2026-2027
Parent-Student Handbook

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

July 2026

Welcome to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School. We are looking forward to working with all of your children during this school year!

Please use this handbook as a guide to assist you with all the policies and procedures that are an integral part of St. Thomas the Apostle School. All of the Diocesan policies and regulations are not included in this handbook. We have included the ones that the Diocese says for us to include, but some of them may not be included, so if you need more clarification or the complete policy, you can go to the Diocesan website at diojeffcity.org to see the complete Diocesan manual for Catholic Schools. Understanding these policies and procedures will help to make this an incredible experience for you and your children as we go through the school year.

Please remember that this document is a guide, and there may be other things that come up during the school year that will be used for more guidance and direction. Thanks for your understanding!

We are very excited to be working with your children during this 2026-2027 school year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Leroy Heckemeyer
Principal

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School
2026-2027

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Bishop of the Diocese of Jefferson City – Most Reverand Bishop Ralph B. O'Donnell
Superintendent of Catholic Schools……Mrs. Kathryn Coulson, Interim

Faculty & Staff

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EDP Director – Ms. Kristin Morris
Art – Mrs. Doris Lehmen (3-8) & Mrs. Linda Boessen (K-2)
Music – Mrs. Judy Schroeder
Technology - Mrs. Theresa Veit
Cook – Mrs. Brenda Heckman
Cook's Aide – Mrs. Peggy Volmert

Parish School Advisory Council

President – Brett Volmert
Members: Fr. Leonard Mukiibi, Mr. Leroy Heckemeyer,
Ryan Wieberg, Amanda Wooten, Kara Holterman and Melissa Verslues, Katie Luebbering

Home & School

President……Katelyn Otto
Vice President……Ashlie Otto
Secretary…. Madison VanderFeltz
Treasurer – Connie Sandbothe

Mascot……. Eagles

School Colors……Blue & Silver

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Parent –Teacher Covenant

St. Thomas the Apostle School relies on the good faith and the sincere efforts of everyone in the school community to keep a collaborative spirit. Active and open communication is essential to the successful operation of our school. The greater the communication, the more successful the school in defining and achieving goals for our students. Parents are encouraged to communicate on an individual basis with teachers, Fr. Mukiibi & Mr. Heckemeyer. Parents desiring to discuss any aspect of their children's spiritual, academic, and social development may either call the school office or send a note/email to the school requesting a phone conference or meeting. The principal or teachers may initiate such communication themselves if they feel it is necessary.

All teachers will communicate regularly with parents through classroom newsletters or other communication vehicles. A principal's e-newsletter will be distributed as needed informing parents about upcoming activities and school news. Including their email address on enrollment paperwork will register parents for this e-newsletter unless it is indicated otherwise.

Parents and students are given the opportunity to meet with teachers at scheduled conferences to discuss children's progress. It is essential that parents and students, when applicable, attend these conferences. While school is in session a previous agreement between the teacher and parent as to a suitable meeting time is imperative. Teachers are responsible for classroom preparations, instruction, before and after school duties, and attending meetings for which they cannot be delayed or negligent in attendance.

Communications

Communications Folders

An updated calendar will be sent home at the beginning of each month. Parents are to check their child's book bag daily for school communications and read and return forms in the folder as necessary. All money is to be sent to school in a sealed envelope with the student's name, grade and item being paid for marked on it.

Phone Calls and Messages

The school secretary will transfer parents to teachers' voicemail so that parents may leave messages. Teachers are not to be disturbed during school hours without an appointment. Office personnel will take all messages or items for students to classrooms. Students are not to use the phone except in emergencies. It is the responsibility of the students to be prepared for school with books, assignments and other activities. Phone calls for these are discouraged.

Visitors

All visitors are required to check in with the office.

Parish School Advisory Council

The St. Thomas the Apostle School Advisory Council consists of a minimum of five members. Those members are elected from the parish; the other two are ex-officio members, the pastor and the principal. The Parish School Advisory Council is a consultative body, advisory to the pastor and school principal. Meetings are scheduled bi-monthly. To request to be included on the agenda, a parent must notify the Council president two weeks prior to a meeting. The board president and principal or pastor reserves the right to approve or disapprove the request.

Home and School

The Home and School Association is the supporting organization of parents and teachers. Meetings are held three times a year and are meant to be informative and helpful to parents and teachers as they work together to benefit the students. Members work to raise funds for the improvement of the school and provide assistance as volunteers in many needed ways.

Volunteers

Any volunteer working with or around the children of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School will be required to go through the Virtus training program mandated by the Diocese.

Core Curriculum

The course study for all grades at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School shall include religion, mathematics, reading, social studies, science, language arts, computers, music, art, and physical education. The curriculum shall meet the requirements of both the State of Missouri and Diocese of Jefferson City.

Mission Statement of St. Thomas the Apostle School

St. Thomas the Apostle School students, with God's help, will learn and grow with a Catholic spirit.

Philosophy of St. Thomas the Apostle School

St. Thomas the Apostle School, which embraces God as its center, will instill in each child the values, knowledge, beliefs and attitudes that will help them live a Catholic, faith-filled life. In the caring climate of the school, home and community, students will learn to show compassion for self and others, develop a life-long love of learning, grow to their fullest potential and share their God-given talents.

OBJECTIVES

St. Thomas the Apostle School is a Catholic, Christian community of people who care about each other and contribute to the growth of each member; therefore…

THE STUDENT is responsible for:

1. Being courteous toward all others, never being disrespectful in word or action, or by disrupting an activity or causing harm to another person or to property.
2. Being prompt for all classes and activities.
3. Being prepared with supplies and assignments.
4. Being where he/she belongs in the classroom, cafeteria or playground.

THE TEACHER is responsible for:

1. Establishing a learning atmosphere that encourages proper behavior by students and gives each one full opportunity to pursue his/her learning without disruption.
2. Establishing classroom procedures which are clear and workable.
3. Communicating with students, parents and principal regarding student successes and difficulties in both learning and conduct.
4. Expecting excellence from students, both in studies and behavior.

THE PARENT is responsible for:

1. Reviewing school regulations with children to ensure that all are familiar with and understand the expected standards.
2. Cooperating with school personnel in carrying out school regulations in a spirit of concern for the community.
3. Reinforcing at home children's study habits and behavior in building intrinsic motivation and self -discipline.
4. Communicating with a teacher or the principal regarding student concerns.

Confidentiality

DSP 5260

STUDENTS: Confidentiality

Rather than strict confidentiality in regard to student-school employee communication (verbal and written), the schools in the Diocese of Jefferson City operate under a "spirit of confidentiality." This means that outside of the seal of confession between priest and penitent, strict confidentiality cannot be promised to the student if the information disclosed by the student includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Information that concerns violation of the law;
2. Matters involving the health and safety of the student or any person;
3. Serious moral issues;
4. Any other matter that raises serious enough concern in the mind of the employee that he or she believes it is important to share the information with school administrator.

The school administrator/principal, after consultation with the Catholic School Office, may choose to disclose the information to parents, legal authorities, medical personnel or other deemed necessary personnel.

ADMISSIONS

Admission to St. Thomas the Apostle School will be open to Catholics as well as non-Catholics; however, if admissions will be limited due to space requirements, the following order will normally be followed in admitting students.

1. Children of parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle.
2. Children of St. Thomas the Apostle school families.
3. Catholic children from parishes other than St. Thomas the Apostle.
4. Non-Catholic children of the community of St. Thomas.
5. Non-Catholic children from communities other than St. Thomas.

No tuition will be charged for students of parishioners who actively support St. Thomas the Apostle Church. An annual tuition of $4500 per child will be assessed for non-Catholic students. The local Pastor will work with the Catholic families and those Pastors who are members of another parish on their fee.

An annual sustaining fee will be assessed to all students. Students will buy their own supplies. (These supply lists are issued with the family folders before school begins in the fall.)

The pastor of St. Thomas will be available for consultation to discuss the financial situation of individual families who do not reasonably feel that they are able to meet the financial guidelines established. The pastor on an individual basis will review each situation.

Kindergarten: Children will be five (5) years before August 1st.

If warranted, student placement will be based on records received and additional screening.

Enrollment & Attendance

DSP 5101

STUDENTS: Non-Discrimination

Every Catholic school in the Diocese of Jefferson City respects the dignity of each individual and, therefore, will not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, sex, or any other basis that is prohibited by law, in regard to enrollment.

DSP 5701

STUDENTS: Students with Special Needs

If a student with special needs (categorized such as EMR (Educable Mentally Retarded), EEN (exceptional educational needs), or other similar classification, or having a serious physical disability) applies for admission and/or is in need of special placement and admission is going to be denied, or a current student is being asked to withdraw, or being referred to another school, the administrator is to immediately consult the superintendent of Catholic schools so that all necessary accommodations can be made in order to meet the needs of the student and to help make a judgment as to whether or not, indeed, that is possible. Whenever possible, accommodations are to be made to meet the total needs of the student. A review committee can be convened by the Catholic School Office, if deemed necessary, before a final decision is made. The review committee can include, but not be limited to, the superintendent of Catholic schools and/or associate superintendent of schools, the local administrator(s), parent representative, counselor, pastor, and other designated professionals. It will be the purpose of the review committee to help the school make a local decision. This review committee can also be convened or reconvened by the superintendent of Catholic schools or associate superintendent, if deemed beneficial, when a parent disagrees with a local school decision.

DSP 6235

INSTRUCTION: Non-Catholic Student Participation

Non-Catholic students enrolled in a Catholic school are required to participate to the same extent in all school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) and courses of study as Catholic students, provided such activity is permitted by Catholic Church law.

SCHOOL HOURS

Students may not arrive at school before 7:15 a.m. unless they sign up/pay for early morning care from 6:30-7:00 am. School will begin at 7:30 a.m. The students will be attending Mass Tuesday through Friday at 7:45 a.m. Lunch count and roll will be taken after Mass. School is dismissed at 3:10 PM for car riders and 3:20 PM for bus riders.

If parents are picking up children early or for an appointment, parents must come into the school and sign children out at the school office. The school secretary or principal will bring your child to meet you at the school office.

We cannot supervise children in the school office before or after 3:20 p.m. Children will go to daycare at 3:25 and will be assessed a minimum one-day charge for any part of an hour. Any child not picked up from daycare by the 5:00 p.m. closing time will be charged $1.00 per child per minute until the child is picked up.

Students not picked up within five (5) minutes of early dismissal days will be required to go to daycare. Fees will apply.

Absence and Tardiness

ATTENDANCE

When a student must be absent, the school office is to be notified before 7:30a.m. When the student returns to school, an excuse form signed by the parent must be sent. Prolonged or repeated absences may justify the withholding of the quarterly report card if the missed work has not been completed.

When a student is absent or tardy he/she must make up missed work. A child who arrives late or leaves early for a medical appointment are marked tardy if the child is not absent for more than two hours. For a child who arrives late/leaves early, he/she must report to the office for the parent to sign him/her in or out.

Tardy – A student is tardy when arriving after 7:30 a.m. Any student who is absent for less than two hours (AM: 7:30 – 11:30 or PM: 11:30 – 3:20) will be considered tardy. Any student that is tardy must be signed in at the office by their parent for admittance to class.

Absent: After any two-hour absence (AM or PM), the student is absent for one-half day. After any four-hour absence from classroom instructional time, the student is marked absent (1) full day.

DSP 5210

STUDENTS: Absence and Tardiness

A. Absence
Excessive absenteeism may be indicative of educational neglect by the parent or guardian. Such neglect might warrant reporting in compliance with child abuse laws of the State of Missouri. (Refer to #5810.)
An absence of more than two hours is recorded as one-half day absence.

B. Tardiness
Excessive tardiness may be indicative of educational neglect by the parent or guardian. Such neglect might warrant reporting in compliance with child abuse laws of the State of Missouri. (Refer to #5810.)
The school handbook specifies times for the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Any pupil who arrives after either of the stated times is considered tardy.
If a student is regularly missing Mass because of arriving late (morning Mass) or leaving early (afternoon Mass) this may be taken into consideration of allowing the student to continue to be enrolled in the school.

DSP 5211

STUDENTS: Written Excuses

When a child has been absent, the school requires a written excuse from his/her parent or guardian. All notes concerning absence are kept on file until the end of the school year. If a pupil is absent without an excuse or if the school has reason to suspect the validity of the excuse, the school administrator/principal may investigate or delegate someone to investigate the situation.

In addition, schools are encouraged to establish or continue procedures whereby a parent is expected to phone the school if a student will be absent. This call, however, does not replace the written excuse as a matter of record.

STUDENTS: Requests for Family Reasons

Parents occasionally wish to take their children out of school for several days because of family plans. The school administrator/principal and teacher(s) should discuss the child's progress and make recommendations to the parent. The school administrator/principal keeps a record of the recommendations made to the parent. The final decision, however, is the responsibility of the parent. Conditions, procedures, and time limits for making up work are to be specified in writing.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Students will have the benefits of daily religious education and periodic planning and actively participating in weekday Masses. Celebration of the seasons of the Church year, major feasts of our Lord and the saints, as well as time of quiet reflection, will be further opportunities for spiritual growth of the students. Participation in these various opportunities is required of all Catholic students.

ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

St. Thomas the Apostle is a member of the Bellarmine Speech League of the Jefferson City Diocese. Teams consisting of eight students in grades 5-8 attend regional meets during the year and one diocesan meet at the end of the year. Students try out for teams with duet, serious or humorous speeches.

On alternating years there are Diocesan Science Fairs (grades 6-8) and Music Enrichment Days (any grade sent by the school). An annual Sketch Day is also held.

Opportunities for playing basketball and volleyball are available to students in grades 5-8. Archery is available for students in grades 4-8. Students are informed of and encouraged to participate in various locally sponsored contests. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to coach or assist in any of the above activities.

Based on academic qualifications, students in grades 6-8 may be eligible for the diocesan summer enrichment program, Aquinas Academy.

A student council is elected and plans activities throughout the school year.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY

Students must be in attendance at least three periods (hours) per day to be eligible to practice or participate in any activity on said day unless it is cleared in advance by the principal.

If school is not in session due to inclement weather, then students will not participate in extra-curricular activities scheduled on said day.

Physical examinations are required for participation in athletic activity.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

When it is necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather, announcements will be made on local radio and television stations KLIK-1240 AM, KJMO-100.1 FM, KPLA-101.5 FM, KWOS 950-AM,

KATI 94.3-FM, KCLR-99.3 FM, KTXY-106.9PM, KOMU TV Channel 8 and KRCG TV Channel 13. When weather becomes bad during the school day, announcements will be placed on local stations. Refrain from calling the school to inquire about cancellations causing phone tie-up. We will notify parents of any cancellations or school closings with our Remind text alert.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued quarterly. Parent-student-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first report period. Other than this planned conference, feel free to arrange any additional conference(s) with the teacher whenever you have questions regarding your child's progress.

Grade promotion or retention is based on teacher recommendation with approval by the principal.

Student records may be withheld for failure to meet financial obligations. Such decisions will be the responsibility of the school principal and the parish pastor.

DSP 5405

STUDENTS: Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

It is highly recommended that each school plan to have conferences at reporting time at least once a year. These conferences provide the opportunity to discuss and explore various aspects of the student's growth and development.

DSP 5410

STUDENTS: Promotion and Retention

All promotions, regular and special, are decided by the school administrator/principal in light of the teacher's recommendation and in consultation with the parents and with the child, if appropriate. Such decisions are based on a total evaluation of a student's growth in all areas of development.

If a student's progress is unsatisfactory and the teacher believes the student may not satisfactorily complete the present grade, the teacher shall discuss alternatives with the school administrator/principal. As soon as possible, the teacher and/or the school administrator/principal will talk with the parents/guardians and, as appropriate, with the student. Although the school administrator/principal always acts in consultation with the student's teachers and parents, the final responsibility for a student's promotion or retention rests with the school administrator/principal.

During conferences and in a follow-up letter, the parents/guardians and the student are informed of the pending decision at least six weeks before it is finalized. The decision, with its rationale, is to be communicated to the parents/guardian. If the parents/guardians do not agree with the school administrator's/principal's decision, the school administrator/principal and the parents/guardians will meet to discuss the rationale for the decision. While parent/guardian input is valued, it is ultimately the school administrator's/principal's decision whether to promote a student.

If a student with special educational needs is accepted in a school that does not offer a special education program, at the request of parents who are aware that a special education program is not offered, the school administrator/principal and parents sign a written agreement concerning promotion and retention procedures for the child as well as the type of diploma to be awarded upon termination of attendance.

High school students who satisfactorily complete a program that includes a modified curriculum or significant accommodations for special needs will receive a diploma that indicates the modified nature of the curriculum, i.e., Modified Diploma

HOMEWORK

Regular assignments are given to the students. Each teacher will use his/her own method of sending homework home and communicating with parents. Homework will be assigned during the week. If at all possible, homework will not be assigned over weekends or over holidays.

When a sick child leaves school or is absent, at least one full day will be allowed before assignments are requested. However, the teacher and student may discuss a reasonable amount of time to make-up work. Call the office before noon to make arrangements for missed assignments.

TESTING

Achievement tests are given to students of grades 2-8 as part of the diocesan testing plan. The results are usually ready for the fall parent-student-teacher conferences. Teachers use test data for instructional planning.

CUSTODY

DSP 5201

STUDENTS: Proof of Guardianship

The school presumes that each parent has the authority to enroll the student, consent to various activities and programs, have custody of the student, or discontinue enrollment.

In any situation where there is a custody agreement, the schools are to obtain the portion of that Agreement that stipulates custody and any other information pertinent for the school.

Schools are to indicate in their registration materials that this is a condition of enrollment. This is also to be stated in the parent/student handbook along with a statement that indicates the parents are to notify the school immediately of any change in the agreement.

When consent by both parents is required by court decree in any/all matters relating to school, the consenting parent represents that the other parent has been consulted, and he or she consents to this registration.

The school administrator/principal will release the child(ren) according to the court documents and visitation documents the school has on file.

Any non-parent having custodial rights must supply the school with complete documentation evidencing such rights.

HEALTH STANDARDS

Adherence to state immunization requirements is mandatory. All students are required to have verified immunization records. Updating immunizations is required.

No medication is given to students without written permission of parents and the physician's instructions if it is a prescribed medication. Forms for this purpose are available to parents. They are to be attached to any medication sent to school. When a student become sick or injured at school, parents or emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the child.

DSP 5520

STUDENTS: Drug/Medication Administration

Any drug which may lawfully be sold over the counter without a prescription may be administered in compliance with the written instructions and consent of the student's parent or guardian. Administration of a prescription drug requires written instructions from a physician, dentist or podiatrist and written consent from the student's parent or guardian.

Each school must have a written policy in regarding to oral medication administration. There must be procedures for the periodic review of the instructions, for the storing of the drugs, for record keeping and for the appropriate instruction of persons who may be authorized to administer the drugs. (For the proper protection of students and faculty, schools are required to keep medication in a locked cabinet.)

School Policy

When a chronic infectious condition exits (such as AIDS or HEPATITIS B) St. Thomas the Apostle School will follow the Diocesan School Policy 8000.

Any student is liable to transmit a contagious condition or illness through day-to-day contact (such as but not limited to fever, vomiting, measles, chicken pox, tuberculosis, etc.) is not permitted to attend school or school-sponsored activities if the possibility of contagion exists.

COVID (exclusion five days from onset of symptoms and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.)

The school's policy will be adjusted following CDC guidelines if recommended days of exclusion decreases.

The student must be free of vomiting and fever for 24 hours before being allowed to return to school or school-sponsored events.

To determine the contagiousness of the condition or illness or the liability of transmitting the condition or illness, the principal may require a student to be examined by a physician and, if the diagnosis is positive, may exclude the person from school as long as the danger of transmittal exists.

At the discretion of the school principal, the Cole County Health Nurse or other qualified individual may be requested to examine students and school personnel for head lice. Parents of the infected students will be notified immediately. Those students may return to school only after the principal is satisfied that the infected student has been satisfactorily treated, is nit free, and will not infect others. Parental cooperation is absolutely essential.

LEAVING SCHOOL

No student is permitted to leave the school for any reason without the permission of the parent(s) or the principal. Before leaving the school premises, parents must come to the office to sign the student in/out of the building.

A note or phone call notifying the school about students going home by a different way is required.

DSP 5370

STUDENTS: Release of Individual Students from School

Extraordinary care is taken in regard to early dismissal of individual students. Parents presume their child is under the care of the school during school hours. Consequently, an elementary student is never released early without explicit knowledge of his/her parent or legal guardian. Under no circumstance may a child be released to anyone other than the parent or guardian who is listed on the child's registration form or another person explicitly authorized in writing by the parent or guardian.

In the case where only one parent has custody of the child, the school must be apprised of any existing court order that would affect release of the student from school. The school personnel must follow the most recent written agreement/order regarding custody.
A student may never be sent home for assignments, books, or disciplinary reasons without parental communication, nor may any student be sent on errands outside the school and parish grounds for anyone.

FIELD TRIPS

Signed parental permission is required for students to participate in class field trips. Field trips are a privileged extension of class work. Students may be excluded for academic or behavioral reasons. All students are required to wear seat belts when school sponsored trips are accommodated by private vehicles.

INSTRUCTION: Instructional Arrangements DSP 6301 EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS, FIELD TRIPS, EIGHTH GRADE TRIPS AND SENIOR TRIPS Diocesan Catholic school field trips and outings shall be learning experiences, but they are also privileges. Each teacher or moderator shall, in advance, explain to the school administrator/principal the proposed field trip, including student preparation, plans for supervision and transportation and student follow-up activities. If approved, the teacher shall follow the local procedures for the distribution and return of the field trip forms with parent/guardian signatures. A school may, but is not required to, sponsor an end of year eighth grade and/or a senior trip. If it does, the school must be ultimately responsible for the planning and implementation, including the assigning of chaperones and the establishment of rules. In addition, school personnel must accompany students on the trip. If the school does not sponsor the trip, then DSP 6306 shall be followed, in which case the school must isolate itself from the planning, distribution of any information, and fundraising. If any fundraising is done, the school name is not to be used. The school tax identification number is not to be used in any way for the trip, and any contracts shall not use the school name. Other than high school sports, any proposed school-sponsored trip that would include an overnight stay, travel outside of the state, or both, must be approved through the Catholic Schools Office prior to permission slips being distributed to parents/guardians. In general, overnight trips are discouraged for elementary/middle school classes. Such trips must be approved through the Catholic Schools Office prior to permission slips being distributed to parents/guardians.

Revised July 1, 2024
Revised July 1, 2021
Revised June 1 ,2015
Revised August 12, 2008

INSTRUCTION: Instructional Arrangements DSR 6301

Educational Outings, Field Trips, Eighth Grade Trips and Senior Trips

All diocesan Catholic School field trips and outings shall be pre-approved by the school administrator/principal. The written consent of parent/guardians must be obtained for every student participating in a field trip or outing. The consent shall include basic information about the trip, including destination, times, chaperones and mode of transportation.

No students shall participate in outings or field trips unless a signed parent/guardian permission slip for the specific event is on file with the school administrator/principal. A sample Field Trip Permission slip is included in Appendix #6301.

Revised June 1, 2015
August 12, 2008

DSP 6305

INSTRUCTION: Chaperones and Drivers for Field Trips, Athletic Events and Other Off-Campus School Activities

Schools should take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students when they are being transported for educational field trips, athletic events, and other off-campus school activities.

An adequate number of responsible adult chaperones are to accompany the students. Ordinarily, at least one adult will accompany every five students in the lower grades and every 10 students in the upper grades - but some situations or younger students may require more. Trips involving a great deal of travel should be discouraged.

When appropriate, schools should use bus transportation by an insured carrier for off-campus school sanctioned events. There are circumstances for which a school administrator may determine that transportation in private passenger vehicles is appropriate. These circumstances could include the fact that there is a small number of students involved in an activity and the cost of commercial transportation. If a private passenger vehicle is to be used, the following criteria shall apply:

1. drivers must be a parent/guardian of a student;
2. drivers must be experienced drivers over the age of 25 and demonstrate the maturity necessary to provide for the safety of those they are transporting;
3. drivers must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that may impair the ability to drive safely;
4. drivers must sign a driving policy acknowledgement form agreeing to abide by certain safety practices; (Appendix 6305: Agreement to Transport Students);
5. regular drivers (those transporting students three or more times in one school year) must complete the *Protecting God's Children* program and read and sign the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Volunteers Working with Minors*;
6. the vehicle must have a valid registration and meet state safety requirements; and
7. the vehicle must be insured for minimum limits of $100,000 per person, $300,000 per occurrence.

All drivers should be given a copy of the above criteria. In addition, these criteria should be printed in the Parent Handbook.

Volunteer drivers must provide the school with copies of a valid driver's license, their vehicle registration, and proof of insurance coverage. The documents shall be kept on file by the school. The school shall also maintain a record of each event and date when each volunteer driver transports students.

LUNCH/BREAKFAST PROGRAM AND SNACKS

The school participates in the government sponsored lunch program. Balanced nutritional meals are served. The program receives some free food commodities.

If students wish to have an extra milk at lunch, they may purchase a "milk ticket". The cost is $5.00 for 10 milks.

Families who qualify at any time during the school year are eligible for reduced-price or free lunches. Application forms are available from the principal. Confidentiality is maintained. Families who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches not only help their child have a balanced meal but also help the lunch program through the subsidy allotted.

Students may bring a healthy snack from home to eat during morning recess.

PROPERTY

A positive respect for and use of school and parish property are a part of the learning environment at school. A child's outerwear and supplies are to be well labeled. If textbooks are destroyed, lost, written in, or otherwise misused, a fee will be charged based on replacement costs. Each student is to use a school bag for carrying books.

Toys, such as electronic pets, which distract from the learning environment, are not allowed. This does not include any that are a part of a special classroom project or activity such as "show and tell".

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

"Fostering Discipline and Discipleship" is the positive approach used to teach Christian behavioral skills and values. Concentration is on positive reinforcement of acceptable student behavior for greatest utilization of instructional time and minimizing time given to negative behavior.

A school-wide discipline program is in place. The approved program fosters the dignity of every child in school. Rules, necessary for an effective classroom, are posted in the classroom and thoroughly explained to the student. Teachers make every effort to handle inappropriate behavior in the classroom. However, when serious problems arise, they are to be brought to the attention of the principal. Students will be required to serve detention.

Normal Discipline Procedures:

1st offense: Verbal warning is given with reminder of the classroom rules or procedures.

2nd offense: Student moves to yellow and must verbalize an alternative strategy to the inappropriate behavior.

3rd offense: Student moves to red, loses recess and the teacher notifies the parents of the situation.

4th offense Student visits principal's office with a written behavior form. If necessary, the pastor is alerted to the problem.

*Teachers may make modifications.

Severe discipline problems will warrant immediate IN/OUT of SCHOOL suspension, dismissal or expulsion. Also, a student with a severe discipline problem could be put on a special behavioral agreement with conditions until problems are resolved with the cooperation of parents. Transfer to another school will be advised or required if conduct is not approved. Examples of such problems are disrespect for other students and authority, possession of dangerous objects, the use of inappropriate and bad language, damage to property, books, etc., graffiti on the building or furniture.

DSP 5305

STUDENTS: Catholic Faith and Moral Standard

As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in schools that are part of the Diocese of Jefferson City, a student's conduct, both in and outside of school, must be consistent with Catholic faith

and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, reputation and welfare of other students or employees and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate dismissal/expulsion.

If a student chooses to continually profess being an agnostic or atheist or hostile to the teachings of the Catholic Church in a manner that is belligerent and harming the institution's abilities to maintain a Catholic identity and promote the Catholic faith, this student may be expelled from school.

DSR 5310

STUDENTS: Prohibition of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is not used under any circumstances in the diocesan schools. The school administrator/principal is responsible to report immediately to the superintendent of Catholic schools any violation of this prohibition. Any extreme or unusual form of punishment or any touching of a child in a manner that is considered punitive is to be avoided.

DSP 5315

STUDENTS: Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

The possession, conveyance, use, or storage of weapons or look-alikes on school property, at school-sponsored events, or in or around a school vehicle is prohibited. This ban applies to students, employees, and visitors, except for those acting in a law enforcement capacity. This prohibition expressly includes those persons licensed to carry concealed firearms. Schools are to formulate specific local policies regarding reporting weapons and dangerous instruments to law enforcement.

DSP 5360

STUDENTS: Dismissal and Expulsion

The dismissal or expulsion of a student from a Catholic school is a very serious matter and should be invoked only in extreme cases. Care should be taken that fundamental fairness is offered the student in the process of expulsion or dismissal.

The term "expulsion" is:

> Termination of a pupil as a student from the school permanently (no opportunity for reinstatement).

The term "dismissal" is:

> Termination of a pupil as a student from the school less than permanently (indefinite or for a given term).

In cases of serious misconduct which could lead to expulsion, the parents are so advised immediately and in writing. They are urged to take advantage of assistance from school, parish, or social service agencies which can help the student with his/her difficulties. Careful documentation must be kept of all disciplinary proceedings.

In extreme cases of incorrigible behavior or when conduct threatens the physical or moral welfare of anyone in the school community, the school administrator/principal, normally in consultation with the pastor, can immediately suspend a student until a final decision is made. (See DSP #5355.)

After the school has exhausted all avenues of assistance for the student, a recommendation may be made to the pastor regarding the dismissal or expulsion. All dismissal and/or expulsions must be reviewed with the superintendent of Catholic schools for compliance with the law and diocesan policies and regulations. A statement of dismissal or expulsion is made in writing, including the reasons for the dismissal and a complete listing of dates and efforts made to help the student to avert dismissal.

Revised July 21, 2010

DSR 5360

STUDENTS: Dismissal and Expulsion

If a dismissal or expulsion is pending, the Catholic School Office is to be notified immediately. The Catholic School Office will review the case, consult legal counsel if necessary, and make recommendations back to the school administrator/principal and/or pastor of the school.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Students and/or adult volunteers of St. Thomas the Apostle School are strictly prohibited from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, using or possessing controlled substances or look-alikes including alcoholic beverages in or on school property while school is in session and during school activities and functions. This does not apply to the possession or use of legally prescribed drugs for medical reasons.

Any student and/or adult volunteer discovered to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension while an investigation is conducted. Pending the outcome of the investigation, future status of the student's ability to continue at St. Thomas the Apostle School will be determined at that time which could include suspension, dismissal or expulsion. This course of action will apply to the first violation of this policy. A second violation of this policy will result in immediate expulsion of the student from school. Consequences of adult violation will be handled by the principal and pastor.

St. Thomas the Apostle School has posted signs indicating that the school building is to be a "smoke free" environment.

DSP 5545

STUDENTS: Alcohol Use at School Related Events

No alcohol may be present or consumed at events where children and youth are the primary focus. For example: field trips, school carnivals, school picnics, school sponsored athletic events, etc.

CHILD ABUSE

In case of child abuse, St. Thomas the Apostle School will follow the Diocesan School Policy 5810.

DSP 5820

STUDENTS: Harassment/Bullying

Policy: All Catholic schools' part of the Diocese of Jefferson City shall maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment. No student in any school shall be subjected to any type of harassment/bullying.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with the student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment. Harassment includes physical, visual, verbal and sexual forms of behavior. Instances of harassment should be addressed using appropriate disciplinary consequences, counseling methods, and parental/guardian contact and involvement in accordance with the nature and frequency of the offense.

Bullying is the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others. The behavior is often repeated and habitual. One essential prerequisite is the perception, by the bully or by others, of an imbalance of social or physical power, which distinguishes bullying from conflict. Behaviors used to assert such domination can include verbal harassment or threat, physical assault or coercion, and such acts may be directed repeatedly towards particular targets.

Every school is to have a comprehensive anti-bullying program that is consistent throughout the school. This program is explained and enforced by the administration, teachers, parents and students. This program will also be available in the school office for parents to refer to if they have questions. This can also be in the school handbook.

Sexual harassment deserves special mention.

1. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, "the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive, sexually graphic materials which is not necessary for school purposes."
2. No student shall be subject to sexual harassment as a student.
3. Any student or employee who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to severe disciplinary measures.
4. Any student who believes that he or she is being sexually harassed shall report immediately such information to the school administrator/principal. Any information reported shall be treated as confidential. All claims of sexual harassment are to be immediately reported to the Catholic School Office and/or chancellor and/or review administrator and shall be thoroughly investigated by the school administrator/principal after consultation with and direction from the Catholic School Office.

No student shall receive any retaliation or disciplinary action for reports of harassment made in good faith.

DSP 5825

From: Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight

Date: October 8, 2019

Re: Reporting Protocols Relating to Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

I am writing you today to announce a change in process relating to reporting allegations of abuse or neglect of a minor to members of law enforcement and related agencies/entities. I have made this change in process after reviewing the investigation report from the Missouri Attorney General that was issued September 13, 2019. In this report, the Missouri Attorney General recommended that referrals be made to appropriate prosecutor's offices because such referrals may help ensure that viable referrals to law enforcement are not missed.

Following this, for reports involving abuse of a person who is currently a minor and the person who is accused of abuse is a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, in addition to reporting to the Missouri Children's Division and local law enforcement, such reports will be shared with the appropriate prosecuting attorney's office.

With this change in policy, I thought it would be helpful to delineate clearly the expectation of the Diocese regarding reporting allegations of abuse, involving minors or vulnerable adults. For reference purposes, there is a "Frequently Asked Questions" document attached to this memorandum which, among other things, contains key definitions regarding what is meant when referring to "abuse," "neglect," and "vulnerable adult." Additionally, for purposes of clarification, this reporting responsibility, as it pertains to allegations involving priests and brothers, applies equally to religious order priests and brothers.

Please share this memorandum with those in your parish with responsibility of working with minors.

1. **Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Involving Current Minor Against a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer**: If an allegation of abuse or neglect involves a person who is currently a minor (under 18) and the person accused of the abuse or neglect is a priest, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the diocesan/parish/school representative receiving the information about the allegation and who has reasonable cause to suspect that abuse or neglect may have occurred, shall immediately make a hotline call to the Missouri Children's Division Child Abuse Hotline and shall then notify his/her supervisor. Thereafter, the supervisor shall notify the Chancellor of the Diocese. Thereafter, the Diocese, or its agents, shall notify the local police and the appropriate county prosecuting attorney. If the person receiving information about an allegation of abuse believes there is not reasonable cause to suspect that abuse has occurred, he or she shall notify his/her supervisor in order to ensure the supervisor is aware of the reported situation, as well as the determination. If the person accused is the supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Chancellor of the Diocese.

2. **Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Involving Current Minor Against a Person <u>Who Is Not</u> a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer**: If an allegation of abuse or neglect involves a person who is currently a minor (under 18) and the person accused is not a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the diocesan/parish/school representative receiving the information about the allegation and who has reasonable cause to suspect that abuse or neglect may have occurred, shall immediately make a hotline call to the Missouri Children's Division Child Abuse Hotline and shall then notify his/her supervisor. Thereafter, the supervisor shall notify the Superintendent of Catholic Schools of the Diocese. If the person receiving information about an allegation of abuse believes there is not reasonable cause to suspect that abuse has occurred, he or she shall notify his/her supervisor in order to ensure the supervisor is aware of the reported situation, as well as the determination. If the person accused is the

supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Superintendent of Catholic Schools of the Diocese.

3. **Allegations of Abuse Involving a Person Who Is Not a Minor Against a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer**: If an allegation of abuse does not involve a current minor (the person is 18 years old or older) and the person accused is a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the person receiving the allegation shall inform his/her supervisor of the allegation. Thereafter, the supervisor shall remind the person making the allegation of his/her right to contact law enforcement and shall offer the assistance of the parish or the Diocese in contacting law enforcement. The supervisor shall also notify the Chancellor of the Diocese. If the person accused is the supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Chancellor of the Diocese.

4. **Allegations of Abuse Involving a Person Who Is Not a Minor Against a Person <u>Who Is Not</u> a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer:** If an allegation of abuse does not involve a current minor (the person is 18 years old or older) and the person accused is not a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the person receiving the allegation shall inform his/her supervisor of the allegation. Thereafter, the supervisor shall remind the person making the allegation of his/her right to contact law enforcement and shall offer the assistance of the parish or the Diocese in contacting law enforcement. If the person accused is the supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Chancellor of the Diocese.

5. **Allegations of Abuse Involving a Person Who Is a Vulnerable Adult Against a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer:** If an allegation of abuse involves a vulnerable adult and the person accused is a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the person receiving the allegation shall inform his/her supervisor of the allegation. Thereafter, the supervisor shall remind the person making the allegation of his/her right to contact law enforcement and shall offer the assistance of the parish or the Diocese in contacting law enforcement. The supervisor shall also notify the Chancellor of the Diocese. If the person accused is the supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Chancellor of the Diocese.

6. **Allegations of Abuse Involving a Person Who Is a Vulnerable Adult Against a Person <u>Who Is Not</u> a Priest, Brother, Deacon, Religious Sister, Employee or Volunteer:** If an allegation of abuse involves a vulnerable adult and the person accused is not a priest, brother, deacon, religious sister, employee of the Diocese/parish/school or a volunteer of the Diocese/parish/school, then the person receiving the allegation shall inform his/her supervisor of the allegation. Thereafter, the supervisor shall remind the person making the allegation of his/her right to contact law enforcement and shall offer the assistance of the parish or the Diocese in contacting law enforcement. The supervisor shall also notify the Chancellor of the Diocese. If the person accused is the supervisor, then the person receiving the report shall directly notify the Chancellor of the Diocese.

I thank you in advance for your compliance with these reporting protocols. If you have any questions whatsoever, you are responsible for contacting the Chancellor of the Diocese for clarification.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does Missouri have a law relating to child abuse reporting? Yes. Missouri Statute 210.115 provides information about who is considered to be a mandatory reporter of child abuse and the responsibility of mandatory reporters to report abuse. A copy of this statute is attached as Exhibit 1.

2. Does Missouri law define "abuse" for purposes of child abuse reporting? Yes. Missouri Statute 210.110 defines "abuse" as "any physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for the child's care, custody, and control, except that discipline including spanking, administered in a reasonable manner, shall not be construed to be abuse." A copy of this statute is attached as Exhibit 2.

3. Does Missouri law define "neglect" for purposes of child abuse reporting? ? Yes. Missouri Statute 210.110 defines "neglect" as "failure to provide, by those responsible for the care, custody, and control of the child, the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, nutrition or medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the child's well-being." A copy of this statute is attached as Exhibit 2.

4. Does Missouri Children's Division offer options for making a hotline report of suspected child abuse or neglect? Yes. Missouri Children's Division offers an on-line reporting system as well as a telephone hotline number. It is the expectation of the Diocese for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect to make a telephone hotline call rather than submitting an online report.

5. What is the Missouri Children's Division Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline number? As of the date of this memorandum, the hotline number is **1-800-392-3738.**

6. What do I need to consider before making a hotline call: A copy of the abuse/neglect reporting form is attached as Exhibit 3. This form can serve as a guide for the information that is helpful to have, to the extent it is available, before making a hotline report. If it is not possible to obtain all of the information sought in the form, this should not delay the making of a hotline report. Timely reporting is the goal.

7. Do I need to make a hotline call if I have reasonable cause to suspect that a minor has abused another minor? Yes. Missouri law requires reports to be made, even if the individual who is accused of abuse did not have care, custody or control of the minor alleged to have been abused. If there are questions, please contact diocesan legal counsel.

8. What is meant by the term "vulnerable adult"? A "vulnerable adult/person" is defined by Church law as "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence."

DSP 1305

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Educational Authority in the Parish

The pastor of each parish, canonically appointed to be the head of the Catholic community, has pastoral authority and concern in all facets of parish life. In educational matters, he works with the school advisory board. The school advisory council is an advisory council established to assist the pastor, school administrator/principal, parish pastoral council, and parish finance council in fostering the education mission, goals and objectives of the Catholic school. It helps formulate and recommend policy and is consultative to both the pastor and the school administrator/principal. The role of the parish pastoral council is to advise the pastor on all areas of the mission and direction of the whole parish. The school advisory board advises the pastor that the school is in harmony with the mission of the parish. The parish finance council advises in the temporal goods to insure the mission is sustained.

GRIEVANCE (REVIEW) COMMITTEE

DSP 1901

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Grievance

Any serious grievance that cannot be solved through an informal process using the local chain of command (teacher, school administrator/principal, pastor) shall be resolved through the Administrative Recourse Procedure. Since the school advisory board is advisory, it is not part of the process of reconciling differences, unless a pastor decides to consult some or all of the board for advice on a serious issue. The Administrative Recourse Procedure shall constitute the exclusive method for resolving such disputes after informal attempts at reconciliation have failed. The parties are bound by its determination as final and binding. The Administrative Recourse Procedure is specifically limited to "Grievances" as defined within the Administrative Recourse Procedure policy and regulation.

DSR 1901
Page 1 of 2

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Administrative Recourse

A. Definition

A "Grievance" is a formal complaint about any serious issue regarding a school or its personnel that needs a formal process of reconciliation in order for it to be resolved.

B. Purpose

The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which may from time to time arise affecting the welfare or working conditions of persons associated with the school.

C. Basic Principles

1. Informal attempts using the local chain of authority (teacher, school administrator/principal, pastor) have failed to resolve the grievance.
2. Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered a maximum and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The failure of a grievant to act within the time limits will act as a bar to any

further appeal and an administrator's failure to give a decision within the time limits shall permit the grievant to proceed to the next step. (*By mutual written agreement, however, the time limits may be extended.*)

3. The grievant agrees that discussions during the procedural stages of a grievance shall be kept confidential.

4. There is to be no retaliation against any party or participant in the grievance procedure.

5. Meetings held pursuant to this procedure shall be conducted by mutual agreement at a time and place that will afford a fair and reasonable opportunity for all persons, including witnesses to attend.

6. Records of formal proceedings at every Level shall be kept and made available to all parties involved.

D. Procedure

1. Informal Attempts at Resolution

Before differences become formal grievances, every effort shall be made to resolve local-level disputes by way of a free and open discussion between the parties involved in the grievance. Accordingly, a party may not pursue a grievance through the formal procedures outlined in this policy unless the party has first engaged in informal attempts with the local chain of authority to reconcile the difference beginning with the person whom the grievance is against. The normal chain of authority is: (1) teacher; (2) school administrator/principal; (3) pastor. The school administrator/principal or pastor may ask a third party to attend and assist the discussion.

2. Formal Grievance Procedures

In the event that informal attempts at resolving the dispute have been unsuccessful, the formal grievance procedure outlined below shall be observed. For complaints to be resolved through the Formal Grievance Procedures, the following shall apply: (i) if the complaint relates to a school administrator/principal, LEVEL ONE will not apply, and the grievant will begin with LEVEL TWO; and (ii) if the complaint relates to a pastor, LEVELS ONE AND TWO will not apply, and the grievant will begin with LEVEL THREE.

LEVEL ONE: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR/PRINCIPAL

The grievant shall reduce the complaint to writing and submit it to the school administrator/principal within fifteen (15) days following the occurrence of the event. In the complaint, the grievant must specifically request resolution through the Administrative Recourse Procedure. The school administrator/principal will hold a meeting within seven (7) days following receipt of the written statement of grievance. The school administrator/principal, a grievance representative designated by the pastor and the grievant shall be present for the meeting. Within seven (7) days following the meeting, the school administrator/principal shall provide the grievant with a written decision.

LEVEL TWO: PASTOR

If the grievant is dissatisfied with the school administrator's/principal's written decision, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing within five (5) days to the pastor. If the Formal Grievance Procedure begins with LEVEL TWO, the grievant shall reduce his/her complaint to writing and submit it to the pastor within fifteen (15) days following the occurrence of the event. The pastor will hold a meeting within seven (7) days following receipt of the written statement of grievance or the appeal, as applicable. The pastor, a grievance representative designated by the pastor and the grievant shall be present for the meeting. Within seven (7) days following the meeting, the pastor shall provide the grievant and the school administrator/principal with a written decision.

LEVEL THREE: CATHOLIC SCHOOL OFFICE

If the grievant is dissatisfied with the pastor's written decision, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing within five (5) days to the Catholic School Office. If the Formal Grievance Procedure begins with

LEVEL THREE, the grievant shall reduce his/her complaint to writing and submit it to the Catholic

School Office within fifteen (15) days following the occurrence of the event. The Catholic School Office or a designated representative of the superintendent of Catholic schools will hold a meeting on the matter within ten (10) days following receipt of the appeal. The Catholic School Office will render a decision in writing stating findings of fact and conclusions within ten (10) days of the hearing and a copy of the decision shall be delivered to the grievant, the pastor and the school administrator/principal.

LEVEL FOUR: DIOCESAN SCHOOL RECOURSE COMMITTEE

If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at LEVEL THREE, a written appeal may be made within five (5) days to the Diocesan School Recourse Committee (DSRC), a committee composed of three members appointed by the bishop. The committee will review the entire record relating to the grievance and thereafter hold a meeting which shall not be later than fifteen (15) days after receipt of the written appeal. The grievant is entitled to attend the meeting. Evidence relevant to the grievance may be offered by interested parties, and questions may be asked pertaining to the cause by committee members as well as the interested parties. The DSRC will render and communicate its recommendation to the bishop who will notify the Catholic School Office and the grievant of his ruling. The decision of the bishop will be final and binding.

DSP 1902

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Penalty Status During Administrative Recourse

The penalty for a violation of a school or diocesan policy or regulation is to be enforced during the recourse procedure. However, a request can be made to the pastor to speed up the procedure. Either the person(s) registering the complaint or the person(s) to whom the complaint is registered can make this request. The request, in consultation with the Catholic School Office, can be granted or denied.

DSP 1430

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Home and School Associations

There must be the closest cooperation between parents and the school faculty and staff. In fulfilling their task, schools are to collaborate closely with the parents/guardians. Associations and meetings of parents/guardians are to be established and held in high esteem. Each Catholic elementary school will establish and maintain a home and school association to help parents/guardian in fulfilling their role as Christian educators and to provide educational assistance in Christian family living. (School) Associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem. (Code of Canon Law, Canon 796.) The home and school fulfills its purpose by supporting the school and collaborating with faculty and staff.

TECHNOLOGY

DSP 6425

INSTRUCTION: Instructional Services and Resources DSP 6425 STUDENT INTERNET, EMAIL AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY USE All diocesan Catholic schools allowing students to have access to the internet, email and other technology shall have a written policy regarding usage in the parent/guardian/student handbooks. This content of this policy shall include, at a minimum, the following statements: Internet, email and other technology access and use in school is a privilege, not a right. Use of technology access shall to be consistent with Catholic teaching, doctrine, morality and values. Students shall not use the internet, email or other technology for the purpose of transmitting or receiving illegal, illicit or obscene materials, or other materials in conflict with Catholic doctrine and practices. Students shall not use the internet, email or other technology for the purpose of violating copyright law, including, but is not limited to, copyrighted software, text, graphics or music. Such action shall be considered theft and is in violation of Catholic and legal standards. Students shall not use the internet, email or other technology for the purpose of plagiarism. Students shall not attempt to gain access to resources belonging to others, including, but is not limited to, passwords, email, personal files, and restricted or secure internet sites. This shall be considered theft and is in violation of Catholic and legal standards. Students shall not use the internet, email or other technology to transmit information about the school or the school-governed facilities, other than their own email address, including, but is not limited to, school personnel names and addresses.

Students shall not use devices or technology to record (video/audio) on school property or at school events without prior permission from administration. The school reserves the right to review any materials (email, files, other correspondence) sent or received via the internet, email

or other technology for appropriateness in light of legal, ethical and Catholic standards. Any violation of this policy is also considered a violation of the school discipline code and is subject to school disciplinary action. The privilege of the internet, email or other technology use can be suspended or revoked at any time by administration. In addition to the above, the school, after consultation with the Catholic Schools Office, can take disciplinary action against any student who, either within or outside school hours and/or on or off school grounds, uses technology to defame, bully or assault the character or being of the school, diocese, any of its personnel and/or students. This includes any such negative postings (verbal or pictorial) on such websites as Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and other social networking sites. This includes any activity that would violate DSP 5305, Catholic Faith and Moral Standard.

Revised July 1, 2024
Revised June 1, 2015
Revised August 10, 2010

DSP 6610

INSTRUCTION: Athletics and Extracurricular DSP 6610 ATHLETICS All athletic programs offered through diocesan Catholic schools shall reflect the values of, and be consistent with the mission and principles of the schools and the diocese. All students, parents/guardians, leaders, coaches and referees will sign a code of conduct prior to participation in any athletic event/team sponsored by a diocesan school. Additionally, schools may require all involved with an extracurricular activity (including athletics) to agree to sportsmanship training prior to the start of the activity.

Revised July 1, 2024
Revised May 24, 2016
Revised June 1, 2015
May 7, 2004

DSR 6610

INSTRUCTION: Athletics and Extracurricular DSR 6610 ATHLETICS All athletic programs offered through diocesan Catholic schools shall ensure the programs meet the following criteria: Sports are viewed as a ministry to students and families. Teams are seen as moral communities. Moral growth and character development are emphasized. Spiritual development is expected. All coaches and assistant coaches (whether paid or volunteer) shall be expected to imitate Christ through their coaching. School administrators/principals who participate in any athletic program shall be responsible for assuring that all coaches, physical education teachers and parents/guardians meet the behavior standards. Evaluation of coaches and physical education teachers by school administrators/principals shall assure that these coaches and teachers are integrating these goals into their ministry of coaching/teaching. School administrators/principals may delegate responsibility for various aspects of the program to other personnel (e.g., assistant principals, athletic directors or secretaries), but shall retain overall responsibility for the implementation of the program in their schools. Additionally, when a diocesan school facility is used for extracurricular activities (e.g., athletic games) involving diocesan schools, a designated monitor for the host school must be present. This monitor will be responsible for making sure school property is protected, and participants and attendees are behaving in ways consistent with diocesan policy. (Refer to the school facility's guidelines.) In view of the respect for and sanctity of the celebration of the Eucharist

on Sundays, holy days of obligation, and the importance of the Easter Triduum, no practices, games, or events shall be held by any diocesan Catholic school-sponsored group, team or club in the school building or playing field, or buildings the school may borrow, rent or own before noon on any Sunday or holy day of obligation, nor at any time on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday. Any games, tournaments, practices, etc. for school teams or individuals participating in a school extracurricular activity held over school holidays must have the express, written permission of the administrator/principal.

Revised July 1, 2024
Revised July 1, 2022
Revised July 1, 2021
May 24, 2016

RECESS POLICY

Students will go outside for recess except in the event of extreme weather. Students are not allowed to play in the snow on school property at any time. Children are to be prepared for outdoor recess (coats, gloves, pants, leggings or tights, hat or earmuffs, appropriate footwear).

DSP 1810

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Relations with Parents/Guardians DSP 1810 PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT Enrollment in a diocesan Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. Especially in the schools, a condition of a child's enrollment is the parents/guardians support of the school, and close cooperation of the parents/guardians with the school. Should disagreements, problems, or criticisms arise, all informal efforts between the parents/guardians and school shall be used to resolve the concern. If informal efforts are unsuccessful, the diocese and the school have a fundamentally fair, formal process to resolve differences, Administrative Recourse. (See DSR 1901.) (Schools shall indicate the page number on which this is found in their parent/guardian/student handbook.) A brief summary of Administrative Recourse is: set up a face-to-face meeting with the teacher; if unsatisfied, meet face-to-face with the school administrator/principal; and if unsatisfied, meet face-to-face with the pastor; if unsatisfied, the complaint will move to the diocesan level. Parents/guardians are requested and expected to communicate any concerns they have directly to school administration and not to express them through social media or broadly distributed email or any form of digital media. If parents/guardians use any form of electronic media to defame or denigrate the school or any of its personnel, or use electronic media to post inappropriate negative statements about the school or its personnel, all as determined by the school in its discretion, this could be cause for the school to immediately end the enrollment of the student of the parent/guardian who has done so. By enrolling children in a diocesan Catholic school, parents/guardians are agreeing to abide and support the school and its policies and regulations.

Revised July 1, 2024
Revised July 1, 2021
Revised June 1, 2015
May 15, 2013

DSP 1430

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL OPERATIONS: Local Policies, Regulations and Associations DSP 1430 HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS In fulfilling their mission, diocesan Catholic schools shall collaborate with parents/guardians. Associations of parents/ guardians shall be established and held in high esteem. Each elementary school shall establish and maintain a home and school association to help parents/guardian in fulfilling their role as Christian educators and to provide educational assistance in Christian family living. "School associations and meetings of parents/guardians are to be set up and held in high esteem," Code of Canon Law, Canon 796. The home and school association fulfills its purpose by supporting the school and collaborating with faculty and personnel.

July 1, 2021
May 7, 2004

DSP 5107

STUDENTS: Attendance DSP 5107 HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION PRIORITY Ordinarily, families who reside in the following communities or send students to the following diocesan Catholic elementary schools shall enroll students in the designated diocesan Catholic high school. In case of special circumstances, families may appeal this designation to the Catholic Schools Office. Families in the "Choice of School" column may attend the high school of their preference. Designated Diocesan Catholic High School, Helias Catholic High School Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School Choice of School Eldon, Sacred Heart Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul Ashland Folk, St. Anthony of Padua Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes California, Annunciation Frankenstein, Our Lady Help of Christians Columbia, Sacred Heart Fulton, St. Peter Freeburg, Holy Family Columbia, St. Thomas More Newman Center Hermann, St. George Holts Summit, St. Andrew Martinsburg, St. Joseph Tipton, St. Andrew Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph Mexico, St. Brendan Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception Moberly, St. Pius X With Sacred Heart, Sedalia Jefferson City, St. Peter Montgomery City, Immaculate Conception being another option Linn, St. George Loose Creek, Immaculate Conception Mary's Home, Our Lady of Snows Osage Bend, St. Margaret of Antioch Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart Russellville, St. Michael Taos, St. Francis Xavier St. Martins, St. Martin St. Thomas, St. Thomas the Apostle, Wardsville, St. Stanislaus

Revised July 1, 2018
May 24, 2016

**Parents may contact the school office if they have any questions regarding these policies or need more information about our school.

DSP 5310

STUDENTS: Discipline DSP 5310 PROHIBITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT Corporal punishment is not used under any circumstances in any diocesan Catholic school. The school administrator/principal is responsible to report immediately to the Catholic Schools Office any violation of this prohibition. Any extreme or unusual form of punishment or any touching of a student in a manner that is considered punitive shall be avoided.

Revised July 1, 2022
Revised August 10, 2010

DSP 5550

STUDENTS: Health and Safety DSP 5550 STUDENT ABORTION If a diocesan Catholic school student has participated in an abortion, or has helped in obtaining an abortion — acts contrary to Catholic teaching — the school shall respond immediately in a Catholic, pastoral way. The hurting individual is in

need of the kind of reconciliation and pastoral care that a Catholic school can provide. Therefore, school administrators/principals shall consult with the pastor, the school chaplain and/or the Catholic Schools Office for guidance in these situations.

Revised July 1, 2021
May 7, 2004

DSP 5552

STUDENTS: Health and Safety DSP 5552 STUDENT PREGNANCY If a diocesan Catholic school student is found to be pregnant, the school shall respond immediately in a Catholic, pastoral way. It shall be the intent of the school to be supportive and not to interrupt the education of the student. The pregnant student and the father of the child are in need of the kind of pastoral care that a Catholic school can provide, including love and understanding.

Revised July 1, 2021
May 7, 2004

STUDENTS: Discipline DSP 5325

VIOLENCE/SELF HARM

To maintain the health, safety, and welfare of all persons associated with diocesan Catholic schools (e.g., students, teachers, personnel, parents, volunteers, etc.), any display of violent behavior, which may include but not be limited to, the verbal and/or physical threat to do harm to one's self or to another person shall be promptly and severely addressed.

Revised July 1, 2024
May 7, 2004

STUDENTS: Discipline DSR 5325

VIOLENCE/SELF HARM

If a diocesan Catholic school student displays any violent behavior (which may include but not limited to verbal and/or physical threat to do harm to one's self or to another person), the following protocol shall be followed:

Parents/guardians must be notified of the incident and asked to remove the child from the school until further notice. If warranted by the situation, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Children's Division or local law enforcement may also be notified.

The student must be seen by a qualified mental health professional as soon as possible.

Return of the student to school shall not be considered by the pastor or the administrator/principal until written evaluation, from a qualified mental health professional which assures the student is not threat to him/herself or others has been provided to the school and reviewed by the Catholic Schools Office.

Providing a written evaluation does not guarantee readmission to the school.

The pastor and/or school administrator/principal may require ongoing counseling, direct communication with a treating mental health professional, etc. as required for readmission into the school.

Failure of parents/guardians or the student to follow-through with required treatment may result in dismissal from the school.

Revised July 1, 2024

July 1, 2021

STUDENTS: Discipline DSP 5335

SMART DEVICES

For all diocesan Catholic school students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, personal "smart" devices or any electronic device other than a school-issued device are not to be used during the school day either on campus or during school events (i.e., field trips). A smart device is any device that can be connected to the internet, including but not limited to cell phones, tablets, computers, watches, glasses, earbuds, etc.

High school students must adhere to local school policies regarding the use/possession of "smart" devices as established by the school's parent/student handbook.

July 1, 2025

STUDENTS: Discipline DSR 5335

SMART DEVICES

Phones, tablets, computers, watches, earbuds, etc. used by diocesan Catholic school students on campus or during a school event on a school day will be confiscated by school personnel and held in the school office. Return of the device and student consequences will be established by local school policy.

The school is not responsible for personal devices. While school administration does strive to keep confiscated items secure, it is the responsibility of the student to follow policies and to refrain from bringing the device to school, if possible.

In the event that a parent/guardian needs to get a message to a student during the school day, such messages can be left with the school office, who will in turn communicate with the student.

For students who need their phones immediately after the school day, phones are not banned from the property, but must stay turned off and in a backpack, locker, etc. for the entirety of the school day.

Students shall be held accountable for information shared using electronic devices while on school property and during school sponsored events.

July 1, 2025

CELL PHONE AND SMART WATCH POLICY LSP 5336

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones or smart watches to school and are not allowed to use them on school property from 7:00 am until 3:30 pm, unless granted permission by teacher or adult supervisors. If students bring cell phones or smart watches to school, the phones or smart watches are to be turned off and left in their backpack or they can turn them into their teacher upon entering the classroom. Students may take them home in their backpack or get them from their teacher at the end of the day if they give their phone to their teacher. The school assumes no liability for any cell phones or smart watches brought to school.

The first time a student violates the cell phone or smart watch policy, the item will be confiscated and kept in the office until the end of the day. The students may pick up the item at the end of the day, and the parents will be notified.

If the student violates the policy a second time, the item will be confiscated, and the parents will be notified that the phone needs to be picked up in the office by the parents.

A third offense may result in a parent/teacher conference discussing the problem of disregarding the established school procedures and possible consequences if the behavior continues. The consequences may include but are not limited to detention or suspension.

If it is determined that there are inappropriate messages or pictures on the cell phone or smart watch, there can be additional and more serious consequences.

SCHOOL POLICY
ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE POLICY
EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2012

General Guidelines

Each student's appearance must be appropriate to a Catholic school setting. Clothing is not to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process. The dress code is designed to further the Catholic mission, promote uniformity and enhance discipline in appearance. Clothing must be of proper fit (not tight-fitting) at all times. Girls may wear small post earrings (No hoop or dangling). Make-up is not allowed during school hours. Final ruling of questionable attire is the responsibility of the principal. Parents will receive a written notice after a 1st, 2nd and 3rd infraction. If a 4th infraction of the dress code occurs in a quarter, students will lose any dress down days for the remainder of that quarter. Infractions start over each quarter.

Dress Down Days

The general guidelines must be followed as well as the length of skirts, shorts, jumpers and dresses. Sleeveless is not allowed.

Date amended: April 16, 2024

Pants Skirts Shorts Jumpers Dresses	Solid colors.	Khaki Navy Blue	If there are belt loops, belts must be worn. (Exempt for grades K-2) Capri pants **must** go mid-calf when worn November 1st – March 31st. Cargo pants are allowed, with minimal pockets/zippers/tags are preferred. Stretch pants (no leggings) may be worn by grades K-2 only. No colored denim, fleece, sweats, nylon, overalls or leggings. The length of skirts, shorts, jumpers and dresses must be longer than fingers when hands at student's side. Grades K-4 must wear shorts underneath skirts, jumpers and dresses. Pants are to be worn from November 1st – March 31st. During this time, tights must be worn under skirts, jumpers and dresses.
Shirts	Including sweatshirts	Navy White Royal Blue Powder Blue Gray	Shirts should be tucked in. Shirts longer in length than the bottom of the pants front zipper or which exceeds 6in. below the top of the pants must be tucked in. No logos, decals or lettering larger than 2in. x 2in. Other school's shirts and sweatshirts are not allowed. No colored denim or sleeveless.
Sweaters	Vest, cardigan, V-neck, crew- neck or turtleneck	Navy White Gray	No logos, decal, or lettering larger than 2in. x 2in. Dress code shirt must be worn under sleeveless sweaters.
Socks	Socks or tights	Black White Gray OR Combination of these colors	Colors are not allowed on socks.

Shoes		Any Color	For safety reasons no backless shoes are allowed. Tennis shoes should be worn on PE days. Please consider outdoor recess when selecting footwear.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM (EDP)

At the present time, St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School offers an Extended School Day Program. Feasibility of this service is evaluated yearly based upon the need for childcare. Hours of operation are from 3:20p.m – 5:00p.m. each school day. The EDP program provides professional supervision, recreation and enrichment activities. It serves working families who desire both parochial school education and supplementary day care in a Christian environment. To review the policies and procedures for this program, parents are to refer to the ***Procedures and Guidelines Handout for the St. Thomas the Apostle School Extended Day Program.***

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

This announcement is the annual notification to inform all concerned that St. Thomas the Apostle School has an Asbestos Management Plan in the school office and available for review by appointment. The school has a periodic surveillance performed every June and December and the Diocese performs a re-inspection of our facilities every three years. The most recent surveillance by the Coordinator of Buildings and Properties for the Diocese was completed during the 2016 school year. All the asbestos that creates an immediate health hazard has either been removed or contained to provide a safe environment for our students, staff and guests. Please contact the school office if you have any questions.

School Telephone Number: 573-477-3322

School Fax Number: 573-477-3700

#2350 Appendix

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School's Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School of St. Thomas, Missouri, Parent Handbook. I understand that it contains important information about St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School's general policies and procedures, and about my privileges and obligations as a parent/guardian. I acknowledge and understand that this Handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document. I further acknowledge that I have read and understand St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School's policies and procedures and agree to adhere to them.

I further acknowledge that revisions to the Handbook may occur. I have received this Handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies and regulations contained in this Handbook and any revisions to it.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

(A copy of this Parent Handbook Acknowledgement is to be signed and returned to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School.)