a satisfactory score may result in a grade lower than C despite the mid-term grade. Exam scores are available upon request.)*

Retention: In the case of retention, a teacher/parent conference will be requested by the end of February. The possibility of retention for developmental or performance deficiency is possible in all grades. In the case of a student in grade 8 not meeting the standards required to receive a diploma certifying that they have adequately completed the required curriculum for all four quarters, a Certificate of Attendance will be issued in lieu of a Diploma. The parents will be notified by February of a possible problem if signs are present indicating that a Certificate of Attendance might be issued. However, the third and fourth quarter grades will contribute to the yearly average, and failing grades in 2 or more core subjects may lead to a Certificate of Attendance. Summer school is recommended and may be required for a failing grade in any subject.

- **Honor Roll:** As an incentive for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 to achieve to the best of their ability, there will be an Honor Roll for those earning an A average in their course work. Grades will be weighted for the purpose of determining an overall average taking into account in-class time.
- **Reporting to Non-Custodial Parents:** Parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and to other school related information on their children. Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to obtain all communications for the non-custodial parent. Copies of these communications will be provided to the non-custodial parent by request and upon receipt of current mailing information. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.
- **Student messages:** Information regarding after school arrangements (rides home, etc.) should be conveyed to students in the morning before the student leaves home. Only emergency situations will be announced by the office. Emergency messages should be given to the office before 2:00 p.m. to ensure they reach the student prior to dismissal.
- **Teacher Communications:** All parent-to-teacher letters or notes should be sent in a sealed envelope. Individual voicemail for each teacher is also available through the school office and email for each teacher is noted on the website.

CURRICULUM

The general curriculum follows Diocesan and State guidelines.

Family Life: Family Life is taught in middle school as part of the religion curriculum. The Diocesan program, *Circle of Grace*, is taught throughout the school.

DARE Program: Students in grade 5 participate in the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program. This program runs for 8 weeks and is taught by an officer from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department specially trained for this purpose. Students complete assignments from a workbook and engage in discussions and role-playing exercises under the guidance of the police officer. Many of the workbook assignments are designed to be completed at home with the parents. The program focuses not only on drug education but also on self-esteem building techniques and life skills. The DARE Program culminates in a "graduation" ceremony for the students. In conjunction with the DARE Program, the police officer frequently visits classrooms of the other grades and is available at lunch time and recess to interact with the children and answer any questions they may have.

Religion:

- Religion classes are taught daily in each classroom in the school. Justice programs are taught in grades 6-8.
- Weekly all-school Masses will be planned and attended in grades 1-8. Kindergarten and Pre-school will also attend Mass as determined by the teacher. Please check the school calendar for times. Active Mass involvement is expected and considered to be essential to the demonstration of understanding of our faith lessons and mission.
- Penance Services are offered periodically through the school year, according to a schedule set up by the pastor, for all students who have made their First Penance.
- Service Hours: At St. Thomas More School, each child is encouraged through our mission to seek ways to offer their time and talents to others. To assist in this effort, the **Heart 2 Heart** program for family involvement is offered. In addition, grade specific service projects are offered by St. Thomas More School coordinating with grade-level curriculum. The Heart 2 Heart Service Log Sheet is available on the school website.
- Students of other religions are expected to participate in class and worship activities.

Please work with the teachers in this important area of your child's development. Suggestions for home discussion and activities are sent home frequently. Please review the textbook and lessons with your child to remain an active participant in your child's faith development.

HOMEWORK

Each student at St. Thomas More is expected to spend some time during the evening on schoolwork. A minimum would be to do some reading for enjoyment, or to review the day's work. Assigned homework is to be a valuable reinforcement of in-class learning. Homework may not be limited to the core academic subjects if it is determined by the instructor that additional practice involving a skill might benefit the learning process. Failure to complete assignments in any application may result in the loss of grade. The following guidelines are used for homework assignments. If your child is exceeding these guidelines, kindly speak to the teacher to determine the nature of the problem.

Grades K – 3: Other than the review of flashcards of math facts and the review of reading vocabulary or the study of spelling words or review for tests, students in the primary grades (K through 3) are not expected to do regular homework unless requested by the teacher. Homework for these students consists of unfinished classroom work. If a special project is brought home by students of this young age, it should not take more than 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

Grade 4: Students in grade 4 should not be expected to have homework that would exceed 30-40 minutes unless the child has not learned to use his/her time well in school. Teachers would be expected to notify parents if such is the case. An exacting student who aims for perfection may also use up to 40 minutes on some nights.

Grades 5-6: Students in grades 5 and 6 may have homework of 45-60 minutes per night. However, if they are using their time well during school, this will be shortened.

Grades 7-8: Junior high students may expect to do homework for an hour or perhaps a bit longer each evening. As they increase in age, we expect them to develop their study skills so that they also may have time for leisure after a day of hard work at school. Projects and long-range assignments are a part of the curriculum and must be submitted on the due date for full credit.

Chronic failure to complete homework will result in notification to the parents. The consequence of failure to complete homework will be at the discretion of the teacher, but will most likely entail the loss of grade points for the missed work. Repeated failure to do work will result in loss of grade without teacher notification beyond the mid-quarter report and quarterly grade card.

Students who have pre-arranged absences (i.e.; appointments) must inform their teachers of these times and dates before they leave school. **It is the responsibility of the student to take his or her books and supplies home before the planned absence. Students must report the following day with all assignments completed.** No extra time will be allotted for make-up work in these cases.

For students with a short-term absence (under 3 days) **homework will be available to the student upon return.** Students should contact the teacher for information regarding the completion of in-class activities and homework. Failure to contact the teacher in a timely manner or non completion of in-class or homework assignments, quizzes, tests or projects may negatively impact the grade.

For those having an extended absence, arrangements should be made with the teacher regarding homework. A student will be allotted the amount of time missed to make up the assignment, i.e., one day missed – one day to complete assignments, three days missed - three days to make up the assignment, etc.

Instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in the loss of grade and disciplinary action as determined by the teacher and administration.

ASSIGNMENT NOTEBOOKS are given to each student in grades 3-8. Parents are asked to check to see that the assignments are written down and completed in the evening. A loss of grade will result from the failure to complete assignments in a timely manner. In the case of repeated instances of late work, a conference with the parent and behavior modification measures may be taken to assist the child in completing work in a timely fashion.

Students are allowed access to the classroom to retrieve forgotten items until 3:45 p.m. Monday – Thursday, and by 3:30 p.m. on Friday. After the designated time, students *may not* go to the classroom unless a teacher so requests or permission is given through the office.

DISCIPLINE

The best form of discipline is self-discipline. Our goal is to develop this in each student. The expectation is that every student respects his/her own person, respects those with whom he/she lives and works, and respects the materials that the student uses. If a student exhibits lack of respect in any of these areas, then he/she will accept the consequences of his/her actions.

Children will tend to have the same attitudes toward authority that parents reflect to them in daily life situations. It is very important that the school **not** be a place of punishment or of constant disciplining in the negative sense of the word. Situations may arise which indicate a child is not functioning in the best interest of his/her own Christian growth and development. Should this happen, definite measures will be taken to alleviate the situation.

No instance of harassment or bullying will be tolerated. The Olweus Core Program against bullying and antisocial behavior is a part of the STM school community. St. Thomas More is a “Golden Rule School.” A rubric

for response to aggressive behaviors is used as a guideline by teachers and administration in conjunction with implementation of the intervention program. The rubric specifies that the first offense is handled and documented by the teacher, notification sent to the office, and parent contact is made. The second offense is handled by the office, the parent is notified, and a morning detention is assigned and supervised by an administrator. The third offense is handled by the office, the parent is notified, and the student is assigned an in-school suspension at parent expense. A behavior contract is formulated and signed at a conference with the administration, parent(s) and student before re-entry to class is permitted.

Different corrective measures for students not complying with any part of the disciplinary code of St. Thomas More School will be determined according to grade level.

Suspension: Students who are on suspension *may complete* all class assignments in order to remain current and to aid in their returning to classes. However, the student will receive *no credit* for daily work including in-class work, activities, projects or daily homework assignments. Long term assignments due and tests taken during the suspension period will be accepted if submitted in a timely manner. Teachers are not expected to instruct or remediate work missed during the time of suspension.

Expulsion: A student who is found, after all other means have been exhausted, to be resistant to working with the school will be dismissed from St. Thomas More.

The teacher or administrator reserves the right to carry out disciplinary measures for any offense or misconduct related to school, even if not specifically mentioned as part of the handbook or on the disciplinary form, which jeopardizes the safe and Catholic atmosphere of the school. **The administration is the final recourse in disciplinary situations and reserves the right to waive any and all regulations for just cause in his or her discretion.** (Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, JD, Ph.D., NCEA Notes, September 1999).

The following may result in immediate suspension or expulsion:

- Possession of weapons or explosives (real or assumed to be real),
- Endangering the safety of oneself/others,
- Harm to oneself/others,
- Possession of pornographic materials,
- Possession, transfer, use, consumption or sale of alcohol, tobacco, or other controlled substances,
- Being under the influence of any controlled substance,
- Vandalism of school or private property,
- Theft of school materials or private property,
- Sexual harassment or lewd behavior.

Care of Materials: Children try to measure up to realistic standards, which adults set for them. School personnel have an obligation to make children feel responsible for taking care of the instructional materials that the school provides for them. Specific expectations for children are as follows:

- * All books, equipment, and materials should be handled with utmost care - books are to be covered.
- * Hands should be clean to avoid soiling pages in books.
- * Help should be sought from an adult to repair a book that has been damaged.
- * Any breakage or damage to equipment should be reported to an adult, so that it can be repaired.

Lost or Damaged Textbooks: Each student will be issued a basic textbook for each curriculum area in which it is needed for classroom use or for home study.

- * A student shall be liable to pay for loss of a book that is issued to him/her. The student will be issued a new book upon payment for the lost book according to the following guidelines:
100% of cost of new replacement books

- * A student shall be liable for damage to a book that is issued to him/her. Students will be assessed for the damage to the book and be responsible for payment

Care of the Building: Students share in the responsibility of keeping the school building in excellent condition. Any destruction of property or vandalism, including writing on walls or furniture, shows disrespect to both school and church. Disciplinary action will be taken, and students will be held responsible for costs of repairs. The condition of the building reflects the student's self-respect.

Lockers for Grades 6, 7, 8: Each student is assigned a hall locker.

1. The student must always keep his/her locker locked.
2. Students are not to reveal their combination to any other student.
3. Assigned locks must remain with the designated lockers.
4. The student must use only his/her assigned locker.
5. Personal locks may not be maintained on lockers.
6. Items of extraordinary value should not be left in lockers.
7. The school is not responsible for materials lost or stolen from lockers.
8. Writing in or on lockers or abuse of lockers will result in disciplinary action and reimbursement for the cost of repairs.
9. Tape may not be used to affix items to locker interiors.
10. School lockers are the property of the school and are provided for the convenience of students, and as such, are subject to periodic inspection without notice.
11. Lockers will not be decorated for special occasions.

Technology Responsibilities: Access to computers, the electronic network, and its resources is a privilege not a right. This privilege may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct. Students using the Internet accept the responsibility of keeping all inappropriate files, or files that could damage the integrity of the network, from entering the network. Students who violate designated guidelines may lose their privileges and/or be subject to disciplinary action.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for participation in the athletic programs is based on Diocesan guidelines and rules established by the principal and reviewed by the STM Athletic Board.

The eligibility policy at St. Thomas More School is designed to assure that academic performance remains consistent during athletic play. Eligibility will apply to grades 6, 7 and 8. The terms of ineligibility will be explained to the students at the beginning of the year, and the written policy will be sent home with the student to be returned with the parent(s) signature. Eligibility will be checked periodically, and the parent and coach notified if a child is ineligible.

Suspension from school or dismissal from school is an automatic suspension from participation in all athletic activities (including practices) sponsored by St. Thomas More School during the period of time the student is not allowed to attend the school. Additionally, if during participation in the school's sports program, a student conducts him or herself in a manner that is immoral, illegal or brings disgrace to the school in the opinion of the St. Thomas More School Athletic Board and principal, such student can be terminated from further participation in the sports program at St. Thomas More. The use of profanity, the defacing or destroying of property, and fighting are some, but not the exclusive list, of the conduct that could result in a student being prohibited from participating in sports. Such discipline, if deemed appropriate, is independent of any other discipline, which may be administered by the school or other authorities.

Unless the athletic director secures appropriate approval, in order to participate in the athletic program through the Parochial League at St. Thomas More School the child must be a member of the parish or attend St. Thomas More School. All School of Religion students who meet the requirements of the Parochial League and who are members of the parish, but do not attend St. Thomas More School, are eligible to participate in the St. Thomas More Athletic Program.

Some students, from time to time, play on other teams, which are not affiliated with St. Thomas More. For instance, some students play on club volleyball teams, AAU basketball teams and premier soccer teams. Students who play on such teams do so, on their own, and those teams are not governed by St. Thomas More School rules. However, the Kansas City Parochial League's regulations, which St. Thomas More follows, provide that no student may participate on any other team of the same sport at any time during the regular season of their member team's participation in the Kansas City Parochial League.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is necessary that each child's file in school contain emergency information with current emergency phone number, home address, and telephone numbers.

AED Devices: Automatic Electronic Defibrillators are available in both the school lobby and on the mezzanine level of the gymnasium.

Emergency Closing of School: The closing of school due to bad weather or other severe emergencies will be announced by the three major local TV stations, on the STM Cyclones website (www.stmcyclones.org), and through the SchoolReach telephone program. *Only in extreme cases of emergency will a parent phone tree be activated.* Announcements will state that **Southwest Pod Schools - Diocese of KCMO** will be closed.

We will never dismiss school *early* when the weather becomes a problem. Taking children from class when parents believe weather or streets are hazardous is at the discretion of the parent. Children will be dismissed to parents or designated adults at the request of parents in any such emergency. Parents should be cognizant of class schedules and attempt not to disrupt classes unnecessarily.

General Safety: Students are never left unsupervised in the course of the school day. The classroom teacher will carry out this precaution most conscientiously. Children are to be advised by parents that they are never to leave an assigned classroom without the express permission of the person in charge. Disciplinary measures will result from unexcused absence from class.

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are held on a periodic basis for the students. All students are to follow the designated regulations for carrying out these drills. Students are advised to trust the adults and to carry out directions very explicitly in order to insure the greatest safety for the children. During emergency drills, the students are to keep absolute silence in order that they may clearly hear and promptly follow instructions from school personnel.

For overall safety, the classrooms remain locked during the day. All outside doors are to remain closed and locked. Students are asked not to open doors for anyone except authorized school personnel.

Please review with your children the seriousness of these safety measures.

Health Services: A health coordinator staffs the St. Thomas More Health Room during the regular school day. State law requires that school personnel are not allowed to give **any** medications, prescriptions, (those prescribed by a licensed physician) or non-prescription, those purchased over the counter (i.e., cough syrup or aspirin) without doctor's orders. Parents may come to school to administer medication. Otherwise the school must have **a written order from the prescribing doctor to dispense any medication.** **These forms are available at the back of the handbook.** PARENTS ARE NOT TO REQUEST THE HEALTH ROOM COORDINATOR TO GIVE A CHILD ANY FORM OF MEDICATION THAT IS NOT PRESCRIBED BY A DOCTOR. Occasionally a parent will ask that we just give them a Tylenol. **WE MAY NOT DO THIS!**

The classroom teacher sends students to the health room if they become ill or are injured while at play. Parents are then informed of injury or illness. In non-emergency situations, we ask that the parent make the determination of the severity of the health problem. Children will be kept in the health room until parents can make a determination as to how the illness is to be handled. When it is determined that the child needs to leave because of illness, he/she will

remain in the health room until he/she has been signed out by the parent in the attendance office.

Illness: All sick children should be kept home for the benefit of the overall school community. A child should not be sent to school until 24 hours after a fever has stopped. If a child returns to school before the 24 hour time period, a call to the parent will be made and *the child will be sent home.* Children returning to school following an absence due to illness must bring with them a note from the parent explaining the nature of the illness. Children are expected to be able to participate in all school activities, including recess, upon their return unless under a written doctor's order indicating otherwise. **Personnel are not available to supervise children needing special services or supervision. Please take this into consideration when determining whether your child should return to school.**

Orthodontics: *Students receiving orthodontic treatment are not allowed to chew gum in the classroom.* If your dentist deems this form of treatment necessary, they are asked to complete a written authorization. The student will then be excused to the health room as necessary.

Students Leaving the Grounds:

- Once students are on the grounds, the school accepts the responsibility for their safety. (After their arrival at school, students may not leave the property unless authorized.) Written authorization must be given to the office by the parents to depart with anyone other than the parent or legal guardian.
- Students may leave the grounds for lunch only with their own parents. **SMALL GROUPS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO GO OUT TO LUNCH.** The lunch/recess period is only 40 minutes long. Parents are required to personally sign students out for each occasion upon which a child is to be removed from the building.
- Upon returning to the building, students are to sign in at the school attendance office to assure that we know the whereabouts of all students at all times.
- If a person other than the parent, who is not known to office personnel, is to pick up a child at school, the office must receive written authorization from the parent or guardian. Please advise the authorized party that the school may require identification from them prior to releasing the student to their custody. Students will not be permitted to leave the grounds or visit with persons unknown to us without the permission, in writing or as determined in an emergency situation, of the parent or guardian.

When appointments are arranged during the school day, please remember that it takes a minimum of 15 minutes for the student to be called from the class and proceed to the attendance office to sign out.

FIELD TRIPS

In a city the size of Kansas City, there are many valuable experiences that we might afford the children and which would be of great benefit to them. We make every effort to give each classroom the experience of a field trip when it proves worthy enough to warrant the danger incurred in removing children from the building. We also attempt to have many in-school programs for the students that are valuable learning experiences.

Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students attend off-campus field trips by invitation only. **NO STUDENT WILL BE TAKEN ON AN OFF-CAMPUS TRIP WITHOUT THE SIGNED PERMISSION SLIP SENT HOME BY THE TEACHER FOR THAT PURPOSE. A TELEPHONE CALL IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.** A student who does not go on a field trip with his/her class will remain at school under the supervision of the principal or another assigned staff person.

Official and current insurance cards and driver's license will be required *each time* a parent is asked to transport children for a field trip. Copies of the information will be kept on file at the office during the duration of the field trip and will be shredded upon the return of students to the school at the end of the field trip.

All parent volunteers accompanying children on the field trip are required to have Virtus training. Training is available to parents in the fall of each year at STM, and during the year at surrounding parishes in the greater Kansas

City area. Please call the office for further information on training scheduled at St. Thomas More or visit the Virtus site at www.virtus.org to register for a session.

INSURANCE

The school carries school accident insurance, which covers all students during the course of the school day during *in-school* activities. Students who are participating in a given sport are covered by catastrophic insurance for the period of time that they are participating in a school-sponsored sport. Feel free to call the school office for more information on this insurance coverage.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

The parents of our students are closely involved in the education of the children in so many ways ... the STM School Board, the STM Home and School Association, the Curriculum Enrichment Committee, room parents, front desk monitors, classroom readers, the annual STM Auction, Wednesday lunches, and coaches for our sports teams to name a few. We appreciate your help and your interest. If you would like to do more at the school, please call the school office.

Volunteers will be required to attend a short orientation and training meeting at the beginning of each school year and are required to attend a training session for the *Protecting God's Children (Virtus)* Diocesan initiative. An application and multi-jurisdictional child abuse screening/criminal record form must be completed by all volunteers and should be returned to the school office. Additionally, a current TB test should be on record. All forms are kept at the school and are confidential. In addition, volunteers must review, on a yearly basis, the blood-borne pathogens film. To ensure child safety, volunteer parents are asked to attend scheduled volunteer activities *without younger children*.

Room Parents will receive a handbook at the beginning of the year providing guidelines for classroom parties and suggestions for games. All party plans must be reviewed and approved by the teacher.

Parent volunteers are to sign in at the attendance office upon entering the building and are to sign out upon leaving the building.

SCHOOL PREMISES

Auditorium (Flanagan Hall): The auditorium of St. Thomas More School is to be used primarily by the school for educational and related purposes. As such, the principal or the principal's designee directly controls its use. School activities have first priority use in using the auditorium. The school/parish staff and organizations are next in priority. It is not parish policy to allow use of the auditorium to outside groups without the approval of the pastor, principal, parish manager or operations director. The auditorium should be used only when More Hall is in use for other celebrations approved by the parish. The auditorium's cleanup and insurance charges are the same as More Hall, and all scheduling should take place through the principal's office for events occurring Monday – Friday. For weekend use, the parish office will hold all keys and codes for the auditorium use. **Use of alcoholic beverages is not allowed in the auditorium or any part of the school when minors are present.**

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

- **Home and School Association:** All parents of students at St. Thomas More School are members of our Home and School Association. This group is the official parent-teacher group that conducts programs of interest to parents and teachers and to promote and strengthen community. Annual dues for membership in the Home and School Association are included with the registration fee. Membership dues help support the various programs sponsored by the association throughout the school year.
- **School Board:** This advisory group is comprised of the following members:

- The school principal(s), the parish manager and operations director and/or parish pastor (ex officio with no vote);
- Nine to ten representatives from the parish community with a mix of early childhood parents (preschool - grade 3), middle and upper grade parents (grade 4-8), and from the parish at large, the president of the STM Home and School Association, the chairperson of the School Finance Committee, and the St. Thomas More School Athletic Director or a representative of that committee

The St. Thomas More Home and School Committee, Athletic Board, and Booster organizations will report to the School Board.

The St. Thomas More School Board serves as an advisory board for school policies, goals, and budget. Parishioners make application and are selected to serve on this team each spring. Applications are screened on the basis of criteria as listed in the application. Applicants are reviewed and selected by the existing board members. New members, to replace outgoing members, are added each year to serve a minimum three-year term.

Meetings are open to the public except when they are in a closed session. Any school board member may call a closed session with the concurrence of the team chairperson and the staff person. Closed sessions last for a maximum of 30 minutes and may be extended to an indefinite number of 15-minute increments at the discretion of the chairperson. Agendas and minutes are published each month and available, on request, from the school office. Notice of the monthly meeting is published in the Thursday parent newsletter and in the parish bulletin the Sunday prior to each meeting.

Agendas for both open meetings and closed sessions are planned in advance by the board chairperson and the principal. Any board member or parishioner may submit items for the agenda.

TESTING AND ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Diagnostic Testing: Diagnostic testing is done through the resource room. A request for testing may come from either parent or teacher. A recommendation and possible service will be made according to the outcome of the tests. Services will be held in coordination with the regular classroom scheduling and curriculum.

Counselor: A counselor is available to students and school families. The counselor, an employee of St. Thomas More School, is in the school building during school hours. The counselor can be reached through the school office.

F.I.R.E - STM for All: St. Thomas More School is designated by the Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph as a F.I.R.E. (Families for Inclusive Religious Education) school. The organization, STM for All, was formed during the 2008-2009 school year to assist the administration in providing funds and resources necessary to meet the needs of all students attending STM. This organization, in conjunction with the Diocesan F.I.R.E. organization, provides local support. For more information on this program, please contact the resource room or school office.

Learning Resource Room: STM School has established a learning resource room to assist students, through the classroom and subject teachers, in adapting curriculum and instruction to best serve individual learning needs. For questions regarding the programs currently available, please contact the school office.

Standardized Achievement Tests:

- **Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8:** In order to insure accountability, students in grades 3 - 8 are tested by a standardized measurement in the spring. This is the test prescribed by the Diocese. Please consult your school calendar for the date of the testing for this year. Kindly see that students are in class and that they get the proper amount of rest while taking the tests.
- **Grade 8: In addition to standardized testing,** eighth grade students take the High School Placement Exam in January. This test is required by the Diocese for graduation. Tests are administered in January at the parochial high schools throughout the area.

We recognize that the tests do not give a full and complete picture of the child, but they do give us a picture of his/her basic skills and call us to be accountable for our work here. Parents are encouraged to compare the work of

the child this year with his/her grades last year and to come to speak to the teacher or principal if they feel the tests are for some reason invalid.

Long Term Illness:

In the case of long-term illness, accommodations to facilitate learning will be made through the resource room in consultation with the parents, administration and the public school district to meet the educational needs of the student. Each case must be considered separately. according to the child's best interest, the type and duration of the illness.

UNIFORM CODE
Dress for Success

It is the belief of this school that the appearance and conduct of the students are part of the educational process. The uniform is described below, and we require that the students follow it. Uniform clothing can be purchased at Dennis Uniform Company, 6322 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS, 913.381.6500.

On specified days students are permitted to wear spirit clothing with jeans or khakis or other designated attire. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be sent to the office. Parents may be called to provide proper uniform attire before the student is permitted to return to class. Repeated offenses will result in additional disciplinary action.

Boys:

Shirt: Tailored white shirt with collar. Can be knit or oxford. Shirts are to be tucked in while on school premises.

Pants: Navy uniform pants or shorts with belt loops. Shorts may be worn in warm weather as determined by the administration. No corduroys.

Belt: Plain, black, navy or brown with a small plain buckle - must be worn with pants having belt loops in grades 2-8.
PK – 1, check with the teacher.

Socks: Solid colored ankle or sport socks.

- Grades 1-6 must cover the ankle bone.
- Grades 7-8 must be visible without adjustment.

Shoes: Any type of low-heeled, hard soled, enclosed toe and heel shoe. Tennis shoes are allowed if laces are tied or fastenings secured. No sandals, moccasins, mules, crocks, boots or slippers.

Sweatshirt/Spirit Wear:

Regulation STM red sweatshirt, STM fleece or STM Booster Club Uniform Spirit Wear as approved.
Check the website for authorized Uniform Spirit Wear.

Undershirts: Plain with no lettering visible through outer shirt.

Hair: Hair must be neat, clean and well-groomed, and of moderate length and style. Extremes in hairstyles (lines, designs, uneven patches of hair) are not allowed. The length of hair for boys should be above the top of the ear without combing or adjustment, not touch the collar or cover the eyes. Unusual or unnatural hair color or style will not be permitted. Facial hair is not allowed.

Jewelry: Necklaces should remain under the shirt. Simple watches may be worn. Questionable jewelry will be reviewed by the administration.

Outerwear:

Non-uniform sweatshirts (including hoodies), jackets and caps are not to be worn in the classroom but may be necessary for recess. Hoodies must have a zipper closure. Please make sure that the student is dressed for outdoor recess.

PE: STM Mesh Spirit Shorts are required for grades 6-8. Shorts should be no shorter than 5 inches above the knee.

Girls:

Jumper, Skirt or Skort:

- Grades K-4 uniform jumper or uniform plaid pleated skort.
- Grades 5-6 uniform plaid pleated skirt or skort.

- Grades 7-8 uniform plaid pleated skirt or skort or navy flat paneled skort.

Shirt: Shirts are to be tucked in while on school premises. No piping or other decoration.

- Grades K-3: Tailored straight-sleeved solid white blouse with collar or white turtleneck.
- Grades 4-8: Tailored straight-sleeved solid white or navy blouse or white turtleneck.

Pants: Navy uniform pants or shorts. Shorts may be worn in warm weather as determined by the administration.

Belt: Simple black, navy or brown belts with a small plain buckle should be worn if belt loops are present.

Socks: Solid color white, navy or black. Plain anklets and knee socks are allowed.

- Grades K-6: Socks must cover the ankle bone.
- Grades 7-8: Socks must be visible without adjustment.

Leggings: Navy or black plain leggings may be worn during cold weather.

No sweatpants, wide-legged pants, lace-trimmed leggings, pajamas or long underwear.

Shoes: Any type of low-heeled, hard-soled, enclosed toe and heel shoe. Tennis shoes are allowed if laces are tied or fastenings secured. No sandals, moccasins, mules, crocks, or slippers. Boots may be worn on snowy days or days when sidewalks are covered with snow.

Undershirts: Plain with no lettering visible through the outer shirt.

Outerwear:

Non-uniform sweatshirts (including hoodies), jackets and caps are not to be worn in the classroom but may be necessary for recess. Hoodies must have a zipper closure. Please make sure that the student is dressed for outdoor recess.

Hair: Must be neat, clean and well groomed. Extremes in hairstyle (lines, designs, uneven patches or arrangement of hair) are not allowed. Unusual or unnatural hair color or style is not permitted. Hair should be kept out of the eyes. Simple headbands, barrettes and devices for securing hair may be worn. Kerchiefs or scarves should not be worn as part of the uniform.

Jewelry: Simple small earrings, necklaces and watches. Questionable jewelry will be reviewed by the administration.

PE: STM Mesh Spirit Shorts are required for grades 6-8. Shorts should be no shorter than 5 inches above the knee.

If a student's general appearance attracts undue attention to the extent that it becomes a disruptive factor in the school, the principal will ask the student to make the necessary changes. All shirts, sweaters, skirts and pants must be in "good repair" (no holes, stains, splits, etc.). Notices of uniform violation will be issued by the office and may result in further disciplinary action. The principal will be the final judge of proper attire and personal appearance.

SCOUT UNIFORM: On days when scout meetings occur, students may wear the official uniform of the scouts in lieu of the school uniform. All other uniform regulations apply.

SPIRIT DAYS/DRESS-UP DAYS: Days having an early dismissal will be designated as a Jean and Khaki Day. Jean or Khaki clothing, adhering to the uniform standard of length, may be worn with the STM uniform or Spirit Clothes top. No large external pockets (cargo-pant type) may be worn. Shorts, including STM shorts, *may* be worn if the length is no shorter than 5" above the knee when kneeling. Team uniform apparel is not considered Spirit Wear and should not be worn on Spirit Days. Halloween, St. Valentine Day, and St. Nicholas Day are special days for

children. These days will follow the color theme stated on the school calendar or in the parent note. Other out of uniform days to support organizations or special events may be added by the administration. The dress on those days will be announced to the student body. Dress-up days may also occur during the year for special Mass occasions. On these special dress-up occasions of Christmas dismissal, May Crowning, and final day dismissal, appropriate church attire is requested.

Please mark all coats, hats, gloves, scarves, uniforms, gym clothing, tennis shoes, and overshoes with the name of the child. There is a greater possibility of regaining lost clothing that is marked.

YEARBOOK

A yearbook, containing individual pictures of each student and staff person, is available for purchase at the end of the school year.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Birthdays and Half Birthdays (June-Dec., July-Jan., and Aug. –Feb., for birthdays falling *when school is not in session*): Birthdays and half birthdays are as special as the child having one. Therefore, the child is invited to come in Spirit Day attire on their birthday or half birthday. If that day is already designated a spirit or dress-up day, Spirit Day attire may be worn the day before or after the birthday. Birthday treats may be served at the close of the school day to the celebrant's class. In support of the health and wellness plan at STM, healthy birthday treats are suggested. As an alternative to individual birthday treats, a book for the room or school library can be donated in the child's name.

Classroom Parties: The students are given two school sponsored parties each year. These take place on the feasts of St. Nicholas and St. Valentine. The parties are held at 2:30 p.m. and finish in time for dismissal. The room parents assist with these. Room Parents should consult with the homeroom teacher for the guidelines for class parties as outlined in the Room Parent Handbook.

Electronic Equipment: The possession or use of personal electronic equipment, including audio equipment, Game Boys, cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices, is prohibited during the school day. The use of such items will result in the item being confiscated and returned, at the discretion of the administration, to the parent. The use of a handheld computer is permitted; however, the student is responsible for the device.

Graduation: The 8th grade graduation is for the celebration of students. Input from 8th grade students and parents should be considered as graduation plans are formulated. A graduation policy has been established to ensure that graduation activities are in keeping with the school mission statement and Catholic identity of the school. An informational meeting may be scheduled for the 8th grade parents at the beginning of the year, at which time the graduation activities will be outlined. The pastor and administration will be invited to the meeting. The graduation fee will not exceed \$100 per graduate, and the fee plus fundraisers cannot collectively exceed \$225 per graduate. All collected graduation funds will be kept in STM exchange accounts and be subject to limitations imposed by those accounts. The funds are to be used for graduation activities that may include a student/parent party (no alcohol), a student graduation party, activity or reception, service project, and a student gift to the school and teachers as stated in the graduation policy.

Gum and Soda Pop may *not* be served in the classrooms. Some parents have suggested that we serve 7-UP as a substitute. It is the ingredients in the soda, namely the sugar, which causes stains on the carpet. Gum causes obvious difficulties when not disposed of properly. Therefore we do not ALLOW soda pop or gum in the classrooms.

Lost and Found:: The school is not responsible for lost articles. The lost and found area is at the rear of the

auditorium, off the school lobby. You may ask for assistance from the office to look there when necessary. Unclaimed clothing is periodically donated to the poor.

Lunch Program: Children are not permitted to bring treats (i.e.; pizza or other fast foods) for select groups at lunchtime. Parents may bring a special lunch *for their own children*. The cafeteria is reserved solely for students of STM School and their immediate family. Guests, other than immediate family, must be approved and have written permission from the parent and administration in advance. Children are permitted to leave the campus for lunch **only** with their parents. To take small groups for special lunches encourages cliques, the isolation of other students, and elitist behaviors.

A school lunch program will be offered on designated days during the week at a cost determined by the provider. Menus are provided and purchasing is done on a monthly or bimonthly basis according to the program. Details on procedures are provided on the menu. Milk is available daily through the use of a milk card (see below).

Lockers: Lockers are provided for the students in grades 6-8 to facilitate multiple teachers and class locations. Each child is responsible for maintaining the locker in a satisfactory manner and in accordance to the school philosophy and school rules. The administration reserves the right to search lockers at any time and to revoke the privilege of the locker granted to a student of STM School.

Milk Cards: Chocolate and white milk are available for students during the lunch hour at a reduced cost as part of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School Nutrition Program. Milk cards are purchased through the homeroom teacher. The cost of the milk card is \$1.00.

Room/Teacher Requests: During spring, the office will review requests for room assignments based upon a *written request* submitted to the principal. **All requests must be submitted to the principal in writing before April 1.** Only requests having a firm educational basis will be honored.

Student Conduct: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a dignified Christian manner. Bullying, harassment, name calling, teasing, or public displays of affection will not be tolerated.

SUMMARY

We have not attempted to answer all of your questions in this brief Handbook. We hope however that it will save you some time. **The principal retains the right to amend the St. Thomas More School Student Handbook for just cause.** Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made. With the full cooperation of the school community - administration, faculty, students, and parents - we hope to give the children the best academic year we can. If we can be of further help, please call the office. God bless you and have a wonderful school year!

SAINT THOMAS MORE PRESCHOOL

St. Thomas More operates a preschool for children ages 3, 4, and 5. The STM Preschool follows the philosophy and mission of St. Thomas More School published at the beginning of this handbook. The preschool is developmental in nature and will provide experiences that are age-appropriate to the children and suited to the age and cognitive readiness of the child. The program will neither be overly academic nor just play but will have a balance of readiness materials and guided play. A child entering preschool must be 3 ½ years of age by July 31st of the year to qualify to attend in the fall and must be able to *consistently* use the restroom independently.

ABSENCES: Please call the school (816 942-5581) to notify us if your child will be absent on any given day.

CALENDAR: The preschool follows the calendar of St. Thomas More School beginning in the month of September and ending in May (including closing of school for inclement weather). A school calendar, found in the student handbook, will be provided to each family with students in the preschool on the first day of preschool. STM Preschool is a preschool, not a day care.

DAYS OF ENROLLMENT: Children may be enrolled for five days, three days (Monday, Wednesday and Friday), or two days (Tuesday and Thursday). Children may attend **ONLY** on the days for which they are registered. The fee covers only the days on which the child is registered to attend.

HOURS: The preschool is open from 7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Children are to be taken to and picked up from the preschool room. Children should be signed in and out by an adult.

LUNCH: Children are asked to bring a sack lunch each day that they attend. Chocolate and white milk are available for students during the lunch hour at a reduced cost as part of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School Nutrition Program. Milk cards are purchased through the homeroom teacher. The cost of the milk card is \$1.00.

ILLNESS OR INJURY: Should a child become ill or injured while at preschool, parents (or the person designated by the parents for this purpose) will be called to pick up the child. It is expected that the child will be picked up within a reasonable amount of time following notification.

MEDICATIONS: We must have written permission to administer **any** medication. The medication must be sent with the child's name and directions for administration. **All medications must carry a doctor's prescription. Permission slips are found at the back of the handbook.**

SNACKS: Parents in the STM Preschool will take turns furnishing snacks for the preschool students. A schedule of when each family is responsible for this will be given to you. We urge you to send nutritious snacks, i.e., carrot sticks, crackers and cheese, etc., rather than sweet treats.

PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO: State regulations dictate that we may have only 20 students in the preschool classroom at any one time. The ratio of children to adults is 10:1. We will follow these regulations precisely, having no more than 20 children in the room at a time with two adults present.

REGISTRATION FORMS are available upon request at the school office.

TUITION: St. Thomas More Preschool is self-supporting. Because of this, the charges for attendance are separate fees and not connected in any way to parish giving. The fee schedule is as follows:

5 days per week	\$625 per month
3 days per week	\$425 per month
2 days per week	\$325 per month

There is a non-refundable preschool registration fee of \$100.00.

The fees are to be paid on the **FIRST CLASS DAY** of each month. Fees will be considered late as of the 10th day of each month. The fee paid for registration is **non-refundable** unless for some reason we are unable to accept the child.

**ST. THOMAS MORE
SCHOOL, DISCIPLINE,
AND ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK**

*Encountering the Living Christ through
Worship, Prayer and Service*

2011 – 2012

**Let all who enter here know that
Jesus Christ is our first teacher.**

Form is to be signed by both parent and child

Family Name _____

I have read, understood and agree to cooperate with the regulations set forth in this handbook.

A Family Covenant

This Covenant agreement represents our commitment to collaborate with the work of the Catholic school in the spiritual formation of our children. As the first teachers of our children in faith, we hereby accept responsibility to support Church teaching in the school, participate in church services every week, and see that our children attend church every Sunday.

For Catholics this Covenant is an agreement to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on all Sundays (Weekends) and Holy Days.

For non-Catholics this Covenant is an agreement to attend weekly church services in your denomination.

We acknowledge that the teachers are also pledged to this Catholic/Christian commitment. Because the partnership of parents and teachers in the formation of children is so important, we accept the family covenant for church attendance as a way of honoring the third commandment, as an extension of our baptismal vows and as essential for the spiritual formation of our children.

Child signature

Grade

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS SIGNED FORM TO THE SCHOOL

Traffic:

The traffic pattern at St. Thomas More School is to ensure the safety of students coming to and leaving from school. With the help of our faculty, student safety coordinator, parent volunteers, student safeties, and traffic committee, we have been successful in keeping our students safe.

Please review the traffic guidelines and traffic pattern maps in this section. Contact the school office or the traffic committee coordinator listed below if you have any questions or concerns. It is also very important that all parents review these guidelines with their children and caregivers who may be taking children to school or picking them up.

Thank you for your cooperation.

General Traffic Guidelines: *Please give all caregivers a copy of these guidelines.*

- All students entering or exiting school must use manned crosswalks.
- All students must enter school through the designated front or lobby entrances.
- If you must go inside the building with your child in the morning, park in the designated area (outlined on the map) and use the crosswalks.
- On snowy days, Holmes Road may be the only entrance and exit depending upon road conditions.

Morning Dropoff Procedures:

1. Allow plenty of time to get to school. School begins at 7:50 a.m.
2. Enter school parking lot at either of the two designated entrances (Holmes or Santa Fe Trail) as shown on the map.
3. Follow the directions of the safety personnel.
4. Students should be ready to exit when you arrive in the unloading area.
5. Pull up as far as possible in the unloading zone so that several cars can empty at once.
6. Be sure passengers are clear of cars before slowly driving off.
7. Unload only on the side of the car by the curb.
8. Drive slowly at all times.

Afternoon Pick-Up Procedures:

1. Parking for pick up can be done on the north, east or west side of school or in the church parking lots. Please consult the map for designated **parent** parking zones.
2. Do not park in the crosswalks or in the lot directly adjacent to the auditorium (south side of school).
3. Back into parking spots.
4. Students should use manned crosswalks. Students with parent may use manned or unmanned crosswalks.

Please do not use a cell phone while operating a vehicle on school property.

We ask all parents/caregivers to demonstrate traffic safety by using sidewalks and crosswalks as well when picking up students. It is important to set a good example.