



STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK  
2020-2021

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*St. Thomas High School reserves the right to modify this handbook at any time. Please review the handbook on a regular basis to stay familiar with our policies and procedures and to identify any ongoing changes.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is provided as a guide for both parents/guardians and students. By becoming familiar with our procedures you will be able to cooperate with the Basilian Fathers, faculty and staff of St. Thomas in our endeavor to educate your son.

**By registration and enrollment at St. Thomas, each student and his parents/guardians agree to accept, observe and abide by the provisions of this handbook and regulations of St. Thomas High School.**

Included in this handbook is important information for students and parents. **Please review this information with your son and then download the Student-Parent Handbook Acknowledgment and Agreement Form from your Magnus Health account. You and your son must sign the form and upload, fax or mail the completed form to Magnus Health, reflecting actual signatures. For returning students, this Acknowledgment and Agreement form must be digitally re-authorized in your Magnus Health account before the first day of each school year.**

## MISSION STATEMENT

Teaching goodness, discipline, and knowledge is the tradition of the Basilian Fathers and the sacred mission of St. Thomas, a Catholic college preparatory high school.

## VISION

A man of St. Thomas is a faith-filled, life-long learner who thinks critically, communicates effectively, and prepares thoroughly to excel in college and in life. He actively serves his community, integrates Christian morality into all aspects of his life, and measures his success by the standards set forth in the Gospels.

## PHILOSOPHY

The St. Thomas family nourishes the faith of all its members. Together and as individuals, members of the community share responsibility for actively bringing Christ's message to society at large. We continue to work and foster a learning environment with a...

- safe, positive learning atmosphere conducive to social and academic success,
- strong academic curricula preparing students for the challenges of college,
- program of athletics designed to develop strong Christian young men,
- technology program that prepares students for a globally oriented society
- fine arts department inspiring creativity and fostering a love of the arts.

The faculty of St. Thomas is made up of professionals who demonstrate expertise, enthusiasm and eagerness for their field of study. The faculty possesses...

- Christian values,
- mutual respect and professionalism,

- strong individual teaching styles
- appreciation and respect for the socio-economic, ethnic and racial differences of each student.

A graduate of St. Thomas is a spiritual young man who...

- embodies Christian values in a Catholic tradition,
- integrates Christian morality into all aspects of his life
- participates actively in a faith community
- respects the religious, socio-economic and cultural diversity in all people

A graduate of St. Thomas is an academic achiever who...

- accepts responsibility for his life-long learning
- thinks critically and communicates effectively
- is prepared to excel in a college program
- is technologically equipped for success in a globally oriented society
- appreciates and is knowledgeable of the fine arts

A graduate of St. Thomas is a responsible citizen who...

- commits to Christian social justice
- respects and practices conservation of the environment and natural resources
- participates (actively) and leads in community service
- understands and appreciates diversity in society
- participates in the democratic electoral process

## **HISTORY OF ST. THOMAS**

It was 1900 when forty-four sturdy little scholars gathered to form the first classes at St. Thomas College School. The faculty of that school on the banks of the bayou were three priests of the Basilian Fathers led by the school's founder and first principal, Rev. Nicholas Roche, CSB

In 1929, Rev. T. P. O'Rourke, CSB, a native Texan, negotiated the purchase of a tract of land at the western outskirts of Houston on the banks of Buffalo Bayou at Memorial Drive and Shepherd Drive. It was there that the buildings of the present structure took shape.

St. Thomas is conducted by the priests of the Congregation of St. Basil. They are an international community of religious priests, who live a communal life and bind themselves to God by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They dedicate themselves to the service of the Church in any priestly ministry, but have centered their apostolic work on the education of youth since 1822.

The Congregation was originally founded in Annonay, France after the French Revolution. The Basilian's special patron is St. Basil the Great, a fourth century Archbishop of Caesarea, Instructor of Youth, and Doctor of the Universal Church.

The Basilian Fathers first came to North America in 1850 and established a school in Toronto, Canada in 1852. From this center, the Basilian Fathers established schools, colleges, missions and parishes across



Canada, the United States, Mexico and Columbia.

Through its first forty years, the school's name was St. Thomas College School. Later, with the Basilian Fathers parenting the University of St. Thomas a few miles away, a suitable accommodation was found in the designation, "St. Thomas High School." Today, St. Thomas High School is Houston's oldest college preparatory high school for young men.

## **SCHOOL TRADITIONS**

### **SCHOOL MOTTO**

"Teach me Goodness, Discipline and Knowledge."

### **SCHOOL COLORS**

Red and White

### **SCHOOL MASCOT**

Eagle

### **ALMA MATER**

Men of St. Thomas, stand for all to see!

Honor and Truth and Understanding, our motto will always be.

These days we spend together, we'll cherish till we die,

And the world must know that we are the Men of St. Thomas High.

## **ACADEMIC LIFE**

### **ADMISSIONS**

St. Thomas employs a holistic approach when evaluating prospective students. Admissions to St. Thomas is the sole decision of the admissions committee. The school will assess each student on their academic capacity using the student's academic records/transcripts, GPA, standardized test scores, and entrance exam scores (ISEE/HSPT/PSAT). The school will also assess the character/academic qualities utilizing the student's Resume and Student Statement, and the student's Math and English teacher recommendation. Additionally, to be considered for admissions, the prospective applicant (freshman or transfer student) must be enrolled in an accredited academic institution.

St. Thomas High School strives to enroll a diverse student body. Final or complete transcripts must be submitted to enroll for the academic year.

### **Selection Criteria:**

Application requirements and selection process may be found on the Admission office website:

<https://www.sths.org/admissions/>

#### Freshman Application Requirements:

- St. Thomas High School Application (\$75 application fee)
- Entrance Exams (HSPT or ISEE)
- Middle School Record (6, 7, 8 grade & 6 & 7 grade standardized scores)
- Math and English Teacher Recommendations
- Personal Essay
- Resume

#### Transfer Application Requirements:

- St. Thomas High School Application (\$75 application fee)
- Entrance Exams (HSPT, ISEE, or PSAT)
- High School Record (include standardized test scores)
- Math and English Teacher Recommendations
- Personal Essay
- Resume
- Student and family interview

Transfer students' grades from their previous schools are listed on their transcripts but are not used to calculate their cumulative grade point average. Incoming freshman grades from previous schools are not listed on transcripts nor calculated into the cumulative grade point average. In all cases calculation begins with grades in courses taken at St. Thomas High School.

St. Thomas High School considers 9, 10, and 11-grade transfer students. Senior and Mid-year junior transfer will not be considered for admissions unless there are extenuating circumstances. The admission review committee will evaluate extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

The following policy applies to all Catholic schools, including St. Thomas, in the Diocese of Galveston-Houston:

*The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of*

*race, color, age or national origin in the administration of its admission, athletic or scholarship programs.*  
Policy: 652.1

## **Registration**

Registration for incoming freshmen takes place in early April. Re-registration of currently enrolled students is completed in the spring. Registrants will be required to have their course requests approved by their parents or guardians. No course change requests are considered after May 15 and all requests for changes will be dependent upon available space as well as meeting course requirements.

A \$550 Registration fee and a \$500 Tuition deposit are required at time of Registration. Registration is not considered complete until each family has opened an online account with Smart Tuition and fully paid the deposit and registration fee to Smart Tuition. No student is considered registered without full payment. No exceptions. Both fees are non-refundable.

## **Re-enrollment**

Enrollment as a freshman does not constitute enrollment for all four years at St. Thomas High School. Re-enrollment for the following year takes place each March. Acceptance of re-enrollment is solely at the discretion of the Principal or President of St. Thomas High School. Completing enrollment paperwork and/or making the required registration fee and tuition deposit DOES NOT constitute re-enrollment.

## **Academic Information**

1. The student course load is 7 subjects and no more than one study hall per semester.
2. To be eligible for honors courses, a student must meet established criteria and be approved by the teacher and counselor.
3. Student schedules are not created or changed based upon requests for specific teachers or specific semesters.
4. Students may not repeat subjects at St. Thomas. Seniors who fail a required course in the fall semester must make it up in night school during the spring semester.
5. Student course requests for the following academic year are set by May 31 each year. Course Selections are based on curriculum requirements, previous courses, grades, and electives selected by the student. Final course selections determine staffing requirements, class sizes, classroom selection, and teacher daily schedules. For these reasons, student course selections for the following academic year cannot be changed after May 15.
6. Underclassmen are not permitted to repeat a failed course during the fall/spring semesters. It must be taken in summer school.
7. No credit will be recognized for courses taken during the summer at another school unless they have been previously approved by the Assistant Principal. Only credit recovery courses will be considered for approval.

## **Failures and Summer School Credit Recovery**

A student who fails to earn credit for a required course must acquire the credit in St. Thomas' summer school credit recovery program or in another approved summer school in order to return to St. Thomas the following year. The only exception to this is in full-year courses in math and languages other than English in which what is learned second semester builds itself on what is learned first semester. In this case, the first semester failing grade will be raised to a passing grade if the student earns a second semester average of C- or better. (Exceptions: Calculus)

Credit recovery courses taken with approval and at St Thomas High School will become part of the school record and will be used in the computation of the cumulative grade point average. Students who fail a course are required to take credit recovery. Students earning less than a C- in a core course may have the option of taking the course again in the summer. Both the original course and the credit recovery course will be on the transcript and included in the cumulative grade point average. **Only courses taken at St. Thomas High School will be included in the cumulative grade point average.**

A student who fails more than one subject in a quarter or semester will be ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities until the mid-quarter grade check.

## **Parent-Teacher Communication**

In the event that any parent needs to contact a teacher or administrator, the parent may do so by emailing. Teachers prefer email as the primary means of contact. Teachers and administrators can also be contacted via email. Addresses can be found on the St. Thomas Website ([www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)). A meeting with all the teachers of an individual student may be scheduled through the student's counselor.

## **STH Portal**

Parents and students may access class LAPs and student grades on STH Portal, our online communication service. Parents and students will be provided with log-in instructions.

## **Semester Examination Policy**

1. Students are not excused from scheduled exam times for any reason, including travel plans. Students who miss exams will receive a zero (0) for that exam.
2. After notifying the Dean of Students Office and receiving approval, only students who are seriously ill or have experienced a death in the family may reschedule their final exams at a time set by the Assistant Principal. For a seriously ill student, a written statement from a doctor must be provided to verify the seriousness of the illness in order to have an exam rescheduled.
3. All semester exams are final. The semester mark will be determined by a combination of 40% first quarter, 40% second quarter and 20% final exam.
4. Cheating or violation of testing protocol on a semester exam will result in a zero on the exam.
5. Permit to Exam cards will not be issued to students until all accounts are cleared with the Business Office and all St. Thomas items (uniforms, library books, etc.) have been returned in good condition.

## Report Cards

All grades will be reported electronically and parents can access grades through the STH Portal.

Electronic reporting of grades will be blocked until all school accounts are settled.

## Academic Due Process

1. In all cases, the concerned parties should contact the teacher, present their grievance and allow the teacher a reasonable time to deal with the grievance.
2. If the issue is not resolved, the parties must first consult the Department Dean, then the counselor and then the Assistant Principal. The teacher will be informed by one of these that they have been consulted.
3. If the issue is not resolved, the requests will be taken to the Principal, who will consult with the Administrative Council and/or hold a meeting with the concerned parties. The teacher will be informed of the meeting in time to prepare a statement and will be given time at the meeting to respond. The principal will decide the issue.

## Senior Exemptions from Final Examinations

Exemptions from the final exam are possible for seniors during the first semester in ½ credit semester courses and in all second semester courses. To be eligible seniors must have at least a 90 average in the class and meet attendance requirements as stated below. The student's exemption is not given automatically. **A student that has more than five class absences per semester that are not school-related activities is ineligible to be exempt from an exam in that subject. Students with more than 5 tardies to school or individual classes per semester are also ineligible for exemptions.** Special circumstances may be reviewed by the Dean of Students Office.

## Junior Exemptions from Final Examinations

Exemptions from the final exams are possible for juniors in the spring semester, in full year courses, if they have at least a 90 average in the class and meet attendance requirements as stated below. In full-year courses, an exemption is only possible in the spring semester with a 90 average in the class. The student's exemption is not given automatically. **A student that has more than five class absences per semester that are not school-related activities is ineligible to be exempt from an exam in that subject. Students with more than 5 tardies to school or individual classes per semester are also ineligible for exemptions.** Special circumstances may be reviewed by the Dean of Students Office.

## Academic Probation and Ineligibility

If a student is failing two or more required subjects at the end of the semester, he will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. If at the end of the probationary period, the student is still failing courses, he may be subject to required withdrawal for poor academic performance. A student who fails more than one subject at the end of the first quarter, the second quarter, the first semester or the third quarter will be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities. The student will not be allowed to participate in practices, games, contests, meetings, or any other extracurricular activity. Every three weeks the moderator or coach may request the student's grades be re-evaluated by the Assistant Principal to determine the student regaining eligibility.

Any student who is not carrying a 2.0 or greater by the end of his freshman year will be placed on academic probation. A student who has not earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or greater by the end of the fall semester of his sophomore year, or any subsequent semester, will meet with the principal and assistant principal. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss best options for said student, including the possibility of withdrawal from St. Thomas High School.

## Academic Concerns

St. Thomas High School does not rank its students. To compute cumulative grade point average, courses are distinguished according to their degree of difficulty and grades are weighted according to the following criteria.

1. Grade point averages are based on a 4-point scale
2. Advanced and Advanced Placement courses will be given an additional point when calculating GPA.
3. The Physical Education grade is not calculated in the GPA
4. Cumulative GPA is rounded to the nearest hundredth of a decimal point.

Below is the grading scale to translate grades into a 4-point scale:

Grade	Percentage	GPA Regular	GPA Weighted
A	93-100	4.0	5.0
A-	90-92	4.0	5.0
B+	87-89	3.3	4.3
B	83-86	3.0	4.0
B-	80-82	3.0	4.0
C+	79	2.3	3.3
C	77-78	2.0	3.0
C-	75-76	2.0	3.0
D+	74	1.3	2.3
D	71-73	1.0	2.0
D-	70	1.0	2.0
F	0-69	0	0

St. Thomas Club and Honor Roll:

A permanent member of the St. Thomas Club is a student who has been on the St. Thomas Club for 7 consecutive semesters.

St. Thomas Club students must maintain a 4.0 GPA  
Honor Roll students must maintain a 3.5 GPA

**The Valedictorian and Salutatorian** are determined at the end of seven (7) semesters. The students with the highest grade point average and the second highest grade point average in January of their senior year will be declared Valedictorian and Salutatorian, respectively. A student must have been in attendance at St. Thomas for at least five consecutive semesters in order to be declared Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

## Graduation Requirements

All students must successfully complete 28 credits for graduation.

Theology	4 credits (required of all students)
Mathematics	4 credits*
English	4 credits
Social Studies	4 credits
Science	4 credits
Health/Phys. Ed.	1.5 credits
Foreign Language	2 credits
Computer	1 credit
Fine Arts	1 credit
Speech	.5 credit
Electives	<u>2 credits (minimum)</u>
Total	28 credits

\*Students must take 8 semesters of Math.

Students may not take more than 1.5 credits of P.E. toward their graduation requirements.

All students are obligated to successfully complete the school service requirements and retreat requirements during their four years at St. Thomas. Please see the Campus Ministry section for details.

Final credit for classes is not given until all financial obligations have been met for the year. **Transcripts for transfer and/or college are not released until all financial obligations have been met.**

## ACADEMIC AWARDS

Four major school awards are presented to graduating seniors at the Academic Awards Assembly in the spring each year:

### REV. ALLNOCH SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD

The student awarded the Allnoch Scholar Athlete Award will be a senior with a high GPA who has earned at least two varsity letters during his senior year. He must have participated in each sport for at least two years at St. Thomas and he must have maintained academic excellence throughout his entire time at St. Thomas.

### **REV. ALBERT R. GAELENS GOODNESS, DISCIPLINE AND KNOWLEDGE AWARD**

Given in honor of Rev. Albert R. Gaelens, CSB who was the 21<sup>st</sup> principal of St. Thomas High School, this award is presented to the senior who most exemplifies the school motto, "Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge." The members of the senior class nominate their classmates for this award and the faculty votes on those students receiving the most nominations.

### **PRINCIPAL'S SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP AWARD**

This award is presented to a senior who has shown outstanding leadership and who has been generous in service to the school and the wider community.

### **REV. RON SCHWENZER CAMPUS MINISTRY AWARD**

This award is presented to a senior who has most exemplified the Man of St. Thomas motto of Faith, Service and Leadership.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Choices Program**

St. Thomas subcontracts with The Council on Recovery to offer the Choices program to students, parents, faculty and staff. The Choices program is a comprehensive, multiple high-risk behavior prevention and intervention program tailored to meet the school's unique needs. The program utilizes evidence-based methods for reducing high-risk behaviors by directly influencing school culture and creating student, parent, and faculty action groups to achieve positive outcomes.

A Choices counselor is on site to provide prevention, education, intervention, counseling and consultation services to address high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol and binge drinking, tobacco and vaping, bullying and cyberbullying, body image and eating disorders. The Choices counselor also helps students develop social and emotional skills related to abstract reasoning, self and social awareness, impulse control and emotion regulation.

The Choices counselor is a qualified credentialed counselor licensed by the state of Texas. All services of the Choices program are provided or supervised by the Choices counselor. Some services may be provided by a Masters level graduate student, but always under the supervision of a licensed and approved supervisor.

### **Counseling**

Each incoming freshman is assigned to a Counselor who will work with him during his four years at STH. The counselors are available before, during and after school for those seeking assistance with questions regarding their future plans, their course of studies, their present day stresses and strains or any other situations for which they feel a need for counseling or assistance. Counseling at St. Thomas High School



is a vital part of the school community, extending various services to its students, faculty and parents. Recognizing the principles of Christianity, the counselors strive to promote Christian values in the St. Thomas community. The goal of the counseling department is to assist the student academically, vocationally and with social and personal concerns.

## **Transcripts**

The transcripts for present students are sent free of charge. Transcripts for alumni may be ordered for \$5.00 each. Transcripts will not be released until all financial obligations are satisfied with the Business Office.

## **Non-Custodial Parents**

St. Thomas High School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school related information regarding the child. 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 a certified copy of the court order. Requests for duplicate mailings should be made in writing to the school office at the beginning of the school year.

## **Learning Enrichment Center**

The LEC is open to students from 7:00 – 5:00. It is a place where students can do independent research, collaborate in study rooms, check out books, study, and read. Students in study halls who wish to spend the period in the library to do research, read, or use the computers must obtain a pass from the LEC staff before their study hall. Students do not need to have passes to visit the LEC before or after school, during lunch, or during flex periods.

## **Bookstore**

Student textbooks are ordered online through our [Virtual Bookstore hosted by BNC K-12](#) (Formerly called MBS Direct). Some of the textbooks will be delivered to you while others will be loaded onto your son's tablet. When visiting the bookstore, please just purchase the textbooks. Please do not attempt to load the books on his tablet. Books should not be loaded until the first day of school. If you have questions, email Mr. Wilson at [bookstore@sths.org](mailto:bookstore@sths.org)

Students should write their names on all of their books, notebooks, binders,, etc. in order to quickly identify any belongings that may be found.

## **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria is open before school for breakfast, studying or just gathering. Hot lunches, as well as a variety of other items, are sold.. The student is to leave his place clean after eating, discarding waste in the receptacles provided. **The eating areas are limited to the cafeteria and courtyard only. Students**

**must remain in these two areas for the entire lunch period unless permission is granted to go elsewhere by the Dean of Students Office. Students may not order food to be delivered on campus.** Information on opening a cafeteria account for students is available on at [www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org) under the student life section. Opening an online payment account is preferred. Credit remaining on a student's account is rolled over to the next year, with the exception of senior year and students who withdraw. Those balances are donated to the school at the end of the year unless a specific request is made to the Business Office within one month of the student's last date of attendance.

Parents and students are encouraged to utilize the lunch account program. This not only speeds up the payment process, but reduces the amount of disposable cash in student hands. Funds can be deposited online or by check. Students may hand the cashier a check which will be deposited in their account.

## **Food Service**

All food purchased for on-campus events should be purchased through the on-campus catering company and cafeteria operator, Sage Dining Services. Orders can be placed in-person or via email at [catering@sths.org](mailto:catering@sths.org). Any questions should be directed to the Business Office.

## **Senior Off-Campus Lunch**

Senior Off-Campus Lunch is a privilege. No senior may go off campus for lunch until the entire senior class has their signed release on file, every senior's Magnus Health account is completed and the Dean of Students gives permission to the entire class that they may begin off campus lunch privilege. Any senior who chooses to go off campus during their lunch will abide by the rules in this handbook. Any senior who leaves for off campus lunch without permission being granted to the entire class will be considered skipping or truant and face appropriate disciplinary action. Off-campus lunch is a privilege for seniors in good standing. **Seniors must either leave campus or have lunch in the cafeteria or courtyard only. Seniors may not loiter or stay in the parking garage or other parts of campus or leave the garage in disarray.** Off-campus lunch may be revoked for one student or the entire senior class for disciplinary and/or academic reasons at the discretion of the Dean of Students. Any student whose off-campus lunch privilege has been revoked for any reason will be considered skipping or truant and face appropriate disciplinary action if they leave for off-campus lunch.

## **Business Office**

The Business Office hours are 7:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday through Friday for transactions with students and/or parents. Checks will not be cashed. All payments in form of check, cash or credit card should be directed to the Business Office and not left with teachers, coaches or other school employees. Many student fees and items can be paid for at the STH Online store accessible via the school's website.

## **Tuition and Fee Policy**

Tuition and registration fees are determined annually. Registration and other fees are paid on Registration Day at the end of March. Tuition must be paid in full each semester, before the student will be admitted to class, in accordance with the tuition agreement signed by the student's parents or guardian. Payment must be made to Smart Tuition directly. Time must be allowed by the parent for

payment to process before the due date. ***The Registration and other fees are never refundable*** because registration is a detailed process involving class programming, computer forms, census forms, mailing lists, Business Office forms and other office procedures.

A student's tuition account must be current before a student is allowed to participate in a parent-paid STH trip. Students with outstanding tuition will not be allowed to go on a trip until their tuition balance is paid. Payments made for trips will be applied to outstanding tuition balances.

With regard to a parent-paid trip, any student that has not paid for the trip before the trip departs is not allowed to go on the trip.

If tuition or other fees are not paid promptly, the school reserves the right to suspend a student until his account is brought current.

Admittance to semester examinations requires a "**Permit to Exam**" card indicating all financial obligations and other school requirements have been fulfilled. The school reserves the right to suspend a student from school for unmet financial obligations including tuition, fees, and other monies owed to St. Thomas.

Report cards, transcripts of grades, college and other recommendations, and diplomas will be issued when financial obligations have been paid.

## **Tuition Assistance**

St. Thomas High School is supported by tuition, fees and donations. It is a fully private institution. Through the work of many volunteers and the generosity of its benefactors, St. Thomas is able to offer limited financial aid to admitted students in cases of demonstrated need. Because of limited resources, St. Thomas cannot promise to meet the financial needs of all students.

Tuition assistance is available by application through filing a confidential statement by February 1st for financial aid. The link is on the St. Thomas website. This deadline is firm. The prior year's tax return is a non-negotiable requirement.

Application is made online and the link is provided on the St. Thomas website under the Admissions tab. Once all the necessary information is received, the application will be presented to the Tuition Assistance Committee for review. Awards are communicated to families mid to late March. **Parents must submit a new application annually.**

Aid may be withdrawn due to lack of timely payment of balance, disciplinary issues or other situations that may arise.

There is no financial aid for summer school programs of all types. All students taking summer school classes or participating in athletic camps or workouts need to have the tuition paid before the class begins.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

All activities sponsored by St. Thomas High School are subject to the rules and regulations established by the administration and published in this handbook.

Away from school, students are responsible to the school for conduct at such times and places they are recognized as St. Thomas students rather than as individuals.

## **CAMPUS MINISTRY**

### **ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Campus Ministry Team serves as the foundation for pastoral support for the St. Thomas community: all students, their families, faculty, and administration. In reverence and commitment to sacramental life, we offer compelling faith-formation programs, edifying retreats, and a commitment to service within the social justice context of the Church. As we strive to make Jesus Christ known to our students, they in turn discover the assurance of God's Grace, transforming into intentional disciples that are leaven of the Gospel, and ultimately, servant-leaders partaking in the heavenly banquet.

#### **FAITH FORMATION**

A man of St. Thomas is a faith-filled learner who lives in accordance with the standards of the Gospels. Campus Ministry discerns and meets the needs of our students, guiding them and encouraging encounters with our Lord Jesus Christ. Students of all faiths will be challenged to grow in prayer, virtue, and holiness.

To this end, we provide an optional weekly schedule to strengthen spiritual growth, which is open to parents, students, all faculty and administration.

1. **Monday:** The Sacrament of Reconciliation and an examination of conscience will be offered before school in the Chapel.
2. **Tuesday:** Mass takes place in the Chapel at the beginning of 'block' lunch.
3. **Wednesday:** Mass takes place in the Chapel at the beginning of 'block' lunch.
4. **Thursday:** We pray the Rosary in the Chapel before the start of the school day.
5. **Friday:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered during both lunch periods.

St. Thomas also celebrates Holy Days of Obligation, as well as several other all-school masses throughout the academic year.

#### **Notes about Faith Formation programming:**

- Student dress code for the all-school masses is a navy blazer or STH red crest blazer with a white dress shirt, red tie, khaki pants, socks, and dress shoes.
- Each time a student attends a faith formation event, with the exception of confession or all school masses, they will receive 2 ½ points of extra credit in theology class for a *maximum* of 10 points per major grade.

## **RETREATS**

Retreats are an essential part of the St. Thomas experience. Every freshman, sophomore, junior and senior is required to partake in a **mandatory** overnight retreat provided by STH during the school year.

### **FRESHMAN RETREAT: CAMP AQUINAS**

In support of the Basilian tradition to teach Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge, and of our vision to form strong Catholic servants to the Church and the world, this program forges young men into servant-leaders; this is accomplished through a comprehensive leadership curriculum based both in authentic mentorship and the powerful experience of nature.

Camp Aquinas is a five-day (Monday-Friday) immersive outdoor retreat experience that takes place during the first week of school. It serves to initiate, or “onboard,” freshmen into the tradition and culture of St. Thomas High School, which will become known as “The Men of St. Thomas.” This program also offers consistent mentorship opportunities among faculty, freshmen and upperclassmen. Ultimately, our students experience faith as it is lived in a nurturing community.

### **SOPHOMORE RETREAT: TAKE UP YOUR CROSS**

This retreat is an extended meditation on Matthew 16:24-26:

*“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?”*

Students will wrestle, like Job, with the reality of suffering, finding the answer not only in the grandeur of God’s creation, but also by delving into the mystery of Christ’s Passion. They will discover that only by dying to oneself can they then rise together with Jesus Christ. In their Houses, students will cement the bonds of brotherhood and unity, realizing that strength is in mutual dependence as they overcome obstacles together.

### **JUNIOR RETREAT: LIFE IN CHRIST**

This retreat is about “the rubber hitting the road,” where faith becomes a critical component of daily life unlike ever before. Spiritual questions are the central focus, revealing faith-based maturity as it comes to pass.

- Our young men will be asked to carefully consider Jesus’ question to St. Peter in Matthew 16:15, “*Who do you say that I am?*,” realizing indeed that if Jesus is who He truly says He is, our lives must radically transform.
- They will reflect on their personal experiences, grappling with moral issues, followed by an invitation to encounter Christ through the graces of the sacraments.
- Finally, they will be encouraged to embrace St. Paul’s challenge to “*not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will*” (Romans 12:2).

## **SENIOR RETREAT: THE GREAT COMMISSION**

In this culminating retreat for the young men of St. Thomas, the focus is Jesus’ final command to His Apostles, to “*therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*” (Matthew 28:19-20).

- Our students will reflect on their unique experience at St. Thomas, assessing where they have matured, and where they still have room to develop.
- They will be challenged by alumni, faculty, and administration to take their faith seriously and embody the Gospel message in their daily lives.
- They will be urged to listen intently for God’s guiding voice, as they move forward in their journey to discover and embrace His tailored plan for their lives.

## **VISION FOR SERVICE**

*“Loving others is a spiritual force drawing us to union with God; indeed, one who does not love others walks in the darkness” (1 John 2:11), “remains in death” (1 Jn 3:14) and “does not know God” (1 Jn 4:8).* Benedict XVI stated, “*closing our eyes to our neighbor also blinds us to God,*” and that love is, in the end, the *only* light which “*can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. When we live out a spirituality of drawing nearer to others and seeking their welfare, our hearts are opened wide to the Lord’s greatest and most beautiful gifts”*

(Evangelii Gaudium 72).

## **WHAT COUNTS AS SERVICE?**

- Feeding the hungry: soup kitchens, food pantries, food banks;
- Sheltering the homeless: Habitat for Humanity;

- Clothing the naked: Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Society;
- Visiting the sick and imprisoned;
- Visiting and interacting with patients and/or residents of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and rehabilitation centers;
- Organized and leadership-approved environmental care projects;
- Participation in fundraisers that raise awareness for life-threatening diseases and illness such as: Cancer Walks, Walk for a Cure, or working the Round-Up Sunday Carnival;
- Tutoring and mentoring for the benefit of the other;
- Parish events;
- Mission trips;
- Running in Steps for Students;
- The role of STH Senior Leader;
- Helping organize and run any of the major fundraisers at St. Thomas;
- Participating as a donor or organizer of a Blood Drive;
- Participating in the Challenger game offered during the football season;
- Organizing a car wash and donating the proceeds to the needy;
- [Meals on Wheels](#);
- Volunteering at a Summer Camp;
- Camp Blessing (special needs);
- Camp Aranzazu (special needs);
- Building and making care packages for the poor (see coach Q.);
- **If you have something else in mind you need to get it approved through the service coordinator of Campus Ministry**

## UNACCEPTABLE SERVICE EXAMPLES

- Baby-sitting;
- Lawn maintenance/work of any kind;
- Service to relatives or family, including grandparents, or privately owned businesses owned by family;
- Helping someone move residences;
- Work for which the student is paid, or for which they receive academic credits;
- Off-site clerical work--such as filing, receptionist duties, or other tasks that stray from altruistic service;
- Service completed during the school day;
- Service not approved by the Campus Ministry team;
- Service that is punitive in nature (detentions)

## TRACKING HOURS

All enrolled students at St. Thomas are accountable for *registering* on the X2vol website, as well as *entering* and *tracking* their own hours. Resources explaining these processes are found online at [www.x2vol.com](http://www.x2vol.com), as well as on our Campus Ministry website, located at: <https://www.sths.org/campus-life/campus-ministry/>

Failure to enter and track one's own hours digitally on [www.X2vol.com](http://www.X2vol.com) will create consequences that impact the student directly, and ultimately, prevent graduation. It is crucial that students take complete responsibility for this fundamental aspect of their education at St. Thomas.

## SERVICE REQUIREMENTS EACH YEAR

- We require service on a yearly basis for **ALL** grade levels.
- Students may complete their service hours during the summer if they so choose.
- All service hours completed after **June 1** will be counted towards the following school year.
- Students must have met their yearly service requirement by **April 1**.
- Please keep in mind the necessity of completing required hours in a timely manner via the [X2VOL system](#).
- Note that all hours must be verified by an adult who works at the organization and not the student's parent; the verifier is the person who organizes, supervises, or arranges the volunteer opportunity.
- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/16AT5h7vgp2IRWwDe1gJUxal-yv2adKPkm3VBTmxBDFk/edit>

The following requirements must be met *prior* to graduation for a student to receive their diploma.

### **FRESHMEN: 25 hours**

**DUE DATE:** All hours are due on **April 1st**. Half of the hours may be completed serving at St. Thomas. Additional hours or hours completed during April and May will not be rolled over, rather they will be added to your current year.

### **SOPHOMORES: 25 hours**

**DUE DATE:** All hours are due on **April 1st**. Half of the hours may be completed serving at St. Thomas. Additional hours or hours completed during April and May will not be rolled over, rather they will be added to your current year.

### **JUNIORS: 25 hours**

All hours are due on **April 1st**. Half of the hours may be completed serving at St. Thomas. Additional hours or hours completed during April and May will not be rolled over, rather they will be added to your current year.



## **SENIORS: 25 hours**

All hours are due on **April 1st**. Half of the hours may be completed serving at St. Thomas. Additional hours or hours completed during April and May will not be rolled over, rather they will be added to your current year.

## **DANCES**

Dances are sponsored by the Student Council or other school organizations with the approval of the Principal. School dance hours vary. Students will be admitted 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the dance and lock in will begin 30 minutes after the dance begins. During lock – in hours no attendees may leave the dance for any reason. All students who plan to attend these dances must be admitted before the designated lock in time and will not be allowed to leave before the designated lock in time ends. Good conduct is expected at all times. Students and/or their dates are subject to Breathalyzer tests, drug tests, or searches upon entry or during the dance. Use or distribution of any alcoholic beverage or any controlled substance, including e-cig and vaping devices, except as legally prescribed for self -carry such as an inhaler or insulin, is strictly prohibited. A parent/guardian will be required to pick up the student if necessary. An incident of this type will be followed by the Dean of Students Office. Parents are asked not to sponsor, condone or allow their son or his date to drink on nights of dances. The use of chartered buses and limos for any dance is forbidden, except for prom. Any buses or limos at prom are subject to search by the Dean of Students, Assistant Deans of Students and/or faculty chaperones.

### **Catholic High Schools Code for Dances**

All the Catholic high schools in Houston agreed to establish and enforce a common dress code for dances. The dress code varies slightly depending on the type of dance. St. Thomas men are responsible for seeing that they and their dates observe the dress code in order to gain admission to the dance.

All Catholic high school dances are alcohol, tobacco, and drug free. Students have a lock-in (time dependent upon the dance time). Students whose dates are dressed in an inappropriate manner will not be admitted to the dance. Students whose dates are not in compliance, but are allowed to enter, will face disciplinary consequences.

### **Formal Dances (Prom, etc.)**

**Men:** Suit or tuxedo preferred. Sport coat, dress slacks, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes and socks required. No head covering.

**Women:** After 5 p.m. dress attire. Formal dress must be in good taste, modest and appropriate. No low cut, bare midriff, bare back or skin tight attire. Dress length may be 2 inches from the knee or lower. Dress shoes are required.

### **Semi-Formal Dance (Homecoming, etc.)**

**Men:** Sport Coat, dress slacks, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes and socks required. No head covering.

**Women:** Attire must be in good taste, semi-formal in nature, modest and appropriate. No low cut, bare midriffs, bare back, or skin tight attire. Dress or skirt length may be 2 inches from the knee or lower.

Dress shoes are required.

### **Casual (Orientation, Back-to-School, after games, etc.)**

**Men:** Dress must be in good taste, modest and appropriate. Dress should consist of blue jeans or Khaki “Docker style” shorts and an appropriate t-shirt.

**Women:** Dress must be in good taste, modest and appropriate. Dress should consist of blue jeans and an appropriate t-shirt or shirt. No low cut, bare midriffs, bare back or skin tight attire.

### **School Trips (Athletics, Field Trips, Band, Forensic, Mission trips, etc.)**

All trips sponsored by St. Thomas are chaperoned and follow the guidelines of this handbook. All trips must be cleared and approved by the Dean of Students Office. Good conduct is expected at all times. **Parent chaperones are also expected to refrain from the use of alcohol when present with students on any such trips.** Misbehavior on off campus school sponsored events or trips may result in the student being sent home immediately at the parent’s expense. Misbehavior on off campus school sponsored events or trips may result in suspension or removal from the extra-curricular activity, club or team and/or result in further disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students.

### **Student Council**

The Student Council represents the students in all areas of student life. It is a liaison between the student body and the administration. This group coordinates school-wide activities as a service to the students of St. Thomas. Student Council officers and representatives are selected by the election process.

### **National Honor Society**

The National Honor Society (NHS) is open by invitation only to St. Thomas High School juniors and seniors. Students considered for membership must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.85 in order to be considered and to remain in NHS during their tenure at St. Thomas. All students who qualify academically are invited to complete a formal application that reveals the qualifications that make them outstanding with respect to character, scholarship, leadership and service. The invitation to apply will be made in the early part of the fall semester of a student’s junior or senior year. A Faculty Committee then reviews the applications and decides which students will represent St. Thomas in the National Honor Society. Emphasis is placed on the demonstration of these qualities while engaged in St. Thomas related activities. Membership is a privilege.

The members of the NHS serve the school and the community in several ways. Tutoring is offered for any St. Thomas student who seeks additional help. NHS members also provide academic support for

children at area elementary schools and homeless shelters. NHS members also serve as hosts for Academic Assemblies and as ushers for school masses and at graduation.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Student organizations are important segments of high school life, providing avenues for cultural and spiritual growth. At St. Thomas, they encompass a great variety of interests and provide many diverse activities for their members. Students who intend to seek an elective position in any organization must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0, be in good standing and registered for the following year.

Students should not be permitted, however, to become engrossed in activities to the detriment of their studies.

## **Dual Officer Positions**

Students may not simultaneously hold office positions in more than one of our major school organizations. (Student Council, National Honor Society, etc.)

## **Clubs and Activities**

To enrich the student's learning experience, organizations are sponsored by St. Thomas to give students an opportunity for school and social service and to offer activities in many fields of interest. Student participation in these organizations is highly encouraged.

### **Clubs**

*Art Club*

*Asian Culture Club*

*Athletic Trainers*

*Campus Ministry*

*Chemistry Club*

*Chess Club*

*Choices Club*

*Eagle Guard*

*Fellowship of Christian Athletes*

*Francophone Club*

*Intramural Sports Club*

*Java Competition Team*

*Magic Card Club*

*Math Aces*

*Math Club*

*Model United Nations*

*National Honor Society*

*Pre-Med Club*

*Quiz Bowl*

## **Round-Up**

Round-Up is a student-body led fundraiser that puts the STH brotherhood front and center for all to experience. It allows those involved to raise money for our eagle brothers in need of financial aid, while having a little fun themselves. It is a chance for our young men to take the lead in a cause that helps others, without seeking self-graduate.

Students are responsible for selling a minimum of one quota of raffle tickets for our annual school carnival, and encouraged to sell as many more as they can. We as the faculty and staff provide many opportunities for any student needing a little extra help to meet the minimum requirement. If, however, a student does not sell his quota, he will be expected to participate in this event by helping to clean the school grounds on the Monday after Round-Up. If he does neither, he may be billed for one quota and shall not participate in any of the Round-Up holidays. These are requirements for all students, including those receiving financial aid.

## **ATHLETICS**

### **Objectives**

Interscholastic athletics are important to a program of education. Participation contributes to health, happiness, physical skill, emotional maturity, school morale and the ability to experience victory and defeat in an acceptable manner. Anyone who is able and willing to meet the standards of the program is

given the opportunity to participate. Games have as chief purposes: sportsmanship, development of playing skills, friendly rivalry and improved community relations.

Athletics present the individual with the opportunity to make strong friends through responsible teamwork – exercising judgment, thinking quickly and taking and executing orders to the best of his ability. The athlete learns that success depends on hard work, devotion to the task and enthusiasm, as well as the innate ability of the person.

Athletic events at home or away are under the jurisdiction of TAPPS, NFHS and UIL rules. Students and parents are reminded that, as spectators, they represent St. Thomas. The purpose of attendance at athletic events is to support the team with positive spirit. Alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, except as legally prescribed for self carry such as inhalers and insulin, before, after or during any athletic event is prohibited.

## **Sportsmanship**

The St. Thomas winning attitude must be motivated by positive attitudes. Preparations for contests should be centered on developing confidence, loyalty, dedication and strength in unity. Cheers and rallies that harass by but not limited to verbal abuse or signage derogatory of opposing players, coaches and schools are counterproductive to the ideals that St. Thomas sets forth in its motto: “Teach Me Goodness, Discipline and Knowledge” and will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Interscholastic Program**

*St. Thomas presently offers 12 sports for interscholastic competition. Ten of our sports compete in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) District 4-6A, while three of our sports compete in sanctioned leagues specific to their sport.*

- Baseball\*
- Basketball\*
- Cross Country\*
- Football\*
- Lacrosse
- Rugby
- Soccer\*
- Swim\*
- Tennis\*
- Track & Field\*
- Wrestling\*
- Golf\*
- Student Athletic Trainers

\*Denotes TAPPS sports

# **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Harassment Policy**

St. Thomas High School strives to maintain a community which is free of all forms of intimidation and harassment. The work and learning environment fostered by St. Thomas must be one in which all individuals are free to develop relationships, and to work and learn without fear of harassment. Special care must be taken not to embarrass, ridicule or make fun of any person in a way that could be interpreted as harassment or disrespect. This applies before, during, or after school, on or off campus. To impersonate another person (staff member or student) in a skit, permission in writing must be obtained from the person in question.

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any electronic, written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived as degrading or insulting a person or group of persons on the basis of personal characteristics, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or handicap. The perceptions of the person or persons to whom these actions are directed, as opposed to the intentions of the person initiating these actions, will be important in the determination of whether harassment, intimidation, or bullying has taken place. The harm, or fear of harm, caused by harassment could be any form of damage to another person or their property.

This policy is not to be construed in such a way as to suppress respectful thought, study or discussion concerning controversial issues. The purpose of the policy is to prohibit harassment, as defined above, in order that each member of the St. Thomas community has an equal opportunity to work, learn and develop to his or her fullest potential.

Any student, faculty or staff member suffering abuse in violation of the above policy at the hands of a student, a group of students, or any member of the faculty or staff is urged to bring the matter to the attention of the Dean of Students Office. Harassment is prohibited by law.

### **Parent/Guardian Harassment**

Under normal circumstances, a student will not be deprived of a Catholic education at St. Thomas High School on grounds relating to the attitude or behavior of parent(s)/guardian(s). Nevertheless, a situation could arise in which the uncooperative, defiant or disruptive attitude of a parent/guardian will so diminish the effectiveness of the school’s endeavors to educate the student or other students, so that continuation of the student’s education would be greatly impaired. Such situations include, but are not limited to any statement, series of statements, action or actions by a parent/guardian or other person responsible for the student which upbraids, insults, threatens or abuses any teacher, administrator, coach or staff member of the school.

### **Health Issues**

1. **Immunizations:** Students at St. Thomas, as one of the schools of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) must be in compliance with all required immunizations as set forth by the Texas Department of Health Immunization Division. All

immunizations must be completed by the first day of attendance. Students without complete records on file will not be admitted to class. *St. Thomas does not allow parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief.*

2. **Physical Examinations:** All new students are required to have a physical, dated after August 15 of the previous school year. If possible, a new physical is recommended and the St. Thomas' physical form should be used (it can be found on the St. Thomas website).
3. **Prevention:** The school wants to prevent contagious illnesses from spreading. For the 20-21 school year the following protocol is required:
  - Students may not be sent to school with a fever or if fever-reducing medication was used to reduce the fever, even if the temperature is reduced to normal
  - Students must be fever free, without any fever-reducing medication, for a minimum of 24 hours before the student can return to school
  - Any student who has had a fever must bring a doctor's note clearing the student to return
  - If students show signs of illness such as but not limited to vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, cough, red itchy eyes, loss of taste or smell, chills, shortness of breath, etc. they should not be sent to school but symptoms should be monitored at home or taken to the doctor for diagnosis
  - Parents must notify the Dean of Students Office the morning on **each** day the student is absent
  - ***Students must be officially cleared by the Dean of Students office upon returning to campus including but not limited to arrival to campus before classes begin, before returning to a classroom, athletic practices, extra-curricular activities, etc.***
  - **COVID-19 protocol**
    - In the case of a student who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return when all three of the **3 Step Criteria** are met.
    - In the case of a student who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the student is assumed to have COVID-19, and the student may not return to campus until the individual has met the **3 Step Criteria**.
    - If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing a self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
    - A student with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 should not return to school until the end of the 14-day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure and are symptom free.
    - **3 Step Criteria:**
      1. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since fever recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications).
      2. The student improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).
      3. At least 7 days have passed since COVID 19 symptoms first appeared.
4. **Serious Chronic Illness:** Parents are to inform the school if their son has a serious and possibly life-threatening chronic illness or condition such as, but not limited to, diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies (including but not limited to food allergies), anaphylaxis and asthma. If medication or

treatments are involved, this information must be in the student's Magnus Health account and notice must also be given directly to the Dean of Students Office. For any serious health issue that could possibly present itself during school hours or extracurricular activities the student attends, the parents must also notify the Dean of Students Office, student's school counselor, the student's teachers each semester, and coach and or/moderator of any extracurricular school activity. Any medication or equipment must be provided to the school in the Dean of Students Office by the parents.

5. **Medication:** All medications that the student takes must be kept in the Dean of Students Office. Students are not allowed to carry any medication, even over-the-counter medications without doctor authorization and a request for in school medication form turned into the Dean's Office and also uploaded to the student's Magnus Health account.
  - a. **Prescription Medication:** A Request for In-school Administration of Medication form must be downloaded from the parents' Magnus Health account, signed by both the parent and physician, and turned in at the time the medication is brought to the Dean's Office. The medicine must be in its original container. Parents are to advise the school, in writing, of any changes in dispensing orders. Clinic or school personnel are not permitted to administer prescription medication unless the physician requests on the form that there is a need for such administration of medication during school hours.
  - b. **Select Over-the-Counter Medications:** For school personnel or Licensed Athletic Trainer to administer select over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications (see permission form for list), a permission for Over-the-counter Medication form must be completed in the student's Magnus Health account.

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

School personnel have a moral obligation, as well as a legal obligation, to report child abuse and neglect. If a school staff member has "cause to believe" that abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, they will report the information immediately to Child Protective Services. The head administration will be notified by school personnel filing the report.

## **Bad Weather Policy**

*In the event of school closure due to inclement weather, the school wide communications system "Blackboard Connect Code Red" will be utilized to keep parents informed of closure and reopening. Final decisions will be made by the principal. We do **NOT** follow the HISD standards or the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. Decisions on the closing of school in the event of a forecasted inclement weather event will be made in a window 24-36 hours ahead of the event.*

If there is an unanticipated major weather event, a decision by the principal to close the school will be made by 5:30 AM on the day of the event.

## **Residency**

Students must be living with their parents or legal guardians, even if they are 18 years of age.



## Electronic Devices

Students will not be called from class to receive a call nor will messages be accepted for students except in the case of an emergency.

Electronic devices include but are not limited to cell phones, school – issued tablets, personal computing devices, and smart watches. Students may use cellphones and smart watches before (7:50) and after school, after classes are dismissed for the day. Students may also use cell phones and smart watches at lunch or during flex time in the cafeteria and courtyard ONLY. Students may use their personal computing devices after the school day ends. Seniors are allowed by senior privilege to use personal computing devices during school hours. The Dean of Students Office reserves the right to revoke this privilege if needed.

Students may not use their cell phones or any personal devices during the scheduled instructional day within the school; **this includes hallways between classes, bathrooms, locker rooms, during assemblies, and Mass.** When in class, all phones and personal devices are to be turned off and must be placed out of sight. Those students who disobey school policy by using cell phones or other personal devices outside of allowed times will have them confiscated. Students whose electronic devices are confiscated will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office.

St. Thomas High School has the legal right to confiscate and search electronic devices at any time. In addition, the school can be expected to maintain possession of the device as an investigation proceeds. Failure by students or parents to recognize this authority or to wipe or remove information from the device under investigation may result in the immediate suspension or expulsion of the student. In the event that inappropriate images are found on the phone or device, the school will determine if, in its judgment, the images include examples of child pornography. Federal and state criminal codes are very clear with regard to the responsibility of the school in cases involving the possession and/or transmission of images that represent child pornography.

In cases like this, St. Thomas High School is required by law to inform the law enforcement authorities and to give them possession of the device containing the images. Federal authorities may become involved if the internet was used in any way in acquiring possession of the images. Students and parents should be aware of the fact that a full criminal investigation may ensue, encompassing interviews, subpoenaing of documents or records, the posting of the inappropriate photos to a national registry, etc.

The Dean of Students Office will review all incidents involving the inappropriate use of social media. Determination of inappropriateness is at the sole discretion of the Dean of Students Office. This covers social media posts done at or outside of school.

## Student Schedule

Students should be aware of their schedules at all times. A bell schedule is included at the end of this handbook and also on the school website.

## First Period

Students are to be in their assigned seats at the start of the first period. If not, they should report to the Dean of Students office. Students are to be silent during announcements.

## **P.A. Announcements**

Any information to be announced must be submitted to the Eagle Broadcast Network by 5:00 pm the night before. All announcements will be made at the beginning of the first period. Dismissal at the end of the school day may follow additional announcements made by an administrator on the P.A.

## **Passes**

During class periods any student moving through the hallways or across campus must have a signed yellow pass or a hall pass from his teacher. Seniors with an *Eagle Pass* will not wander the halls. Eagle Pass students must remain on campus at all times. Students with Eagle Pass during A period or block day E period must check in at the Dean's office before the first period final bell.

Students must have a yellow pass from the Dean of Students Office to go to their car during the school day (exception – seniors leaving for off campus lunch). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## **Student Parking and On Campus Driving**

Students are not allowed to be in cars or parking areas any time during the school day.

Students are expected to drive safely and slowly on campus.

Students are expected to park only in their designated space or area.

Parking and driving on campus are privileges, not rights.

To obtain and keep these privileges, students must adhere to the following regulations:

1. Every student parking on the property must apply for a permit and register his car with the Business Office within one week after the beginning of school.
2. All student automobiles parked on school grounds must be registered with the school. Students who obtain a license and begin to drive to school during the school year **MUST** obtain a permit immediately **before** parking on campus.
3. The parking fee is \$150.00 plus tax. Parking spaces on campus are limited, especially for larger vehicles. Preference will be given to juniors and seniors. The remaining spaces for sophomores will be available on a first come, first served basis. Parking permits are purchased online on the St. Thomas website under Student Life. Once payment is made, the student should bring his vehicle registration papers, parking agreement form and on-line payment receipt to the Business Office where the parking permit will be issued.
4. **The parking tag must be displayed at all times**, hanging from the rearview mirror without obstruction, and must be visible to a casual observer. If in extenuating circumstances the mirror's size is too large to hang the tag, then the parking tag must be adhered to the windshield right above the car's registration sticker on the driver's side of the vehicle. **No exceptions.**
5. Only seniors can park on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of the parking garage. Juniors and sophomores will park on floors 4 – 6.
6. No student may park on the first floor of the parking garage.

7. Students may not park in the parking spaces on the ramps between floors in the garage.
8. Student parking is strictly limited to the parking garage. Parking in “surface spot” areas anywhere campus is restricted to faculty, staff and visitors. **Students may not move vehicles after school from the parking garage to any surface lot until after 5 p.m.**
9. All students who bring a car on campus must be licensed and must be covered by insurance as required by state law. The school is not responsible for the vehicle, its contents or damages occurring while on school property.
10. Students may not use permits assigned to other students. Parking tags may not be shared, as each tag is tied to a particular vehicle. If a student’s “daily driver” car changes, he must report the new vehicle to the business office immediately.
11. If a student is in a temporary car, they must let the Dean’s office know immediately of the duration of the temporary car’s use, make and model, or risk a violation.
12. Students must drive slowly on campus, give right of way to pedestrians, conform to posted traffic and speed signs, as well as slowing down for speed bumps.
13. If a student needs to obtain something out of their car during the school day, they must obtain permission and a pass from the Dean of Students Office **only**.
14. Violations may include, but are not limited to: disobeying any parking or traffic regulation, driving recklessly on campus, parking in a space or parking garage floor not assigned to the student, parking in a space assigned to someone else, parking without a permit, permit not displayed properly (see #4 above), displaying a parking tag from previous years, loitering in parking areas or garage, going to cars without permission during the school day, etc. and will result in fines and/or suspension of parking privileges and possible disciplinary action. Violations of these regulations may result in one or more of the following at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office: fines, detentions or other disciplinary action, the suspension or loss of driving privileges.

Please note the following parking/driving violations will be enforced:

**All fines are paid to the Business Office by the deadline listed on the ticket. Students must then show proof to the Dean of Students Office by that deadline that the fine was paid and any other instructions on the ticket were completed.**

**Failure to pay the fine on time and show proof to the Dean’s Office will result in disciplinary action and possible suspension of driving privileges.**

1<sup>st</sup> Parking Violation – \$25 Fine

2<sup>nd</sup> Parking Violation –\$25 Fine and disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students Office

3<sup>rd</sup> Parking Violation – \$50 Fine and disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students Office

4<sup>th</sup> Parking Violation – Loss of driving and parking privileges, possible disciplinary action and \$100 fine.

## **Assemblies**

Speakers and performers expect courtesy from St. Thomas students. Loud laughter, whistling, loud noises or stomping of feet, although acceptable at pep rallies, are certainly out of order at most other assemblies. Use of any electronic devices during an assembly is not allowed. In all assemblies, students

are to maintain appropriate behavior.

## **Fire Drills**

Silence must be maintained during the entire fire drill. Students must have ID's visible at all times. When the alarm sounds, all must leave quickly and silently in a single-file line, taking nothing with them. The last person out of the room checks that all students have gone and shuts the door. Doors are to be shut, but remain unlocked. Posters by each room exit indicate the route to follow. Maintain silence to hear possible instructions and maintain single-file down the sides of the halls and stairways. Students should move quickly but safely to the stadium, line up in single file on their designated yardline, and remain silent on the field for attendance and possible further instructions. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones at any time.

## **Campus Policy for Leaving Campus**

No student is to leave the campus during the school day without permission from the Dean of Students office. See Truancy section in handbook for further information.

## **Changing Classes at Lunch Time**

On non-block schedules, students are not to re-enter the building after their lunch period begins until the next class change.

## **Study Hall**

If a student has a Study Hall in his schedule, he is to be in the room assigned. Study Halls are quiet areas for study. Absence from Study Hall will be considered truancy. Students who need to go to the LEC, another teacher's room, the counselor, etc. must obtain a pass before school (from the place they need to go instead of study hall) and show this pass to their study hall teacher at the beginning of the study hall period, before going to the place indicated on the pass.

## **Lost and Found**

A "Lost and Found" is maintained in the Dean of Students Office. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Students are to report lost or stolen articles to the Dean's Office immediately.

## **Insurance**

The school insurance does not cover personal injury. All injuries must be covered under the parents' insurance policy. All students attending St. Thomas High School are required to have private insurance. This includes but not limited to injuries sustained during athletic events, practice, P.E. class, or moving around campus. Students may not participate in extracurricular activities or travel on ANY excursions until private insurance is obtained.

## **Lockers and Backpacks**

All lockers are the property of St. Thomas. Lockers and backpacks are subject to search with or without cause, by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students. Any illegal substances, weapons or property owned by others found in a locker or backpack will be confiscated and may be delivered to law enforcement authorities. Parents will be notified. By signing the acknowledgment for this handbook, the student and parent/guardian specifically agree to any such search or seizure. Students must use the locks provided to them by the school. The school is not responsible for any personal or school supplied items that are not properly secured in a locker (school and/or athletic locker) or kept with the students at all times.

**Students should keep their combinations confidential.** Locker clean-up should be completed by the last day of final exams. Anything left in the lockers becomes the property of St. Thomas High School. Students are issued locks for school and athletic lockers. Students are expected to keep their lockers locked at all times. Students should secure valuables or have them on their person at all times. Students are expected to keep personal property locked in a locker or with them during after school activities.

**The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles.**

### **ID Cards and Lanyards**

Picture ID cards will be made during the first week of school. For safety and security reasons, students are required at all times on school days to wear their school ID on a lanyard around their neck and visible outside all clothing. From arrival on campus until exiting campus, Student's ID must be on and visible unless a student is participating in PE or an after school sport. The school ID is also used to fob into school entrances. Students must provide ID cards in the cafeteria to purchase meals/food. Students may not use another student's ID to purchase food. If a student ID stops working, students should go to the main office. Replacements for lost cards can be obtained, for a replacement fee, through the Main Office. If a student arrives at school without his ID, the student is required to go immediately to the Dean of Students Office to sign in and obtain a temporary ID for the day. Students will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office for failure to follow the procedure above.

### **Use of School Branding**

No articles of clothing or merchandise using the name of St. Thomas High School, our logo, monogram or mascot are to be made, sold or distributed without prior authorization and approval of design by the Vice President for Advancement.

### **Selling Goods on Campus or at School Events**

Students may not sell any homemade or purchased goods on campus or at school events, to benefit themselves or any organization. Non-STH students must receive permission from the Dean's Office for the sale of any school sponsored goods on the STH campus or at STH sponsored events.

### **Campus Supervision**

The main building is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. After 3:15 p.m., the school does not supply supervision or security unless the student is participating in a regularly scheduled school activity. Students who are not in a scheduled after school activity and who must wait after 3:15 on campus must report to either the LEC for quiet study or the cafeteria and student center. . The LEC is open until 5:30, cafeteria until 4:00 and the student center is open until 6:00. Students should bring their own snacks and food may only be eaten in the cafeteria and student center.

## **Field Trips**

Students participating in any school sponsored field trip must have both administrative and parental permission. An Emergency Consent/Activity Participation/Insurance Waiver form, which grants parental permission for the entire year, must be downloaded from the parents' Magnus Health account, signed and uploaded, faxed or mailed back to Magnus Health, where it will be kept on file. Parents will be notified by the trip moderator at least one week in advance. Parents at all times reserve the right to not have their son participate on a field trip and should notify the Dean of Students immediately. The administration reserves the right to deny permission for a student to go on a trip for academic, disciplinary or other reasons. Students representing St. Thomas High School are expected to dress and act appropriately on all field trips.

## **TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY**

In an effort to support the vision for a “man of St. Thomas to be a faith-filled, life-long learner who thinks critically, communicates effectively, and prepares thoroughly to excel in college and in life,” St. Thomas provides a variety of resources to support student learning, including electronic resources. It is imperative that all students, staff, and guests of St. Thomas use those resources ethically and responsibly to further the educational goals and objectives for which they are intended.

### **To meet these goals and objectives St. Thomas will:**

- provide necessary devices to students
- provide a stable and secure network, along with necessary technology support
- ensure technology is integrated into the curriculum
- provide education on appropriate digital citizenship in 21<sup>st</sup>-century education
- provide warranty coverage for normal wear, including a loaner laptop while such repairs are resolved

### **In working toward these goals and objectives, St. Thomas students will:**

Students will refrain from using their own personal electronic devices, such as but not limited to laptops, personal tablets, cell phones, etc. during the instructional school day.

**Only seniors will be allowed the freedom to utilize their own personal laptop or tablet as a senior privilege.** Since it is a senior privilege, it may be revoked either individually or, if it is significantly abused, as a class.

The school is not responsible for the safety of or any damage to a personal device that is confiscated for inappropriate use. These devices will be governed by the same rules as cell phones.

- **Treat electronic resources responsibly:**
  - Students are responsible for ensuring their laptop is in working order before classes begin each day, including having charged batteries and all troubleshooting issues resolved.
  - Students are expected to be good stewards of all resources (e.g. refraining from unnecessary download or streaming of large files to conserve bandwidth, unnecessary printing to conserve paper).
  - Students must back up data regularly, using Cloud space such as Google Apps, Dropbox, etc. Data and materials of any sort stored on a student laptop is the responsibility of the student.
  - Students must refrain from making any modifications to their laptop, aside from necessary downloads of files for educational purposes.
  - Students must report any physical damage to their laptop or any inappropriate material they may receive immediately.
  
- **Use electronic resources only for legitimate academic purposes and to access academic content:**
  - Students must use their laptops as educational tools, refraining from using the laptops or St. Thomas network resources for personal or recreational computing when on campus.
  - Students must use social media and any online presence respectfully and references to St. Thomas should be made only for educational purposes. Additionally, students must represent themselves using language, images, and content that is consistent with the school's mission and vision.
  - While students may need to download apps or other files for academic purposes (e.g. drivers for home printing, media files for projects), students must not download files (e.g. games, music, media) for purposes other than academic while on St. Thomas' network or for a purpose that violates copyright laws or fair use guidelines.
  - Students must not download or store any inappropriate content to their tablet which can be defined as, but is not limited to, content of a sexually explicit or violent nature, defamatory or harassing in nature, or illegal activities of any type.
  
- **Act ethically when using electronic resources at St Thomas:**
  - Students must not attempt to bypass or disable any network security or filter. (e.g. when on campus, students should access the Internet via St. Thomas' network, not by tethering to another device.)

- Students must respect the property rights of others, including copyright and fair use laws.
- Students must honestly represent their own work and document any sources from which they acquire information. Plagiarism is prohibited.
- Students must use only their personal account, password, email, or storage space and should not give access to other users.
- Students must treat others with respect, decency, appropriateness, courtesy, tolerance, and integrity in all forms of digital communication.
- Students must not access websites or media that contain inappropriate material, which can be defined as, but is not limited to, content containing material of a sexually explicit or violent nature, defamatory or harassing in nature, or illegal activities of any type.

**In supporting their sons' efforts toward these goals and objectives, parents of St. Thomas students will:**

- share responsibility with students for computing activities conducted away from school
- refrain from modifying or attempting to repair school-owned devices
- assume financial responsibility if the device (or its accessories) are lost or damaged and that damage is determined to have been purposeful or is not covered by insurance provided by the school.
- Laptop repair costs are \$50 including accidental breakage. Laptop replacement cost is \$1,275 for lost, stolen or breakage beyond repair. Power supplies are \$45.98. To replace a lost or damaged case is \$25. A stylus is \$64.75. Costs for the new laptops will be determined and published before school starts in August.
- Students must use the St. Thomas Help Desk for laptop maintenance.

**Other Considerations:**

While on campus, St. Thomas has taken actions to prevent access to the above-mentioned material that includes the use of blocking/filtering software. However, because of the changing nature of information on the Internet, it is impossible for St. Thomas to completely prevent access to such material. To help students make wise decisions in using technology resources, faculty and St. Thomas leadership will educate students on appropriate digital citizenship. To reinforce such digital citizenship off campus, parents should monitor student technology use away from school.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's electronic resources, just as they are in a classroom. Therefore, general school rules regarding proper conduct will also apply to students using the St. Thomas network, laptops. The use of electronic resources is not a right; it is a privilege. If the privilege is abused, it may be revoked, and additional disciplinary actions may be applied in accordance with the St. Thomas code for student conduct.



The user will be personally responsible for his actions when using school equipment to access technology resources both inside and outside of the school's network. Laptops and storage space will be treated in the same fashion as school lockers, meaning administrators and technical support personnel may periodically review stored contents to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using resources responsibly.

The consequences of violation of any usage policies include the full range of standard disciplinary measures and the imposition of monetary fines to compensate the school for the time and materials necessary to repair any damage caused by the student.

### **Audio/Video Recording**

To protect the individual's privacy and rights, students are forbidden to take pictures, audio recordings, or videos of school employees or fellow students without their explicit permission. The use of any type of picture taking, video or audio recording devices anywhere on campus or off campus or at a St. Thomas event is prohibited, unless with permission and for educational purposes. This includes during class.

## **INTERNET USAGE**

***St. Thomas students' technology usage will be audited to ascertain appropriate usage.***

St. Thomas' sole intent in providing access to the Internet is to further the educational goals and objectives of our students. **Students and parents are warned that users may, either intentionally or unintentionally, access textual, graphic, visual and/or auditory information which is sexually explicit, violent, defamatory, harassing, illegal or otherwise offensive.** Access to the above material is strictly prohibited. St. Thomas has taken actions to prevent access to the above-mentioned material that includes the use of blocking/filtering software. However, because of the changing nature of information on the Internet, it is impossible for St. Thomas to completely prevent access to such material. *It is the duty of St. Thomas to define appropriate standards concerning the access and use of material contained on the Internet.* St. Thomas respects the right of each student and parent to decide whether or not the student will be permitted to access the Internet.

### **Conditions and Rules of Use**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network, just as they are in a classroom. Therefore, general school rules regarding proper conduct will also apply to students using the St. Thomas computer network. **The use of computer resources is not a right; it is a privilege.** If the

privilege is abused, it may be revoked, and additional disciplinary actions may be applied in accordance with the St. Thomas code for student conduct.

The user will be personally responsible for his actions when using school equipment to access computer resources both inside and outside of the school's network. Computer storage space will be treated in the same fashion as school lockers, meaning administrators and technical support personnel may periodically review stored contents to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using the system responsibly.

When accessing the St. Thomas computer network, all users must comply with the following conditions and rules of use:

1. The computer hardware and software at St. Thomas is the property of St. Thomas High School. Computer hardware, software and network configuration are **not to be modified in any manner**. The copying of St. Thomas computer software will constitute theft.
2. St. Thomas High School reserves the exclusive right to represent itself on the Internet and social media. The St. Thomas High School name and all Web contents, including any descriptions, graphics or photographs are the sole property of St. Thomas and may not be used in any form without expressed written permission from the administration of St. Thomas.
3. Students and staff are prohibited from creating, maintaining or contributing to any website or social media platform not sanctioned by St. Thomas that purports to contain information concerning St. Thomas or any of its clubs, activities or personnel.
4. Students may not attempt to access or alter the main network operating system or the computer storage space of another individual. **The sharing of passwords is forbidden**. This is for the student's protection.
5. St. Thomas computers are to be used solely for bona fide educational purposes. **They are not under any circumstance to be used as a communication device, except for educational use with explicit permission of faculty or staff.**
6. **The playing of any Internet based or multi-player games, watching movies, videos, and other related activities are expressly forbidden while on campus.** This condition is intended to preserve our limited bandwidth for students and staff who are working on legitimate educational projects. Other inappropriate and forbidden activities include but are not limited to are all commercial and political activities.
7. **The downloading and/or storing of MP files, movies or videos are not allowed without explicit permission of faculty or staff.** This condition is intended to reduce the threat of viruses, reduce non-educational use of bandwidth and protect St. Thomas from certain legal liabilities involving the unauthorized copying and distribution of copyrighted work.
8. **Accessing websites which feature inappropriate material is expressly forbidden.** "Inappropriate material" can be defined as, but is not limited to, content containing material of a sexually explicit, violent, defamatory, harassing or illegal nature.

**Except in very rare cases of legitimate research and explicitly approved by faculty or staff for such research, websites that advocate violence, racism or illegal activities of any type will also be considered inappropriate.**

**9. The St. Thomas computer network utilizes “blocking” software to prevent access to inappropriate Web resources.** Any attempt to disable or circumvent the Web filter is prohibited. The use of any “proxy” type Web site will be considered an attempt to bypass the filtering system. This system was installed for the protection of our students.

10. Any “inappropriate material” received innocently should be reported immediately to the teacher in charge and the Dean of Students Office.

**11. Students may not load, download or install any type of software for any reason without the express consent of an authorized network administrator.** This policy is intended to protect the integrity of the St. Thomas computer network, reduce “down time” due to software compatibility issues and guarantee the legality of all software loaded on computers owned by St. Thomas.

## **Websites and Social Media**

Students who develop and maintain any type of social media account, website, or any other type of online presence must keep in mind they are a student of St. Thomas. Any personal account or site must not contain inappropriate material, which can be defined as, but is not limited to, material of a sexually explicit or violent nature, defamatory or harassing in nature, or illegal activities of any type.

Any online or social media behavior by a student must follow the same guidelines as above. Students may not use any form of the school’s crest or any other image files of St. Thomas. These images are the sole property of St. Thomas.

## **Student Accountability**

St. Thomas High School encourages all students to use the Internet and electronic devices for their educational potential, but to be very careful of its many traps and opportunities for unhealthy and dangerous activity. We are concerned about the safety and reputation of all of our students. When St. Thomas students misuse their laptop, social media accounts, internet or any other online presence they have, the school can and must hold the student responsible for its content.

The consequences of violation of any usage policies include the full range of standard disciplinary measures as determined by the Dean of Students Office and the possible imposition of monetary fines to compensate the school for the time and materials necessary to repair any physical damage to a laptop caused by the student.

# **ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Class Attendance**

St. Thomas families and students should be aware that leaving school before the dismissal time, and/or accumulating excessive absences or tardies, not only jeopardizes student academic progress, but it also disrupts the learning environment of fellow classmates. Students are expected to be in class and ready to begin work at the beginning of the day when the final bell rings for the first period and also at the beginning of each instructional period.

Students are to be present for all classes as outlined on their schedule. A student must not be absent from any one class more than five (5) times during any one semester. At the discretion of the Assistant Principal, a student may lose credit for a semester course if absences in that course exceed five (5). In addition, excessive absences may result in non-participation in extracurricular activities that interfere with the school day. A student who is absent for more than half a school day (4 periods) may not participate in any extra-curricular activities later that day.

School sponsored or sanctioned activities are exempt from and do not count toward the total of five (5) absences per semester. In the event of extenuating circumstances (extended illness or hospital confinement), consideration may be given to extending the limit of five days, provided the parents notify the Dean of Students Office. A doctor's statement will be required for extended absences.

After an excused absence, the student has one day plus the number of days he was absent to complete work due after he returns. After this, make-up work may be accepted at the discretion of the teacher. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, the student may **not** fax or email the assignment to the school, unless explicitly approved by the teacher.

Students absent from a class or school day for a school sponsored or sanctioned activity must still turn in any work due that day or class period including but not limited to homework, project, or paper. Tests or quizzes missed on the day or class period of a school sponsored or sanctioned activity must be made up the following day upon return.

***After an unexcused absence, it is up to the discretion of the teacher, in consultation with the Dean of Students Office, whether to allow a student to make up material and tests. In the case of truancy, the student receives a "zero" on all tests, quizzes and assignments due that day.***

**For pre-approved (by the Dean of Students Office)** planned absences (including college visits), students are required after approval from the Dean's Office to contact their teachers immediately and make a plan, before the approved absence, for all missed work.

The Dean of Students Office reserves the right to put a student on an attendance contract for students with excessive tardies (to school or individual class periods), absences, and/or early dismissals. Failure of parents and the student to abide by the terms of the contract may result in suspension or dismissal from St. Thomas.

## **Absences**

When a student is absent from school, **the following are required:**

- **Parents must notify the Dean of Students office directly; not the teachers or counselor.**

Unexpected medical or family emergency absences:

- **A telephone call or an email between 7:20 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the day of an absence by calling 713-864-6348 x 109 or email [deanofstudentsoffice@sths.org](mailto:deanofstudentsoffice@sths.org) (each day of an absence).**
- **If the Dean's office is not notified of an absence within two days, failure to do so may result in the absence being considered "unexcused" no matter what the reason.**
- A doctor's note, if required by the Dean of Students Office, should be turned in before school on the morning of the student's return.
- **Under no circumstances will a handwritten note alone be accepted to excuse an absence. All absences must be verified through a parent or legal guardian, even if a student is 18 years old.**

Pre-approved planned personal absences (including college visits):

- St. Thomas is aware that there may be mitigating circumstances for an absence that may not fit directly in one of the excused categories below. However, **any personal absences must be approved ahead of time by the Dean of Students Office or the absence will be unexcused and subject to penalty.** The Dean of Students Office reserves the right not to approve a personal absence due to but not limited to: excessive absences, dismissals or tardies of the student, critical timing of requested absence (near midterms, end of quarter, near finals, etc.), etc.
- For any planned personal absences, permission for approval from the Dean of Students Office must be obtained at least a week in advance,
- For college visits, a college visit form must be completed and turned into the Dean of Students Office for approval **at least a week in advance.** The STH form for college visits may be found on the school website (Dean of Students Office or Counseling).
- Once approved by the Dean's Office, the student must contact his teachers immediately to plan in advance for missed work.
- After returning from an approved college visit, the student must bring the form provided by the college confirming the visit.
- Confirmed college visits will not affect possible final exam exemptions.

School related absences:

- Students are required to check with their teachers **before** the school related absence (all day, early dismissal, etc.), to make a plan for missed work, test, quiz, etc. Work due that day must be turned in before leaving for the activity. Tests or quizzes missed must be made up the next day.

## **Excused Absences**

The following are excused absences:

1. Illness of the student
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Funerals of relatives and close friends
4. Participation in school activities with permission from the Principal, Assistant Principal or the Dean of Students Office

5. Doctor's appointments that cannot be made after school hours. **An official appointment card or signed note from the doctor's office is required to verify any professional appointment.**
6. Court appearances
7. Pre-approved personal absences— In order for personal absences to be excused, students must obtain approval from the Dean of Students Office.

**Note: College visits are excused absences, but advance notification and approval from the Dean of Students Office is required.**

### **Absence policy before and after a holiday or break:**

Students shall not be absent on the day or consecutive days before or after any major holiday. This includes, but is not limited to: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas break, MLK Day, Spring Break, and Easter Break. All absences will be considered unexcused unless the family is able to produce a valid excuse from a certified physician for illness. Any tests, assignments, or other deliverables due on these days will not be excused and students will receive a 0 for the assignments. Tests, assignments, and deliverables for these days may not be taken early or late.

One day may be missed before or after a holiday to accommodate a college visit or college recruiting event. In accordance with our handbook, this absence will count as a pre-approved excused absence if the following protocol is completed at least one week prior to the college visit. The STH College Visit form must be completed and presented to the Dean of Students Office at least one week in advance. Once approval is granted, students are required to contact their teachers immediately and make a plan for all work that will be missed (also no later than one week in advance). Upon their return, students must provide evidence of the college visit/event to the Dean's Office.

### **Semester Examination Absence Policy**

1. Students are not excused from scheduled exam times for any reason, including travel plans. Students who miss exams will receive a zero (0) for that exam.
2. After notifying the Dean of Students Office and receiving approval, only students who are seriously ill or have experienced a death in the family may reschedule their final exams at a time set by the Assistant Principal. For a seriously ill student, a written statement from a doctor must be provided to verify the seriousness of the illness in order to have an exam rescheduled.

### **Tardiness**

Tardies to the first period of the school day are considered unexcused unless the Dean's Office has received prior notification of late arrival from the parents/guardians, and the tardiness is due to illness, doctor's appointments, court appearances, or pre-approved personal issues. Traffic congestion, trains pre-scheduled road construction are not considered a legitimate excuse for an excused tardy. Only mitigating traffic issues such as but not limited to closed lanes due to a traffic accident may be considered for an excused tardy at the discretion of the Dean's Office. Students are allowed three unexcused tardies per semester before the student receives consequences, allowing a window of opportunity for adjustments to departure times, routes, taken, etc.

Students who are late to school must go directly to the Dean of Students Office and present their ID card to be admitted. The Dean of Students Office will then issue an Admit to Class slip. There may be a penalty assigned for any student who does not have his ID card in his possession. **Students who fail to check in through the Dean of Students Office (even if arriving between class periods) will be considered truant for classes missed and face the consequences of truancy.**

After every three unexcused tardies (including morning and class period tardies) students will receive morning detentions. After 12 unexcused tardies, students will receive a Saturday or other off day service detention and a parent conference will be required.

A disciplinary course of action for tardiness can be adjusted by the Dean of Students Office at any time.

## **Early Dismissal**

When it is necessary for a student to leave school early, the parent must:

- Email or call the Dean of Students Office (the day before or the morning of before 7:45 a.m.) stating the reason and time for the dismissal.
- Students must get an early dismissal slip before 7:45 a.m. from the Dean of Students Office.
- If a student is driving himself off-campus for an early dismissal, the parent must notify our office the day before or morning of before 7:45am giving permission.
- **Except for an emergency, parents should not expect the Dean of Students Office to track down the student and pull them out of class for an early dismissal. Parents must follow the early dismissal policy or it may not be possible for the student to be released from school early.**
- For a medical early dismissal, students must bring a doctor's note the next day before 7:45 a.m. to the Dean of Students Office.
- **No student may leave campus, even with a parent, without first checking out through the Dean of Students Office.**
- No student will be released to a parent, guardian or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (such as inebriated) and, therefore unable to drive safely
- No student will be released during the school day to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or parent designee
- Doctor's appointments and other non-school business should be carried out on days when there is an early dismissal, when possible

## **Truancy**

Truancy or "skipping" is defined as an absence from class(es), study hall or an assembly without the permission of the Dean of Students Office. Truancy will result in no academic credit being given for subjects that were missed, plus appropriate disciplinary action.

Any student who leaves campus for any reason, including but not limited to illness, medical appointment, or senior lunch, without permission of the Dean of Students Office will be considered truant and face the same consequences.

Students who arrive late and do not check in at the Dean of Students Office or do not have an approved excused tardy by the Dean of Students Office will be considered truant.

The determination of truancy will be at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office.

### **Medical Excuses for P.E.**

Medical excuses from P.E. class for more than one day must be in writing from the doctor or a penalty will be imposed on the P.E. grade. A doctor's note to miss P.E. must be turned into the Dean of Students Office.

## **DRESS CODE**

### **General Appearance and Attitude**

A student's general appearance reflects his attitude toward his school and himself. An abusive or negative attitude hurts the entire school. A student who habitually displays a negative, uncooperative or disrespectful attitude will be asked to leave St. Thomas. As long as a student is enrolled at St. Thomas, he represents and reflects the tradition of St. Thomas.

St. Thomas will be the sole judge of what is proper or improper grooming and/or attire. Students out of dress code for any reason must report to the Dean of Students Office prior to the first period. If a student does not do so, disciplinary action may be taken. It is solely at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office to excuse out of dress code exceptions.

Students may at no time wear "unwholesome" images or branding that supports lifestyle choices that are inappropriate for teens. It is also inappropriate for students to display images, names, wording or messages that are political in nature or could otherwise be considered divisive. Final decisions on appropriateness are determined by the Dean of Students.

### **Shirts**

All shirts must be neat, clean, have a fold over collar and be tucked into the pants, with no inappropriate designs, patterns or zippers as determined by the Dean. Pocket size emblems only. Any branded STH shirts are allowed but only if issued by school organizations or sold by the athletic booster club. Hawaiian shirts are on approved days only, with no inappropriate items displayed.

### **Pants**

Students must wear tan khaki dress or "Docker" type pants that are neat and clean. Students may not wear "denim trousers" style pants of any kind except on special dress down days announced by the Administration. This includes tan denim "western" jeans. A belt is to be worn at all times. Drawstring or side-pocket type pants are not permitted. There may be no fraying, rips or holes on the pants.



## Shorts

On days that students are allowed to “dress down” and wear shorts, all shorts must be tan khaki “Dockers Style” walking/golf shorts. All shorts must extend below mid-thigh.

## Shoes

Shoes must be dress shoes, loafers, Sperry style, or boots. Shoes must be leather or suede, have a sole, and be fully enclosed (entire foot is covered). The predominant color must be black, dark blue, grey, brown, or tan. No house shoes/slippers, athletic shoes or shoes/boots with heavy terrain soles are allowed. Any shoe that is too casual or not worn properly (i.e. shoelaces must be tied) is not acceptable. The final decision for appropriate or inappropriate footwear is solely determined by the Dean of Students Office.

Socks must be worn at all times. “No show” socks are not allowed. ***Students who fail to wear socks will be required to purchase socks from the Dean’s Office for \$2.***

## Outerwear

All non STH outerwear is to be with minimal logos and branding as determined by the Dean. Students may also wear official STH outerwear.

## Hats

No hats, caps or head coverings may be worn on the school campus during the school day, **Hoodies may not be pulled up and worn over the head at any time during the school day, including in the classrooms.** Caps may be worn at athletic events on campus.

## Hair and Facial Hair

At all times, a student’s hair must be neat, clean, well groomed and remain its natural color. As a general rule – hair should be **ABOVE** the bottom of the ear lobes, not lower than the **TOP** of dress collars or **BELOW** the bottom of the eyebrows. **Hair should not obscure a student’s face.** Hairstyles that result in lengths over the eyebrows and/or bottom of the ear lobes are not allowed. Students not in compliance will be given a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the Dean’s office to get a haircut and return to compliance.

Hairstyles that are a result of fads are inappropriate at St. Thomas, including “Mohawks”, mullets, fades or styles with patterns or designs shaved into the hair. This includes co-curricular organizations. Students may not wear braids or dreadlocks outside the parameters of the existing code. Students may not use ties, clips, barrettes, rubber bands or headbands to keep hair in compliance.

Sideburns are to be moderate and may not extend below the bottom of the ear lobe.

Facial hair of any kind, including a beard or mustache, is not allowed. Students who are required to shave will be asked to pay fines ranging from \$1 to \$5.

### **Body Piercing and Tattoos**

Body piercing of any type is prohibited. Tattoos may not be exposed at school.

### **Jewelry**

Expensive jewelry should not be worn to school. Earrings are not allowed to be worn at school or school events.

### **Mass/Special Assembly Dress**

Mass dress consists of tan khaki “Docker” style pants, a solid white dress shirt, a tie that has red as its dominant color (any STH team/activity tie is allowed) and a navy blue blazer or STH red blazer with crest. Navy blue blazers or the STH red blazer with crest are the only outerwear permitted on Mass/Special Assembly Dress days. Hoodies and other coats/jackets are not to be worn in school, Mass or special assemblies on those days.

### **Activity Day/Dress Down Days**

For days designated by the administration as spirit or dress down days, the dress code is as follows: dress should consist of Khaki “Docker style” shorts, khaki pants, or blue jeans (non-distressed – no tears or fraying), belt, socks and athletic shoes. Students may wear their team or club identifying shirt, jersey (jerseys must have t-shirts underneath), official STH t-shirt, or Hawaiian shirt.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Students Rights and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the student, the school and parents to create a social climate within the St. Thomas community that is conducive to the exercise of self-respect and respect for others and their property. St. Thomas desires an atmosphere of courtesy, honesty and pride in one’s own work and achievement within one’s ability.

When corrective measures are required, they will be flexible enough to allow for individual differences among students and situations. However, the welfare of the community (the common good) is paramount and continuing. When exhaustive efforts by the school to help an individual do not produce an acceptable response, the student will be asked to withdraw or be expelled.

Whether any corrective measures, including, without limitation, any detention or other disciplinary action, shall be taken in any circumstance, and the degree of those corrective measures, shall be decided at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

When a student feels that his rights as an individual are infringed upon, his recourse will be decided through consultation with his parents, the Principal and the Dean of Students.

## **Detention**

*The penalty for ordinary rule infraction is detention before school. Daily detentions are scheduled at 7:10 a.m.* Special detentions for major infractions or for excessive number of regular detentions will usually be given on Saturdays or by other service detentions not considered a part of the standard school day, including Round-Up holidays.

Students will be notified of assigned detentions through their STH email account. All detentions are to be served on the day assigned by the Dean's Office. The only exceptions, which must be approved ahead of time by the Dean's Office are...

1. doctor's appointments which must be verified by the doctor's office
2. participation in a game sponsored by the Athletic Department (not intramurals) or
3. special tutoring sessions confirmed by the teacher

An additional detention may be assigned for failure to report for any assigned detention. Exceptions are not to be presumed by the student. The student must have permission from the Dean of Students office before missing a detention.

## **Probation**

Students placed on probation must sign a contract with both parent and student signatures and adhere to the terms set by St. Thomas in the contract. Failure to adhere to the terms of the contract may result in further disciplinary action determined by the Dean of Students such as, but not limited to, multiple Saturday or other service detentions, suspension, or expulsion.

## **Suspension**

When a student continues to violate the regulations or has serious infractions of the rules, the student may be suspended from school. There are two types of suspensions, internal and external. When a student has been suspended, the school will notify his parents or guardian. Suspended students are not to attend classes and are not to participate in or attend any school events on days of suspension. An internal suspension will be served in the Dean's office. The student will be allowed to do any work for that day of school as supplied by the teachers, but will stay in the Dean's office from 7:50 – 3:10, including lunch. An external suspension is assigned when, in the judgment of the Dean's Office, the student should be temporarily separated from the other students. Students serving external suspensions may receive credit for their work. Teachers must allow a student to make up any classwork, quizzes, or tests missed during the suspension period. Homework assignments must be submitted the day the student returns. Quizzes and tests missed should be taken on the return date unless new material was covered or a review was given on a day of suspension. In this case, the student should take the quiz or test on the day after their return to school.

## Unacceptable Behaviors

Maturity is an on-going process of life. Students are expected to accept responsibility, to grow in character, to respond to advice and suggestions and to learn not to see themselves as exceptions to regulations which protect mutual freedoms. The following are unacceptable behaviors:

1. Harassment of any kind including but not limited to, violent, defamatory, harassing, demeaning, sexual, threats, and including direct or indirect violent or terrorist threats against persons or property, or knowledge thereof. This includes harassment done but not limited to in person, social media, electronic transmission, spoken or written, through third parties, on or off campus at any time.
2. Sexual harassment or sexual misconduct
3. Possession of sexually explicit material of any kind.
4. Deliberately setting off a fire alarm
5. Unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct, by St. Thomas student, whether it be on campus or away -- the students are representing St. Thomas
6. Possession or use of any tobacco/nicotine or tobacco/nicotine products, including but not limited to eCigs, vaping devices, and paraphernalia is not permitted on campus at any time or off campus event.
7. Unauthorized or misuse of electronic devices or internet/social media as per the handbook
8. Destruction, vandalism, or breaking and entering of school, neighborhood, or another person's property. Restitution may be required
9. Leaving campus without permission or failure to check with the Dean of Students Office after the first period of the day begins.
10. Recording devices are not allowed unless authorized by a teacher.
11. Cheating in any form is a serious matter, and will be punished by academic sanctions and disciplinary consequences. The determination that cheating has taken place is left solely to the discretion of the teacher and the Dean of Students Office. No academic honors will be awarded to those who cheat.
12. Study aides, or any outside material including but not limited to internet sourced materials are not to be used without explicit permission from the teacher.
13. Food and drinks are not allowed in the buildings with the exceptions of a cafeteria and student center without the explicit permission from the Dean of Students Office.
14. Open defiance of school authority or disrespect to/of any faculty, staff, chaperone or administration member in word (spoken, written or electronic) or action.
15. Stealing, including possession of stolen articles and aiding or abetting any theft.
16. Truancy from school or skipping one or more classes.
17. Disruption of the learning environment by participating or engaging in any activity that interferes with normal instructional activity. Determination of what is a disruptive activity is at the sole discretion of the teacher.
18. Assault or fighting, or possession of items judged by the administration to be weapons or reasonable facsimile thereof on or off campus.
19. Any inappropriate language, spoken, written, or electronic form, that is offensive to the values of St. Thomas High School or any language that demeans the dignity of any student or staff member. This would include the tone, as well as the content of any statement and would be language any reasonable person would consider offensive. This also includes students who are offended by the use of inappropriate language from a faculty or staff member.

***Any action or behavior, on or off-campus, during or outside of school hours, that is inconsistent with the mission and values of St. Thomas High School is unacceptable.***

***Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to the above behaviors. Final decisions of unacceptable behavior and resulting consequences are determined by the Dean of Students Office.***

**Note:** Law enforcement may be involved for any criminal activity on or off campus. The determination of severity of consequences will be at the sole determination of the Dean of Students Office.

## **Consequences**

Violations of the aforementioned unacceptable behaviors may be dealt with in the following manner:

1. Detention(s)
2. Saturday or other service detentions
3. Disciplinary probation contracts
4. Loss of extra-curricular privileges
5. Suspension
6. Expulsion

## **Outside Evaluation and Treatment**

In some cases, as a result of a student's behavior, St. Thomas High School may require evaluations by outside mental health professionals designated by St. Thomas High School. Parents must set up the initial evaluation in the timetable determined by St. Thomas. Parents and students must sign consent to release information with the designated professionals so the recommendations from the evaluations and updates regarding progress and completion can be reported by the professional to the school's administration so that decisions regarding the student's future enrollment or possible conditions for continuing enrollment at St. Thomas will be determined. The information obtained by the school as a result of these evaluations will not be part of the student's academic file. In the event that a treatment program is recommended by the professional, the administration will require certification of the completion of the treatment program for continuing enrollment. In some cases, the student may be suspended until the evaluation and the resulting consultation with St. Thomas is completed. The parents/guardians will be responsible for all charges associated with the evaluation and possible treatment program. Failure to agree to and comply with the above conditions may result in the immediate dismissal of the student from St. Thomas.

## **Appeal Process**

In the case of expulsion, a student's parent or guardian may appeal to the Principal only if they have new evidence to present, or at the discretion of the Principal.

## **Faculty and Academic Support Staff Disciplinary Review**

Each semester the faculty and academic support staff assemble to evaluate the behavior of each student. These evaluations are directed to the Administration for determination of a student's continuance at St. Thomas.

## **Academic Honesty Policies**

Using unauthorized notes, texts, study aids, calculators, "cheat sheets" or other like information, printed or electronic, as identified as unauthorized by the teacher for specific assignments, quizzes, tests, or projects.

Giving or receiving information or observing the work of another student during a Final Exam will result in the student receiving a "0" on the Final Exam.

Students who violate the classroom testing policy will face the same consequences as an "Academic Honesty" violation. This includes the use of a cell phone for any reason or having a phone on one's person during a test or examination before the entire class has completed testing.

Students found to be wearing a smartwatch, camera pen or other electronic device on their person will also be subject to penalties and consequences.

All of the following are instances of academic dishonesty at St. Thomas High School. Academic dishonesty in any form, on any assignment, is a serious matter, and the determination of instances of academic dishonesty and resulting academic and/or disciplinary action are at the sole discretion of the teacher and the Dean of Students Office.

1. Using unauthorized notes, texts, study aids, calculators, "cheat sheets" or electronic based information, as identified as unauthorized by the teacher; giving or receiving information or observing the work of another student during a classroom exam or quiz
2. Staying in class while a teacher discusses a test that you have not taken and not reminding the teacher you have not taken the test
3. Altering a graded work assignment or altering graded work after it has been returned and then submitting it for re-grading
4. Allowing another person to do one's work and then submitting it under one's own name
5. Submitting identical or similar papers in two different classes for credit
6. Telling someone who has not yet taken a test or quiz what is on the test or quiz
7. Asking someone who has already taken a test or quiz what is on the test or quiz
8. In a foreign language, using a "translation engine", either purchased software or a translation Web site or using an English translation of a work
9. Acquiring answers for any work or examination from any unauthorized source, as identified as unauthorized by the teacher
10. Copying homework or class work or allowing a student to copy your homework or class work, regardless of either party's intention. Sharing or showing your work to another student who has had or has the same assignment.
11. Agreeing with any person to commit any act of scholastic dishonesty

12. Submitting material that is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source
13. Using the ideas of another without crediting the source or paraphrasing sentences or phrases written by another without crediting the source
14. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from any other source including the Internet
15. Using the Internet as a source of material for essays, reports, or projects and not crediting the Web site
16. Falsifying or inventing any information, data or citations
17. Stealing, reproducing, circulating or gaining access to examination materials, either classroom exams or final exams
18. Stealing, retaining, possessing, using or circulating previously given examination materials, either classroom exams or final exams, without specific authorization of the teacher
19. Failure to complete an assignment individually. Students should assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless their teacher explicitly authorizes otherwise.
20. Using Cliff's Notes or similar published study guides or guides available on the Internet and not reading a literary work
21. Skipping a class to avoid any academic activity
22. Signing another's name to a document, including but not limited to, a Progress Report
23. Providing false information or failing to cooperate in any inquiry regarding academic dishonesty
24. Copying or altering computer files that are not one's personal property is stealing and vandalism
25. Purchasing or selling review sheets for final examinations.

Honest students are troubled when they see instances of cheating. Students often witness behavior that is not observed by a teacher. Academic honesty is jeopardized and class grades may be affected. Students should discuss concerns with their teachers. Students may help other students by warning them that cheating is a violation of STHS principles and policies. Seeing or observing another student engage in any act of academic dishonesty and not reporting this act imperils academic integrity and is considered a conduct violation because it is behavior inconsistent with the mission and values of St. Thomas High School.

## **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE POLICY**

**The purpose of this program is to...**

- provide for the health and safety of all students,
- undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for students to refuse to use controlled substances
- Encourage students who use controlled substances to participate in appropriate treatment programs.

### **Consent**

As a condition of enrollment in the school, students and parent/guardian(s) have consented to drug,

alcohol and nicotine testing of the student. There is no possibility for any particular student to “opt out” of the testing program.

The following rules concerning controlled substances apply

1. No student may provide, by sale or otherwise, any substance which is actually or he represents to be a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, (synthetic) marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, “bath salts,” nicotine product or intoxicant of any kind to another student. Providing controlled substances for others whether cash or a similar reciprocal exchange or for no charge is grounds for immediate expulsion from St. Thomas. **This will result in the student being expelled.**
2. No student may possess or use any substance which the student has reason to believe is, or which has been represented to him as a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, nicotine product or intoxicant of any kind.
3. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or being under the influence of caffeine-based pills or substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA) without a prescription.
4. Violation of numbers 2 or 3 may result in expulsion.

Depending on the nature of the violation, the Administration will offer the parents and the student the option of withdrawal or participation in evaluation and counseling. An initial evaluation session must be arranged by the parent and student with a substance abuse agency counselor designated by St. Thomas within the specified time frame determined by St. Thomas.

Once the results of the evaluation are received by the Administration from the approved agency, an administrative decision will be made based on the recommendations. The student and parents will be informed of the decision requiring withdrawal, or permitting continued enrollment with counseling approved by St. Thomas.

If the decision is to retain the student based on the evaluation, the student will participate in and complete any and all recommended services. It is understood and agreed by the student and parents that the student’s and parents’ full cooperation is required.

As a deterrent to the possession of controlled substances, contraband dogs will periodically perform unannounced searches.

## **ALCOHOL**

1. During dances random alcohol testing will be conducted
2. Alcohol testing can be done at any time during school or any STH activity if the student appears to be under the influence

## **NICOTINE**

### **Vaping and e-Cigs:**



1. Along with tobacco products, vaping devices, vaping materials, and e-Cigs are considered controlled substances. The use of these devices is highly addictive and often leads to the vaping of illegal drugs. Vaping devices themselves are dangerous as potentially explosive.

2. Any student found using or in possession of an e-Cig, any vaping apparatus, accessory or product will be subjected to both a nicotine and a drug test and face further consequences in accordance with the STH controlled substance policy.

## **DRUG AND NICOTINE TESTING PROCEDURES**

### **Testing**

All students are included in our random testing and may be tested at any time. Tests are conducted by the Dean of Students Office. Samples are tested off-site by Omega Laboratories.

In addition, a student must submit to an immediate and/or non-random test if (a) the student has tested positive at any time in their time at St. Thomas or (b) there is reasonable suspicion, which is defined as sufficient reasons or basis in fact to give rise to a reasonable belief that the student may have drugs or nicotine in her/his system. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, among other things...

- conduct that indicates the presence of drugs or nicotine in an individual's system, including affected behavior, speech and/or body odors
- other circumstances that would indicate that an individual is in other than a sober and reliable state
- behavior on the part of the student that puts the school in the position to determine the cause of said behavior
- reliable information of behaviors or activities after a thorough vetting of the source by the Dean of Students Office

### **Student Selection**

On days determined by the Dean of Students and/or his designee/s, students will be randomly selected. The Dean of Students Office will gather the selected students to provide samples for screening purposes. Samples will be collected at the time the student is brought to the office for testing. If the student is absent or otherwise unable to provide a sample at the specified time, he shall provide a sample at the discretion of the Dean of Students office. Parents will be notified of the results of all tests.

**A student or parent of a student selected who refuses to submit to a test and/or re-test will be dismissed from St. Thomas High School.**

### **Scope of Tests**

St. Thomas High School utilizes the services of Omega Laboratory Services Inc. for oral fluids and/or hair analysis to determine the presence various controlled substances including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine, benzodiazepines, methamphetamines, methadone,

ecstasy (MDMA), OxyContin and barbiturates or nicotine.

## **Types of Tests**

At the discretion of the Dean of Students Office and/or his designee/s, the student is subject to random testing, reasonable cause/reasonable suspicion testing, or follow up testing using a hair test, a saliva test or both. In the event that a hair test is done, up to 1.5 inches of hair will be collected and tested, which represents approximately a 90-day window of detection. If a sufficient amount of hair from the crown of the head is not available, then alternative hair may be collected and used for testing. If oral fluid tests are conducted, the saliva specimens will be provided by the student in the prescribed manner.

## **Drug Testing and Consequences**

The test screen will determine if a number of controlled substances are present in either the hair or oral sample, including but not limited to: marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine, benzodiazepines, methamphetamines, methadone, ecstasy (MDMA), OxyContin, barbiturates, or nicotine. Those students who are legally taking medicines prescribed by their physicians will not face consequences beyond parental notification.

## **Consequences for Positive Drug Test Results**

### **First Positive for drugs:**

1. If not already performed, a nicotine test will be administered,
2. The Dean's Office will conference with the parents,,
3. The student will undergo an assessment by the The Council on Recovery. The student will undergo an assessment at the Council for Recovery. The student or his parents must make an appointment for an assessment with the program by the date given by the Dean's Office. Parents must sign a release of information allowing St. Thomas to be kept fully informed of the progress of the student in the prescribed program. Further, the student and parents must sign an agreement that both student and parents will comply with the prescribed program of treatment. A certificate of completion from the program must be received by St. Thomas in order for the student to remain at St. Thomas. Parents will be responsible for any charges associated with the prescribed program of treatment. If a family's financial situation may need to be considered, the parent must let The Council on Recovery know **before** the evaluation for possible consideration of financial assistance.
4. The student and his parents must comply with and follow all the requirements of the Council and successfully complete any treatment program that is designated by St. Thomas
5. The student may have possible suspension from extra-curricular activities. Suspension and length of which will be determined by the Dean of Students Office..
6. All of the above will be included in a behavior contract written and provided by the Dean's Office.

**Second Positive** student shall be dismissed from St. Thomas High School.

## **Nicotine Testing and Consequences**

Students are also chosen at random, for reasonable cause or follow up for nicotine testing. If the result of a first nicotine test is positive, the following protocol will apply. Please note that the consequences for follow-up positive nicotine tests are also stated.

**First Positive for Nicotine:**

1. If not already performed, a drug test will be administered.
2. The Dean's Office will conference with the parents,,
3. The student will undergo an assessment by the The Council on Recovery. The student will undergo an assessment at the Council for Recovery. The student or his parents must make an appointment for an assessment with the program by the date given by the Dean's Office. Parents must sign a release of information allowing St. Thomas to be kept fully informed of the progress of the student in the prescribed program. Further, the student and parents must sign an agreement that both student and parents will comply with the prescribed program of treatment. A certificate of completion from the program must be received by St. Thomas in order for the student to remain at St. Thomas. Parents will be responsible for any charges associated with the prescribed program of treatment. If a family's financial situation may need to be considered, the parent must let The Council on Recovery know **before** the evaluation for possible consideration of financial assistance.
4. The student and his parents must comply with and follow all the requirements of the Council and successfully complete any treatment program that is designated by St. Thomas
5. All of the above will be included in a behavior contract written and provided by the Dean's Office.

**Second Positive for Nicotine:**

The student will repeat all consequences for the first positive test. In addition, at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office, one or more of the following consequences may be applied:

1. Additional behavior contract.
2. The student may have possible suspension from extra-curricular activities. Suspension and length of which will be determined by the Dean of Students Office..
3. Assignment of service hours for the benefit of the school.

**Third Positive for Nicotine:**

Parents of the student will be asked to withdraw the student. If the parent chooses not to withdraw the student, the student will be expelled. Any consequence for a third positive for nicotine may be appealed to the principal. If a student is withdrawn, reapplication at a later date may be considered.

**Non-Punitive Nature of Policy**

No student will be penalized academically for a positive controlled substances test. The results of tests pursuant to this policy are considered confidential information and will not be documented in any student's academic records. Information regarding results of tests will not be disclosed to criminal or juvenile authorities except in cases of legal compulsion by subpoena or other legal process.

**Positive Non-Random Test Results in Connection with School Events**

The forgoing "Consequences for Positive Test Results" and "Non-Punitive Nature of Policy" may not apply

to any student who tests positive in any drug test taken in connection with suspected use of drugs, alcohol, nicotine or other controlled substance at, during or in connection with any school activity or event. Any student who tests positive under such circumstances shall be suspended and referred to the administration for further disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the school.

### **Improper Attempts to Avoid Detection**

Any student who attempts to avoid detection of a drug, alcohol, nicotine or other controlled substance use through the use of a masking agent or other act of deception, may be deemed to have tested positive and be subject to additional discipline, including possible dismissal from the school.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

### **Al-Anon**

10120 N.W. Fwy, #242  
713-683-7227

### **Child Abuse Hotline**

1-800-252-5400

### **Children's Protective Services**

4040 Milam  
713-626-5701

### **Community of Concern**

[www.communitiesofconcern.org](http://www.communitiesofconcern.org)

### **Cornerstone Recovery**

[www.cornerstonerecovery.org](http://www.cornerstonerecovery.org)

### **Crisis Hotline**

713-228-1505

### **Eating Disorders**

#### **Inter Group Association**

4140 Director's Row  
713-686-6300

### **Family Service Centers**

4635 Lillian  
713-861-4849

### **Houston Council on Recovery**

303 Jackson Hill  
281-200-9380

### **Parents Anonymous**

4625 Lillian  
713-802-7701

### **St. Joseph Mental Health Center**

1404 Calhoun  
713-757-7507

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **Advancement and Alumni Office**

This office has charge of alumni relations, communications and fund-raising for operations, capital improvements, endowments and scholarships. The office coordinates the activities for the Mothers' Club, the Alumni Association, and publishes the school's website, parent and community newsletters, and the *Eagles Nest*, 3x a year community magazine.

### **St. Thomas High School Foundation**

St. Thomas receives bequests, trusts, etc. to support the school through long-range investments managed by its Board.

### **Alumni Association**

This organization sponsors activities for alumni to remain in contact with the school and provide an on-going spirit of support for all school activities.

### **Mothers' Club**

This organization provides innumerable auxiliary services to the school. The Mothers' Club provides chairs and volunteers for the annual Auction, Round Up and Style Show which help raise funds for operating expenses and student financial aid.

### **Booster Club**

This organization supports all sport activities through fund-raising functions and strengthens the athletic program through financial contributions and moral support.

### **Music Guild**

This organization, composed of parents of music students, supports the music program through fund-raising activities.

### **Tom's Moms**

This organization offers an opportunity for mothers of alumni to stay in touch with the activities, spirit and development of the school.

## **PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING COLLEGE ADMISSION APPLICATIONS**

### **Naviance**

St. Thomas High School offers the Naviance program for students to use for college and career planning. Naviance is accessible from the main St. Thomas web page ([www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)) under the Students tab at the top. Families receive their log-in information early in the freshman year during Freshmen Parent Night and will continue to have access until graduation. Both students and parents are encouraged to set up accounts.

Freshmen utilize the Naviance program to determine their unique learning style as well as to begin building their resume. Sophomores take several assessments to learn more about their personality style, interests, and possible career paths. Juniors will research college majors and other college information to create their initial list of colleges for further exploration. In the Senior year, students use Naviance to track their college applications and request transcripts. Information about the college planning process can be found on the welcome page of Naviance with additional resources located on the Counseling webpage.

The STHS counseling staff uses Naviance to monitor student progress in college planning and also to submit letters of recommendation and transcripts electronically. It is recommended that students submit their applications online. Students can save time by applying to multiple schools through the Common Application ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)) or through the Apply Texas Application ([www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)). For schools that are not part of either of these two programs, students may access an online application directly through that school's Web site. In addition, counselors use the email component of Naviance to contact parents and students so regular access of your account is encouraged.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

**St. Thomas provides the following accommodations:**

1. Preferential seating
2. Note-taking assistance
3. Extended time (up to 50%) for quizzes, LAP tests and semester exams
4. Learning Ally use for audio books
5. Computer use for essay portions of tests

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Freshmen students will automatically have extended time arranged for them by their teachers. If they wish to opt out of automatic extended time for a certain subject, their parents may make this request through the LEC. Students will still be able to request extended time for any test.

Upperclassmen students are responsible for requesting the use of their extended time accommodation and computer use for essays from their teachers at least two school days before a quiz or test. Additionally, the students must make use of the extended time on the same day as the assessment in the testing room.

**For Current STHS students who already have a diagnosis that qualifies them for the above accommodations, families must provide the LEC with:**

- Current (less than 36 months old) Psycho-Educational testing report with diagnosis and recommendations for accommodations
- Middle School IEP on school letterhead
- ARD paperwork including testing information, diagnosis, and testing data

**For Current STHS students seeking accommodations for the first time:**

- Contact the LEC staff to set up a meeting with your son to discuss his learning differences.
- Meet with a member of the LEC staff to discuss and receive learning intervention strategies to implement before formal testing.
- Schedule psycho-educational testing with a testing provider.
- Bring or send a copy of the diagnostic report to the LEC staff. The LEC staff will meet and discuss:
  - o Academic Need – based on past and present classroom performance
  - o Outcome of intervention strategies
  - o Testing Report
  - o Parents and students will be notified of the committee decision.

In order to receive accommodations in both of the above cases, documentation must include cognitive ability testing, academic achievement testing, and a specific diagnosis. The testing may also include (but is not required unless it pertains to the noted disability) a neurological evaluation, a psychiatric evaluation and/or a medical evaluation. This information needs to be in the form of a report from an appropriate testing professional such as a psychologist or neurologist. The report should include a test results, a specific diagnosis, and recommendations for accommodations.

For a list of St. Thomas approved psycho-educational testing facilities, please contact the Director of the Learning Enrichment Center of St. Thomas.

## **ALCOHOL AND ADULT LIABILITY**

**Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on campus  
without written permission from the  
STH Administration.**

The following information has been provided by the Harris County District Attorney's Office regarding alcohol and adult liability:

1. Alcohol consumption by anyone under 21 is against the law in the state of Texas.
2. Possession of alcoholic beverages by anyone under 21 is against the law in the State of Texas. Punishment – fine up to \$200.
3. For anyone other than a parent to furnish alcohol to a person under 21 is against the law in the state of Texas. A spouse who is over 21 can furnish alcohol to his/her wife/husband who is under 21 if in the presence of each other.
4. A parent furnishing alcohol to his/her own child under 21, if that parent is not visibly present, is against the law in the state of Texas. Punishment – fine up to \$500.
5. Certain areas of Houston and the state of Texas are “dry.” For anyone to possess alcohol with intent to distribute in a dry area is against the law in the state of Texas. Possession of more than one quart is evidence of intent to distribute or sell. Punishment – up to one year in jail and fine of \$1,000.
6. For anyone under 21 years of age to state he/she is 21 years of age or present a document indicating he/she is 21 years of age when in truth he/she is under 21 years of age is against the law in the state of Texas. Punishment – fine up to \$500.
7. For anyone, regardless of age, to drive or operate a motor vehicle in a public place while intoxicated (blood-alcohol content of more than .08 or if his/her mental or physical faculties are impaired) is against the law in the state of Texas. Punishment – not less than three (3) days in jail, fine up to \$2,000 and the loss of driver's license for 12 months for first offense.
8. For anyone, regardless of age, to be intoxicated (loss of normal mental and physical faculties) in a public place is against the law in the state of Texas. Punishment - fine

**For the school calendar go to [www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)**

**For the school bell schedule, go to  
[www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org) and click on “student life.”**