

HANDBOOK

STA

2022-2023



St. Thomas Aquinas High School Prayer

Dear God,

through the intercession of St. Thomas Aquinas,
grant us a mind to know you, a heart to seek you,
the wisdom to find you, a conduct pleasing to you,
and a hope of embracing you.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

St. Thomas Aquinas, pray for us.

Introduction

An interesting and challenging experience awaits you as a student or parent of the school. To answer some of your questions concerning the school's policies, the school has prepared this Parent-Student Handbook. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. The policies stated in this handbook are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, as are all other policies, procedures, or programs of the school. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policy. However, the school has the right to add, delete or revise any school policy or procedure with or without notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, and none of the policies or provisions should be construed as such. If you have any questions about the school's policies, please ask the principal for assistance.

Students are expected to behave consistently with the mission, philosophy and spirit of St. Thomas Aquinas High School and the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to take any form of disciplinary action, including administrative withdrawal, against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this Handbook.

History and Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas High School

For over eighty years, St. Thomas Aquinas High School has established an outstanding reputation in the field of education in Broward County, in the State of Florida and throughout the United States. In its unique way, the school, in its many programs, has trained thousands of young people to assume responsible positions in the community.

The school, originally developed as part of St. Anthony's Parish, transferred to its present site in 1952 and became Central Catholic High School. In 1962, the name of St. Thomas Aquinas High School was adopted and continues to this day.

St. Thomas Aquinas High School, a Roman Catholic co-educational college preparatory school, embraces the Christian humanistic philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas, defining learning as the simultaneous and harmonious development of all facets of the human personality.

Within a faith-oriented environment and a four-year program of theological studies, students are guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ as handed down to us through the Catholic Church in Christian revelation. The study of the Gospel message, the history of the Church, and its experience in human society provide impetus and guidelines for instilling in our students an active awareness of and involvement in moral and social issues in the local, national, and global community. These ideals and objectives are supported and fostered by the St. Thomas Aquinas faculty and staff.

We recognize the role of parents as the primary educators and encourage parental participation and involvement in the school wherever possible. We are committed to serving families in helping them attain their educational goals and believe that the home and school must work together in the formation of Catholic men and women.

As a college preparatory educational institution, we strive to instill in our students a love of learning and, at the same time, challenge them to think and act with responsible human freedom. The school seal of St. Thomas Aquinas High School depicts the sword of freedom, the torch as the light of Christ, the book of knowledge, and the Holy Spirit as the gift of Christ's presence among us.

Mission

Respectful of each person's self-worth, the St. Thomas Aquinas High School community seeks to develop each student's God-given talents in a safe and caring atmosphere of sharing and challenge.

Vision

St. Thomas Aquinas High School is a four-year, college preparatory school, which educates young men and women according to the traditions of the Catholic faith. Through a comprehensive program of Catholic teachings, quality education and personal development, St. Thomas offers to its students religious experiences, academic challenges, innovative approaches, athletic programs, and social and cultural opportunities, and service to others.

The entire program focuses on the individual student, made in the image and likeness of God, who receives attention, and affirmation.

Statement of Beliefs

- We believe that each person in our school community, having been created in the image and likeness of God, has dignity and importance.
- We believe that the entire school community shares in the responsibility to help all students develop their God-given talents to the best of their ability.
- We believe that the entire school community shares the responsibility of creating a safe atmosphere of caring, sharing, and challenge.
- We believe that students learn most effectively through diversified programs of educational opportunities, religious experiences, athletic programs, social and cultural opportunities, and service.
- We believe all individuals in our school community deserve personal attention and recognition.

Goals

St. Thomas Aquinas High School, in an atmosphere of discipline and order, strives:

- to model for our students the daily practice of Christian living;
- to invite our students to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ;
- to provide a program that serves the spiritual, cultural, physical, and academic needs of a diverse student population;
- to challenge our students to achieve academic success and excellence;
- to instill a sense of Raider pride and tradition in our school and community;
- to instill in our students a hunger to learn so that learning becomes a life-long commitment;
- to help identify and develop student leaders through the academic and extracurricular programs;
- to develop in our students a social conscience and a commitment to community service;
- to develop responsibility and self-confidence in our young people; and
- to develop responsible and literate digital citizens with the skills to retrieve and analyze information, create valuable output, and succeed in the technological world.

Academic Integrity

St. Thomas Aquinas High School highly esteems the values of personal integrity and honor. All forms of cheating and plagiarism compromise the mission of the school and violate the provisions of this handbook. Violations include, but, not limited to, the following:

Cheating is the act or intent to deceive. The deceptive use of technology or a device (i.e. cell phone, smartwatch, laptop, airdrop, etc.) will be considered cheating. Cheating includes copying another student's academic work, using a cheat sheet/notes for a quiz/exam or evaluation.

Plagiarism is representing the words or ideas of someone else as your own. Examples are failing to properly cite direct quotes, and failing to give credit for someone else's ideas.

Collusion is the act of working together on an academic undertaking for which a student is individually responsible. Examples are: sharing information for assignments that are assigned to be completed individually.

Forgery of any kind is a violation of the Academic Integrity policy. That includes the forging of parent/guardian signatures on any document.

Violation of Testing Procedures refers to actions against standardized testing instructions, as well as any teacher's particular expectations. Traditional test taking behaviors are expected at all times.

Academic Dishonesty is any act not specifically stated here that compromises the integrity of a student or intrudes, violates, or disturbs the academic environment of the St. Thomas community.

A violation of the Academic Integrity Policy may result in any, or all of the following consequences:

- The act/intent is reported to the Principal/Administrator/Dean;
- Parents are notified of the violation;
- The student receives a "0" on the assignment/evaluation;
- The student is placed on Academic Probation; and/or
- The student is subject to Administrative Review.

Academic Probation

When deemed necessary by the STA Administration, the student and parent(s) may be required to sign an Academic Contract and placed on Academic Probation. Failure to satisfy any of the requirements within the Academic Contract will result in Administrative Review.

Administrative Review

At the end of a probation period, term/semester, or when deemed necessary by the Administration, a student's Attendance, Disciplinary or Academic/Integrity Policy record is subject to Administrative Review by the Principal/Administration. Academic performance, attendance, conduct, and industry are evaluated. The Administrative Review may result in probation or Administrative Withdrawal.

Academic Status Report

Parents are notified via email, at mid-quarter, when a student's grade is below 70%. Parents are expected to communicate with the appropriate teacher regarding the insufficient grade.

Advanced Placement

All Advanced Placement students are required to sit for the Advanced Placement examination for which they are registered. The fee for each AP exam is set by the College Board and will be billed to tuition statements directly. Any AP student who does not take the AP exam in May, without Administrative approval, will forfeit the AP weight for each course. Every college and university has their own policy for granting college credit taken in high school. Advanced Placement credit may not be honored at all post secondary institutions.

Advanced Placement Programs of the College Board are offered in the following areas: Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, Comparative Government & Politics, Computer Science A, English Language & Composition, English Literature & Composition, Environmental Science, French Language & Culture, Human Geography, Italian Language and Culture, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Music Theory, Physics 1, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, Physics C: Mechanics, Psychology, Spanish Language and Culture, Spanish Literature and Culture, Statistics, Studio Art: 2-D, Studio Art: 3-D, Studio Art: Drawing, United States Government and Politics, United States History, and World History: Modern.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Administration expects that if a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school Principal/Administrator/Dean.

The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

*physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student;
damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the Catholic mission of the school.*

1. Definition

- a. **Bullying** is the willful and repeated harm inflicted upon another individual which may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyberbullying or other verbal or written conduct. **Cyberbullying** includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). Bullying reflects a pattern of behavior, not a single isolated incident.
- b. This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

2. Scope

- a. *This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:*
 - i. *on school premises before, during, or after school hours;*
 - ii. *on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity; or*
 - iii. *during any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.*

3. Reporting Complaints

- a. *Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school principal. The principal will provide the student/parent with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated and signed by the complaining party so that the school may initiate further inquiry, when appropriate.*

4. Disciplinary Action

- a. *Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion.*

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate remedial action which may include, but is not limited to, the assessment of costs incurred by the School in its investigation and review of any reports deemed to have been made in bad faith.

Appeal

A student or parent may submit an appeal following an Administrative Withdrawal decision. The Appeal must be via email, submitted to the Dean/Principal within 24 hours of receipt of the decision. The appeal will be presented to the Administration.

Attendance

It is the parent's responsibility to monitor their student's attendance. The STA academic calendar contains 180 days exclusive of holidays. Students are expected to attend every day of the school year. Absence from school, for reasons other than illness, are detrimental to the student's best interest. Travel should be arranged in such a way as not to interfere with the time the students should be in class. Excused Absences are at the discretion of the Principal. A student who is absent from school is not allowed to participate in extracurricular/sports activities which take place on the day of the absence. Students must attend a minimum of 3 class periods that day. The final determination of eligibility for participation rests with the Principal.

NOTE: There are no school-sanctioned "skip days"

Start of School Day

A WARNING BELL rings at 8:00a.m. to advise students to proceed to Period A. The LATE BELL rings at 8:05a.m. STA prayer, pledge, & announcements begin immediately following the 8:05a.m. bell. Student arrival to Period A after 8:05a.m. warrants a “tardy” (see below).

Any student missing more than a total of ten (10) days of school or 10 classes of the same course in one semester (including excused and unexcused absences, tardies and early dismissals) will be asked to make up the time in order to receive academic credit for that semester.

Any student who misses more than a total of twenty (20) days of school or 20 classes of the same course in the school year (including excused and unexcused absences, tardies and early dismissals) will be asked to make up the time in order to receive academic credit for that semester.

Make-up time may involve professional tutoring, summer school, and or supervision as determined by the administration, at the cost of the parents.

The Administration reserves the right to review a student’s attendance record at any time and take appropriate action, including but not limited to, requiring the student to enroll in ADOM Catholic Virtual School or subject to Administrative Review.

Report an Absence

The parents are expected to report a student’s absence via our Absence Reporting System on their parent’s Canvas or by emailing the attendance office attendance@aquinas-sta.org. A valid physician’s note, court documents, and/or parent communication must be submitted within 24 hours for the absence to be considered excused.

In the event of an extended or repeated illness (for five (5) or more days) a doctor’s medical release for readmission to school is required.

Extended Absence

Any absence of 3 days and more (other than illness) must be reported to the Attendance Office at least three (3) days in advance.

Students must complete an “**Extended Absence Form**” available from the Principal Office prior to departure. The form must be signed by all the student’s teachers, the guidance counselor and the Principal. Excused Absences are at the discretion of the Principal.

Semester Exam Absence

Requests for absences that conflict with semester exams require prior approval and are subject to make-up fees. Students must complete an electronic Semester Exam Make Up Request form available on their Canvas.

Unexcused Absence

The following absences will be classified as unexcused:

- Skipping class/truancy;
- Absence is not supported by a valid excuse from the parent/guardian or physician note;
- Absence(s) determined unexcused by the Principal/Administrator/Dean.

Excessive Absences

The Administration views excessive absences as jeopardizing a student's academic performance and may result in Administrative Review. Absences (excused or unexcused) totaling seven (7) days of school in a semester, seven (7) classes of the same subject in a semester, or fifteen (15) days/classes of the same subject in a year is considered excessive and the above stated consequences may be applied as determined by the Principal. The same review will apply for any student who reaches three (3) absences, excused or unexcused, from any Enrichment (morning/afternoon) class.

Administrative Review, may result in the student being put on Attendance Probation, being denied credit, required to attend professional tutoring, required to make up the time, enroll in additional classes, and/or Administrative Review. The parent assumes the responsibility for the expenses associated with such required actions.

Tardy

Student entry to the Period A class after 8:05a.m. OR after the late bell rings each class period will be deemed tardy. A student who is tardy must proceed directly to the Attendance Office to obtain a Tardy Pass for admission to class.

All exterior access gates will be closed at 8:10a.m.. Once gates are closed, access and student drop-off is available only at the Main Office gate.

The following thresholds and consequences will apply to tardies:

- 3 tardies: 1 hour Dean's detention
- 6 tardies: 3 hour Saturday detention
- 10 tardies: 3 hour Saturday detention, make up of missed academic time;
- 15 tardies: 3 hour Saturday detention and/or make up of missed academic time, internal suspension, attendance probation and/or administrative review.

With each level of occurrence, the parent/student will be notified by the Dean of the resulting disciplinary action (detention, class make up time, parent conference, Attendance Probation, suspension, loss of class credit, Administrative Review) and expectations/consequences for infractions.

Early Dismissal

All early dismissals, other than due to illness, are highly discouraged. Excessive class absences resulting from early dismissal will be subject to review, make up of missed academic time, attendance probation and/or administrative review.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student MUST report to the clinic. The Nurse will contact the parents and arrange the dismissal. Another student is never permitted to drive an ill student home.

The request for an Early Dismissal must be received via email (attendance@aquinas-sta.org) at least 24 hours in advance. Email must include name and student ID, date, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal, name of person picking up the student or that the student will drive him/herself. Students are not allowed to drive other students off campus during school hours.

Official physician/dentist documentation is expected via email (attendance@aquinas-sta.org) within 24 hours.

Parents/Guardians who are picking up a student during school hours must park in a visitor parking and proceed to the Main Entrance. Please bring a picture ID. The security officer will have the list of pre-arranged dismissals. Only a parent/guardian or person designated on the emergency card can take a student home. The student will be dismissed from the attendance office and sent to the Main Entrance.

Student drivers will be dismissed between classes or during their lunch period. Please familiarize yourself with the daily schedule before requesting a dismissal.

Last minute phone calls for dismissals will not be processed. In case of emergency, please contact the attendance office.

Excused from class

Any student out of a classroom must have a pass from the teacher or an administrator. Students shall not be permitted to be excused from class except in an emergency. A student who becomes ill during school time MUST report to the clinic. The nurse will process the dismissal if deemed necessary.

Bullying/Harassment & Investigation Disclosures

While the School generally prohibits the nonconsensual disclosure of the information contained in educational records, limited exceptions apply including for the disclosure to victims of bullying or harassment when disciplinary sanctions or other measures relate directly to the victim.

Parents hereby consent and acknowledge that the School may, pursuant to this exception, disclose to the victims of harassment or bullying, and to their parents, any information related to disciplinary sanctions and/or other measures that relate to the harassment and/or bullying at issue regardless of whether the matters disclosed are part of an educational record.

Bus

Students who ride on a St. Thomas Aquinas High School bus or a school-chartered bus must observe all of the rules and policies that are observed on campus. Bus riders, both on the bus and at the bus stop must conduct themselves in accordance with rules of behavior outlined in this Handbook. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Cafeteria

The daily schedule includes four lunch periods. Students must show concern for others by leaving the cafeteria clean and behavior in the cafeteria should reflect courtesy and respect. Lack of cooperation will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Students may not purchase food during class time. The consumption of candy, drinks or food of any kind is prohibited in the classrooms.

Campus Ministry

The Campus Ministry Office seeks to work with the entire faculty and student population in developing the spiritual purpose and mission of the school by offering each student an organized spiritual program whereby God's grace might lead all of us closer to the Lord. Campus Ministry's primary inspiration is the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the lives of students.

The school-wide celebration of Mass takes place at various times throughout the school year. These times include Holy Days and other special occasions. A Mass or Communion Prayer Service is celebrated daily at 7:15 a.m. in the Chapel. During the school year, various experiences of spiritual formation (i.e. Penitential Services, guest speakers from the Archdiocese of Miami and the community) enhance the Campus Ministry program.

The Retreat Program will offer the students the opportunity to deepen their personal relationship with our God and thus to develop a basis for a much deeper spiritual growth and development in their lives. Grade level Retreats are offered throughout the year which are peer led and tailored to the spiritual development of the students.

Students are encouraged to participate in our Campus Ministry program, through serving as Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and servers at our school Masses. CrossRoads is the student music ministry program and is open to students at all grade levels.

Night of Fellowship is a once-a-month opportunity for students to gather for a time of prayer and fellowship. Nights of Fellowship are led by our Ministry class students.

Students who participate in the Campus Ministry program serve as peer leaders for our Retreat program and in the local church community, through service, eighth grade retreats and Confirmation Retreats given at local schools and parishes.

Canvas

Canvas is the STA Learning Management System. Canvas allows student and parent access to student academic information and progress, and provides the opportunity for dialogue between parents and student, and, if needed, between parent and teacher. The STA Administration expects consistent and constant monitoring of student academic progress via Canvas throughout the academic year.

Cell Phone & Headphone/Earpiece Usage

Cell phones must be turned off and stored during school hours. The only exception would be during the student's lunchtime in the cafeteria or on the patio. Any student phone usage during school hours, outside of the student's lunch period, must be with Dean or Administrator permission. Headphones and earpieces of any kind are prohibited during school hours.

Repeated noncompliance with these policies will result in a parent conference with the Dean and may result in disciplinary action and/or Administrative Review.

Child Protective Investigations

Florida law provides that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare must report such knowledge to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The school will cooperate with all child protective investigations by DCF or the local law enforcement agency. Reports should be made to Florida's Department of Children and Families by calling the Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will seek to notify the parents that their child has been asked to participate in a child protective investigation. The school may also request the presence of a school staff member during investigative interviews on school property. However, please note that, under Florida law, DCF and local law enforcement have the discretion to conduct unannounced interviews and to disallow school staff member's presence during these interviews.

Classroom Decorum

Students are expected to respect the academic environment of the classroom, including homeroom, at all times. No food or drink consumption permitted in the classrooms. Students are to be in their seats and attentive when the late bell rings and are not to leave the room until the bell rings to end the class. Students are expected to adhere to all behavior guidelines. Communication with the teacher regarding attendance and academic issues is the responsibility of the student.

Clinic

The clinic is available to all students who become ill or require first aid during the school day. In order to provide prompt medical assessment and treatment to students, adherence to the following policies and procedures is necessary:

1. A pass to the clinic from the teacher is required for a student to enter the clinic. The nurse will consult with the parent as needed after the student is evaluated.
2. If the student needs to be dismissed early from school due to a medical issue, he/she will only be released to the parent, guardian or designee on file OR an email from the parent to the Nurse authorizing a designee for transport.
3. If the student drives to school, he/she will only be discharged from the clinic with verbal consent from the parent, guardian or parent-provided designee.

4. Students leaving school due to an illness or injury will be dismissed from the clinic, not the attendance office.
5. Parents of students who have special health needs, chronic health conditions, or require medication must discuss the particulars with the nurse.
6. See the medication protocol stated in this handbook.

College Application Handbook & Early Decision

It is the student and parent/guardian's responsibility to read the college application policies outlined in the College Application Handbook that is distributed in the spring of junior year. If a senior applies Early Decision to a college/university and gets accepted, the School Counseling and College Advising Office cannot send transcripts to any additional schools.

Community Service Activities (Service Learning)

Community service activities are not school activities and St. Thomas Aquinas High School does not mandate or direct any specific location or locations in the community where these services are to be performed. Students are free to select the location where they wish to perform community service so long as the location and the activity meet the requirements of the school. St. Thomas Aquinas High School does not operate or control the locations where students choose to perform community service and consequently the school, its agents, and affiliates do not assume responsibility for any injuries, damages, or losses incurred in the course of performing these services in the community. Students perform these services at their own risk.

The STA Administration, Faculty and Staff support the purpose of community service hours and are committed to the requirements stated below. STA Service Learning is grounded in terms as set by the Archdiocese of Miami Department of Schools. We firmly believe in the benefits that result when the student develops the heart of a servant leader. The minimum hours stated below are just that. Excelling beyond the minimum is an informal expectation for STA students.

The STA Administration reserves the right to deny approval of hours that do not benefit those less fortunate. Political affiliations, agencies, and/or organizations that conflict with the mission of STA and/or ADOM will not be on the STA approved list and therefore, the hours will not be approved.

Annual Requirements

- The student is required to post 25 hours PER YEAR while enrolled at STA.
- The minimum number of hours required for transfer students is determined by STA enrollment date: 25 per year/12.5 per semester.
- As part of the third quarter Theology grade, ALL STUDENTS must submit a reflection paper on the service provided during the previous marking periods. If a minimum 15 hours are not posted to Service Track at the time of the assignment,

an irreversible grade of “55” will be posted. The assignment due date will be determined by the Department Chair with approval from Administration.

Deadlines

- **Grades 9-11:** The minimum number of hours must be posted to Service Track by 8:00a.m., the last day of regular classes in June.
 - Failure to meet the minimum by the above date will result in the student’s account being placed on “hold” immediately after final exams in June and will remain until service hours are current and could result in Administrative Review.
- **Grade 11:** Juniors must be current (75 hours) by the end of the last regular school day of Third Quarter or will receive a “55” for the third quarter Theology grade.
- **Grade 12:**
 - The deadline for Seniors to be eligible for Graduation is 8:00am, the Friday before Senior exams.
 - The deadline for Service Hour Honors for Seniors, exceeding 500 hours, is May 1st.

Service Hour Guidelines & Approval Information

- Service Hour submissions to Service Track are subject to the STA Integrity Policy, Disciplinary and Administrative Review.
- All non-STA service efforts must be posted by the student via ServiceTrack following the posted guidelines.
- as part of an STA project/activity will be posted by the STA teacher, moderator, coach;
- must benefit STA approved, 501c3 non-profit organization, listed on ServiceTrack for approval;
- must be submitted in a timely manner for expedited approval;
- associated with controversial issues (i.e. social, political, economic, etc.) or that fail to align with the mission of STA are subject to administrative approval; and
- are not awarded/accepted for donations of items; work in an office or place of business (i.e. doctor/dentist, attorney, realtor); or paid positions/internships, babysitting, day-care assistance, animal care, dance studio, karate classes, professional athletic events, etc.

Conduct

Students and Parents are expected to behave consistent with the mission, philosophy and spirit of the school and the moral teachings of the Catholic faith as determined by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Miami. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to take any form of (1) student disciplinary action, including administrative withdrawal and/or (2) restrictions against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this handbook.

Respect shall be shown towards all students, faculty, and staff members at all times. Students have a right to a safe environment. They are not to be threatened or frightened by other students. Demeaning, degrading, obscene, or sexual remarks or actions to another student or teacher are considered serious violations of our school philosophy. Representation of, and/or behavior that is considered counter cultural, socially unacceptable, or against school beliefs and values are subject to disciplinary action. It is the practice of St. Thomas Aquinas High School to cooperate with law enforcement officers that contact the school in the course of any criminal investigation.

Stealing is not tolerated. Students guilty of this offense will be subject to disciplinary consequences/Administrative Review and must also make restitution.

Fighting is not tolerated. Any student involved in fighting on campus or at any school-sponsored activity is subject to suspension/probation and Administrative Review. Students who provoke such actions are subject to disciplinary consequences/Administrative Review.

Language unbecoming a Christian young lady or gentleman is not tolerated. Such behavior reflects disrespect for the student and lack of consideration for others who may be offended by unbecoming, foul, or obscene language. Students who verbally abuse other students, faculty/staff members, or threaten them with physical harm are subject to probation/suspension and/or Administrative Review.

COVID 19 and Related Items

Attendance at school and participation in school activities poses some risks including the transmission of COVID-19 and exposure to related variants. Although the school has taken various measures to reduce the risks of transmission, the possibility of infection from COVID-19 or other communicable diseases is nonetheless present. Parents expressly assume such risks by allowing their children to attend school and participate in school activities and/or by coming onto the school campus and attending school activities themselves.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which in the judgment of the school administration make it unfeasible, unsafe or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school educational programs shall resume as soon as practical by way of distance learning and/or other methods. There will be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition in these circumstances.

Digital Citizenship

Any student who posts, shares, likes, comments, distributes or follows any social media account (including anonymous social media accounts) that presents any media that displays STA property damage or defacement, bullying, sexual harassment, false allegations etc. may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: verbal reprimand, temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may

be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion. This applies to all aspects of media, social or otherwise.

Dignity of the Individual

The protection, safety and dignity of each student and staff member is paramount. Whether during the school day or at any other time, it is essential that we seek to assure the health and good name of each individual. In keeping with our Catholic values, deliberate defamation of others will not be tolerated. The use of social media is strongly discouraged when it violates the mission of the school and is harmful/hurtful. Each person will be held accountable for his/her actions. Assaults, threats, or the invasion of the personal space of another student, faculty or staff members will not be tolerated. Violations of these policies will be dealt with in the most serious manner, resulting in disciplinary consequences/Administrative Review.

Discipline

Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, detention, suspension and/or Administrative Review. These measures may be imposed separately or progressively as the situation indicates. Students who are persistently troublesome, habitually unruly or uncooperative, or students who refuse to improve after repeated counseling make themselves unwelcome at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. The school retains the right to discipline students and refuse re-enrollment at St. Thomas. If the Administration deems the situation of a serious nature, the student may be asked to withdraw from school immediately.

The Administration or the Dean's Office reserves the right to interview any student at any time regarding investigations of infractions of school policies or rules at school or at school sponsored events without prior parental notification or permission. When the situation warrants such an inquiry, due to the timing/sensitivity of the issue, the Dean/Administration reserves the right to decide whether parents will be notified prior to the inquiry. The number and length of any student interview is at the discretion of the Dean/Administration. The Dean(s)/Administration may request a student to provide information regarding such an investigation either orally or in writing. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary consequences. Any student who makes a false statement when providing oral or written information will be subject to disciplinary consequences and/or Administrative Review.

Detentions are given for lateness to school, dress code infractions, disciplinary referrals, and other infractions as determined by the Administration. Students will serve detentions within 48 hours. Failure to do so will result in a Saturday detention. Students who receive or have accumulated 3 or more unserved detentions in a marking period may receive additional consequences including Saturday Detention, suspension, disciplinary probation, and/or Administrative Review.

Students must turn off their phone, laptop(Chromebook), smart watch AND any type of electronic device during any formal verbal interaction with a Dean or Administrator. These devices are turned over to the Dean/Attendance/Administrator during the interview. STA expects

students to practice candor in their written and verbal statements with any teacher, Dean or Administrator. Any violation of these expectations the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences including Administrative Review.

Disciplinary Audit

The Dean(s)/Administration may implement a Disciplinary Review for any student that has a serious infraction, multiple infractions or current Probation Contract. Any student recommended for Disciplinary Review will be notified in person. The Dean(s)/Administration will evaluate the student record.

If a student is asked to withdraw grades will be submitted as is. The student must withdraw within 24 hours to avoid Administrative Withdrawal.

A student may be asked by the Administration to withdraw for any serious infraction or series of infractions at any time during the school year.

Dress Code

Students are expected to be in complete uniform upon arrival to campus. Uniform checks will be conducted randomly by faculty, staff, Deans and Administration. Violations of the dress code below will result in disciplinary action.

First infraction: detention. Second infraction: Saturday detention. Students who violate this policy a third time will be subject to Suspension and/or Administrative Review. Multiple uniform infractions may result in Saturday detention, Dean/Parent conference, probation, and/or suspension. Students may be required to change into the proper uniform attire and parents notified. The regular school day dress code, expected of all students, is as follows:

Pants: Khaki or Navy pants, available only at Debbie's Uniforms; worn at the waist. A student who is not able to wear the uniform pants (injury, surgery, etc) is expected to wear sweatpants. With the permission of the Dean only, thigh length shorts may be permitted.

Belt: Black or brown belt required when the shirt is tucked in.

Shoes (socks required): Sneakers may be all black, all white or any combination of black and white. No other color is acceptable. Shoes are to be worn properly, avoiding the heel of the foot being exposed, and must be worn as students enter the school campus. Flip flops, crocs, any backless shoes are prohibited. Medical shoes that meet the uniform guidelines must be approved by the Nurse/Dean and require a physician's order.

Shirt: Navy and blue/white uniform shirts can be purchased in the Campus Store only. The uniform shirt must be worn at all times during the school day.

Outerwear: An official STA school, team, club jackets and sweatshirt only may be worn during the school day. Official STA hoodies are permitted. The hood of the sweatshirt is not allowed to be worn on the head at any time.

Hair (Boys): Well groomed Extreme hairstyles or hair coloring are not permitted and not to extend below the collar or cover the eyes. Natural hair colors only are permitted. Pink, blue, green, purple, etc. hair colors are not permitted. Exotic hairstyles, colors or completely shaved heads are not acceptable.

Facial hair: Boys must be clean shaven and sideburns limited to the bottom of the ear.

Hair (Girls): Natural hair colors only are permitted. Pink, blue, green, purple, etc. hair colors are not permitted.

Jewelry (Boys): Earrings, tongue/nose jewelry may NOT be worn during the school day. Band-aids or spacers may not be worn to cover them. Visible body piercings are not permitted.

Jewelry (Girls): Tongue/nose jewelry may NOT be worn during the school day. Band-aids may not be worn to cover them. Visible body piercings are not permitted.

Other: Headdresses, hats, bandannas, beads, waist chains, and visible tattoos that are offensive, obscene, inciting, or subversive and counter-culture symbols are unacceptable.

The following will also result in disciplinary consequence(s):

- Earpods are not to be worn at any time during the school day without teacher/Dean/Administrator permission.
- Drawing/writing on any part of the STA uniform is a violation.
- Failure to wear official STA ID and appropriate grade level lanyard.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs by any student on school property or while attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity or at any time the student is wearing a school uniform is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include administrative withdrawal from the school, even for a first offense.

Any student selling drugs on school property or at school functions may result in a disciplinary response, up to and including administrative withdrawal.

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse. It may also involve the use of drug dogs and other methods in the discretion of the school administration which seek to deter the use and/or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol.

If a student exhibits the symptoms, or is suspected of substance abuse, the school may require that the student undergo substance abuse testing at the parents' expense. If the results of the test suggest abuse (and the substance was not used on or brought to campus or a school-related activity), the school will normally use this information to help the student seek assistance. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in administrative withdrawal from the school.

At times, the school may choose to conduct random drug testing of the student body at the parents' expense.

A school may conduct random searches as set forth in this handbook.

The STA Administration is committed to enforcing a drug and alcohol policy that is educational. The intent is to provide a safe school environment while increasing student awareness and provide assistance to families when possible. The administration reserves the right to administer random/announced drug and alcohol tests during the school day or at STA sponsored events including but not limited to requiring a student to submit a hair sample. The school may invite the drug canine unit from the local law enforcement agency to enter campus for drug detection purposes.

Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment courses include: World Religions, Multi-Cultural Studies, Philosophy II, Ethics, Pre-Calculus: Trigonometry, Calculus 1, Calculus III, Ordinary Differential Equations, Composition, Composition and Literature, Marine Biology, Ecology, Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Spanish for Speakers 1, Spanish for Speakers 2, Human Anatomy & Physiology I, and Human Anatomy & Physiology II. All fees for Dual Enrollment courses must be paid to the university at the indicated deadline.. Failure to do so will result in the university not allowing students to take additional dual enrollment courses. . Every college and university has their own policy for granting college credit taken in high school. Dual Enrollment credit may not be honored at all post secondary institutions.

Electronic Acknowledgments

*Periodically, the school may require that parents or guardians make electronic acknowledgments confirming the receipt and/or acceptance of various policies, procedures, notices, releases or updates. Any time a parent/guardian makes an electronic acknowledgment by clicking "submit" or "accept" on an electronic document, that individual is agreeing that he/she has read, understood, and agrees to be bound by the contents of the electronic document. Electronic acknowledgments and signatures are valid and binding and may serve as consent to the contents of any electronic communication. Parents and guardians are responsible for reviewing the contents of any electronic document prior to making any electronic acknowledgments. In addition, **Parents/Guardians, by executing the acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE** to receive and be bound by electronic acknowledgments.*

Emergency Communication & Procedures

The choice for emergency communication procedures rests with the Principal. Email, phone calls, and/or text messaging will be used for emergency communication. Postings to the STA website and Canvas will be used in “non-emergency” situations. St. Thomas Aquinas High School will consider the decisions of the Broward County School Board. However, the ultimate decision rests with the STA Administration, with approval from the Archdiocese of Miami Department of Schools.

Fire drills are held as required by law and in cooperation with the Fire Marshal’s requests. Every fire drill must be taken seriously. When the alarm sounds, the building must be evacuated by everyone immediately. Silence is maintained throughout the drill—leaving and returning. Students should follow the route posted in each classroom. Students who do not adhere to the required directions will be subject to disciplinary action. Lock-down and tornado drills are also conducted to insure the safety of our school community. St. Thomas Aquinas High School fully cooperates with the Ft. Lauderdale Police Department and the Broward County Sheriff’s Office. From time to time, the school grants permission to local agencies for training purposes.

Exceptional Student Services

Any parent/student seeking accommodations must submit in writing to the ESS Coordinator. The ESS Coordinator will review and respond to requests within 30 school days. The ESS Coordinator will submit requests for accommodations on standardized testing to the College Board and ACT. Decisions on accommodations requests are at the discretion of the College Board and the ACT. Parents are encouraged to connect directly with the College Board and ACT regarding questions about accommodations on testing.

Event Behavior and Dress

STA enforces a “CLEAR BAG POLICY” for all extracurricular events admitting non-STA students/faculty/staff as guests.

The STA school uniform is required for all events during the school day unless otherwise approved by the Administration. Students should dress appropriately and tastefully at all St. Thomas Aquinas High School events. When appropriate, specific dress codes are posted and must be strictly followed. Students who dress inappropriately may be denied admission to the event and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students are responsible for their guests’ behavior and appearance at all school events. Only students currently enrolled at St. Thomas Aquinas High School may attend St. Thomas dances. Students must be in attendance at school as prescribed by the Administration or may forfeit the privilege to attend the event.

Unless otherwise stated, the following dress codes provide parents and students the primary dress guidelines for school events on/off campus. Dress code violations will be addressed on

site by the Dean/Administrator. Disciplinary action will result. Extreme violations could result in the student not being admitted to the event, Saturday detention and/or suspension.

Be sure to refer to event info on Canvas and/or the STA website for details regarding specific events (i.e. bag check, ID requirements, check-in, permission forms, cost, etc.)

NOTE: AS OF AUGUST 2023, ATTENDANCE AT PROM AND OTHER SUCH EVENTS, AS DETERMINED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND POSTED, WILL BE RESTRICTED TO STA STUDENTS ONLY.

FORMAL (Prom)

Required for ladies:

Floor/ankle length dress

No extreme plunging necklines

No exposed bare midriff, side cutouts, or visible undergarments

No slits above straight arm fingertip length

Required for gentlemen:

Formal suit/tuxedo, collared dress shirt & tie required

Dress shoes (no athletic/gym shoes)

No hats, canes, jeans

Well-groomed and clean-shaven. No earrings.

HOMECOMING

Dress for ladies:

Formal length dress OR straight arm/fingertip at the thigh length dress.

Dressy shoes/sandals

Unacceptable:

Visible undergarments, extreme cleavage, exposed bare middle, flip flops, athletic shoes

Dress for gentlemen:

Dress shirt & tie

Dress pants & belt

Dress shoes

Unacceptable:

Hats, canes, athletic shoes, jeans

INFORMAL DRESS CODE (Ring Day Mass, honor society inductions, awards dinners/ceremonies, Baccalaureate Mass, etc.)

Required for Girls:

Maxi skirts/dresses or dress pants/pantsuits.

Jacket, sweater, or sleeved blouse must cover the shoulders. No tank tops, thin strapped, or low cut tops are permitted.

Dress shoes/sandals with backs are required. No flip-flops, sneakers, crocs, etc.

Required for Guys:

Dress pants, belt, dress shoes and socks collared dress shirt & tie.

Dress shoes (no sneakers, flip flops, crocs, etc.).

Well-groomed and clean-shaven. No earrings.

Field Trips

Participation in a school sponsored field trip is a privilege. A student can attend a field trip if in good standing academically and behaviorally, and free of excessive absences/lates. In order to attend a field trip, students must present all required forms by an established due date. The STA uniform will be worn on all field trips, unless decided otherwise by an administrator. Student behavior during field trips is to reflect the policies in the Parent-Student Handbook. Any incidence of misbehavior will result in administrative action, including, but not limited to, Saturday detention, probation, suspension, loss of senior privileges, including prom attendance, graduation exercises, and senior breakfast attendance, and/or prohibited from future field trips.

Financial Obligations

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester, or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or administratively withdraw the student if any financial obligations are not met.

The Administration reserves the right to place a student account on “hold”. This action prohibits the student and/or parent from access to Canvas/schedule, prohibits student from taking semester or final examinations, ceases the processing of transcripts or any other student records, and/or disallows participation in or access to school activities. The Administration reserves the right to disenroll the student if any financial obligations are not met.

Step UP for Students Income Based Scholarship is accepted at STA.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship

For detailed requirements, descriptions and the Bright Futures Handbook, visit <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org>

Florida Academic Scholarship

- 3.5 recalculated Bright Futures core GPA

- 1330 SAT or 29 ACT

- 100 community service hours

Florida Medallion Scholarship

- 3.0 recalculated Bright Futures core GPA

- 1210 SAT or 25 ACT

- 75 community service hours

Students and parents are responsible for filing their own Florida Bright Futures Scholarship application. All test scores must be sent directly from the testing agency. Students must request test scores be sent to one of Florida’s 12 state universities or Florida state colleges (public

community colleges) when the student registers for the ACT®/SAT® so the scores will be sent to the FDOE repository. Students can also mail an official copy (no photocopies) of the test scores in the original sealed envelope to the attention of 'Home Ed' at the address:

Florida Department of Education
Office of Student Financial Assistance
Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1314
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400.

Students have until June 30th to meet the Bright Futures requirements and submit their Florida Financial Aid Application.

Fundraising

No student or family member may solicit funds in the school's name unless such solicitation has been authorized in writing by the principal.

All fundraising efforts must receive approval from the Assistant Principal of Student Affairs. The Administration reserves the right to stop all unapproved fundraising efforts immediately, secure and distribute the funds to a worthy cause.

Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)

The G.P.A. is calculated using semester grades only and posted officially on the grade report each semester. The letter grade is converted to a quality point number as follows:

A = 4 quality points
B = 3 quality points
C = 2 quality points
D = 1 quality point
F = 0 quality points

The weighted G.P.A. is the sum of quality points per course (including appropriate honors/AP weight below) divided by the potential semester credits. Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses are assigned added weight as follows:

* = .5
** = 1.0
**** = 2.0

Grading

Grade reports are issued quarterly, four (4) times a year at the end of each grading period.

A formal parent/teacher conference is usually held at the end of the first quarter.

All classes, except Personal Fitness (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory), receive a numerical grade.

Any middle school student passing a high school-level course may be granted a high school credit with a numerical grade. The grade is included in the G.P.A.

Also, students must maintain a semester 2.0 G.P.A. (unweighted) in order to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities.

Credits are determined on a semester basis. A passing grade of 60% allows a student to earn one-half (0.5) credit each semester in a given course.

The grade received by the student reflects success in meeting the teacher requirements and expectations within a particular area of study. Course grades are as follows:

90 – 100	Excellent (A)
80 – 89	Above Average (B)
70 – 79	Average (C)
60 – 69	Below Average (D)
50 – 59	Failure (F)

The Conduct Grade is reflective of how students conduct themselves. Any infraction of conduct will adversely impact a student's conduct grade as well as frequent disruptive behavior and a disregard for stated rules. The Conduct Grade reflects the following:

- (1) Excellent: The student always follows classroom/school rules and procedures without being reminded.
- (2) Good: The student usually follows classroom/school rules and procedures without being reminded.
- (3) Satisfactory: The student usually follows classroom/school rules and procedures when reminded.
- (4) Unsatisfactory: The student frequently disregards classroom/school rules and procedures. Consequences have been ineffective in resolving behavioral issues.

The Industry Grade is reflective of how students apply themselves to the learning process. A student's failure to complete assigned work, to pay attention during class time, and to follow directions are but a few circumstances that may result in a low effort grade. The Industry grade is applied as follows:

- (1) Excellent: The student's academic performance significantly and consistently demonstrates mastery and application of course standards taught to date.
- (2) Good: The student's academic performance consistently demonstrates growth in mastery and application of standards taught to date.
- (3) Satisfactory: The student's academic performance demonstrates fundamental growth in mastery and application of standards taught to date.
- (4) Unsatisfactory: The student's academic performance does not demonstrate fundamental growth in mastery and application of standards taught to date.

An Incomplete Grade may be given only at the end of the first and third quarters if a student has been absent due to illness, injury, or reason approved by the Administration. All outstanding assignments and assessments must be completed within three (3) weeks of the new quarter.

Graduation Academic Distinctions

The GPA to determine Graduation distinctions is computed using grades from courses taken at STA and any courses with an appropriate FLDOE number taken during middle school. In addition, this includes any administratively-approved online course(s).

The **Valedictorian and Salutatorian** of the graduating class are determined at the end of the third quarter marking period of the Senior year by the highest weighted cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) and by completion of all credit requirements. The GPA for Valedictorian/Salutatorian will be computed using grades from courses taken at STA and any courses with an appropriate FLDOE number taken during middle school. In addition, this includes any administratively-approved online course. A student must have been in attendance at St. Thomas Aquinas High School from the beginning (first day) of the Sophomore year and have an exemplary disciplinary and attendance record to be considered.

Summa cum Laude recognition is given at graduation to those students whose weighted GPA is 5.0 or higher (no rounding up) at the end of the 4th Quarter marking period, a date determined by the Administration.

Graduation Requirements

Participation in the graduation ceremony requires satisfactory completion of all school requirements and is at the discretion of the Administration. Receipt of the diploma presumes that all academic requirements have been met and that the student has satisfactorily participated in the graduation ceremony.

The requirements for the STA diploma are as follows:

- Minimum 24.5 credits (24 must be STA credits without Principal approval);
- Students must be enrolled full time, a minimum of six (6) subjects each year;
- A cumulative 2.0 unweighted G.P.A. is required to be eligible for a diploma;
- Regardless of whether the total number of credits accumulated to date meet or exceed the minimum credit requirements the student must be enrolled as a full time senior year student at STA to be eligible for participation in graduation ceremonies and a diploma;
- *Every student in an ADOM school must take the ACT prior to graduation/diploma;* and
- These courses:
 - Theology (4)
 - English (4)
 - Mathematics (4)
 - Science (3)
 - Social Studies (3)
 - World Languages (2 years same language) *
 - Electives (2)
 - Fine Arts (1)
 - Personal Fitness (.5) completed prior to August 1st Sophomore year
 - Health (.5) completed prior to August 1st Sophomore year
 - Online Course (.5)

*NOTE: Although STA & Bright Futures requires only 2 consecutive years of the same language credits, most universities recommend a minimum of 3 credits.

Harassment and Discrimination

The school is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy. In addition, this policy applies to all conduct occurring on school grounds, at assignments outside the school, or at school-sponsored events. All students are responsible for helping to assure that any harassment or discrimination is reported. If a student witnesses or learns of any conduct that violates this policy, the student must immediately report the incident to his/her principal. If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Miami. If an investigation reveals that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will take corrective action based on the circumstances.

Hazing

St. Thomas Aquinas High School has a zero tolerance policy on hazing, whether it be on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity. According to Section 1006.135 of the Florida statutes, hazing is defined as "...any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student at a high school with grades 9 through 12 for purposes, including, but not limited to, pressuring or coercing the student into violating state or federal law, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance, or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student, and also includes any activity that would subject the student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the student."

Honor Roll

To qualify for the quarterly Honor Roll, a student must achieve the following weighted G.P.A.s:

Principal's Honor Roll.....	4.50 G.P.A. or above
First Honors.....	4.00 G.P.A. to 4.49 G.P.A.
Second Honors.....	3.75 G.P.A. to 3.99 G.P.A.

No student receiving a (4) "unsatisfactory" in Industry or Conduct or a failing grade is eligible for Honor Roll.

Hours

The campus is open for all students at 6:45 a.m. After 4:00 pm daily, all students who are still on campus are restricted to the front of the gym for pickup. The Main Entrance gates are closed at 4:00 p.m. daily.

Main Office Hours: School Days 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. July: 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

Campus Store Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

ID/Lanyard

As part of the STA Security Plan, students are required to wear the ID/Lanyard to enter campus and at all times during the school day. Students will be required to purchase a ID/Lanyard replacement (\$5) from the Campus Store. A detention will be issued when the ID/Lanyard when the ID/Lanyard is not worn properly. A student will be subject to further disciplinary consequences for repeated incidents (i.e. Saturday detentions, suspensions, and Administrative Review.

Immunizations

The Archdiocese of Miami requires that, prior to attendance in school, each student present or have on file with the school a certificate of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health. A Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) completed by a health care provider participating in Florida Shots is required to document the administration of prescribed immunization doses or to document a permanent or temporary exemption therefrom. An exemption from immunization requirements is permissible only with a physician's certification as to the need for either a temporary or permanent medical exemption. An exemption from immunization requirements is not permissible for religious, philosophical, personal, or other reasons.

Locks & Lockers

The student is responsible for all personal property while on campus, including the use of school lockers. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage to any student's property. There are a limited number of lockers available for student use in homerooms. Personal Fitness and athletic lockers are to be used for relative items and locked at all times. Only STA locks may be used on STA lockers. Personal Fitness/athletic locks will be issued by the teacher/coach. Other locks may be purchased in the Campus Store. The administration reserves the right to search student lockers at any time without notice.

Loitering

Students are not permitted to loiter or socialize in the STA parking areas, including inside vehicles. Upon entry into a vehicle the student is expected to leave the campus. Students are expected to follow the directives of school security personnel. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension and/or Administrative Review.

Lost and Found (Valuables)

All lost articles are brought to the Dean's Office. Items can be claimed, within 2 weeks, with proper identification. Students must be responsible for protecting their property at all times.

Students must keep anything they consider valuable (cell phone, cash, etc.) on their person and with them at all times during the school day. Students who bring valuable items to school do so at their own risk. The school will not be held liable for any lost, stolen or damaged personal items.

Make-Up Policy

All tests and quizzes missed due to an absence must be made up. It is the student's responsibility to confer with the teacher concerning makeup work, tests and quizzes. Makeup work, tests and quizzes must be completed within three (3) days, not including the date of return for credit. Failure to complete make up work, test or quizzes within three (3) days will result in a zero for the missed make up work, test or quiz. An extension may be granted at the teacher's discretion. In the case of a prolonged excused or unexcused absence (five (5) consecutive days or more), arrangements for make-up work, tests and quizzes are coordinated with the teacher through the Guidance Department.

Medication Guidelines

Except as authorized by the school, students are not permitted to carry or distribute any prescription or non-prescription drugs or treatments, including aspirin, on the school grounds or at any school function. The administering of medicine to a student outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should only be delegated to school personnel when necessary and authorized by the school. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so it can be administered at home. Only when necessary will the school allow the administration of medication on campus, and only under the following guidelines:

- 1. An authorization form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.*

2. *Medications to be dispensed at school should be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosage. The name and telephone number of the physician should also be on the label.*
3. *While the school may monitor a student taking the medication, the school will not remind students to come and take their medication.*

Exceptions to this policy may be made for the use, supply and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection (EpiPen), or as otherwise authorized in writing by the school. In particular circumstances, the school may agree to administer medication or otherwise provide health care interventions that go beyond a minor adjustment for a particular student. In those cases, Parents hereby release the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of those health care interventions that are beyond minor adjustments.

Non-Custodial Parent/Student Records

Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.

The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents will be given access to the academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent is denied access to such information.

Notification of Rights under FERPA

For the purposes of College Applications and scholarships, most universities expect and encourage students to waive their FERPA right to view their recommendations. The STA Office of School Counseling & College Advisement also recommends students waive their right to FERPA. For more information, please visit [What is the FERPA Waiver? \(commonapp.org\)](http://commonapp.org)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. *The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.*

Parents or eligible students should complete the Request for Release of Student Records and submit it to the School principal (or appropriate school official) identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. *The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.*

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. *The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.*

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. *The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:*

*Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920*

Online Courses

The State of Florida requires that ALL students take a 0.5 credit on-line course in order to receive a high school diploma. On-line courses must be taken via ADOM Virtual, unless authorized by the Principal. Students are permitted to remediate previously failed courses and courses with a grade of D or F through ADOM Virtual. Any additional online course requests exceeding the 0.5 ADOM Virtual mandatory graduation credit or remediation courses must be approved by the Principal.

Open Admission Policy

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. Nor does the school discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

Parental Cooperation

The school views the education of a student as a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents and students are expected to comply with the school rules and policies, and to accept and support the authority of school officials, whether it be at school events, on or off school campus, or on social media or other public forum. Just as a parent can withdraw a child from the school if desired, the school has the right to administratively withdraw a student if it determines at its discretion that the parent or student partnership with the school is irretrievably broken.

Parking and Driving on Campus

The school provides security for the gated parking areas on campus. Administrators, law enforcement, teachers/staff, and school security will report security and behavior issues when observed. Behavior that may appear to compromise the dignity of the student or be in violation of this Handbook, in any way, will result in disciplinary action including detention, suspension, or administrative withdrawal. The administration reserves the right to determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior in a Catholic school. Students are forbidden to loiter in or around vehicles on campus at any time. Social gatherings, of any kind are forbidden, in or around cars at any time.

The perimeter of the school is patrolled by the City of Ft. Lauderdale Police. Additionally, the school maintains that student behavior expectations, as stated in this Handbook, apply to these areas.

Students are expected to report any accidents, incidents, or damage that occurs in the school garage, school parking lot or school grounds to an Administrator immediately. When the administration deems necessary, these reports will be directed to the police officer on campus or the proper authorities for resolution.

Driving and parking on St. Thomas Aquinas High School property is considered a privilege. The administration reserves the right to deny that privilege to students who violate STA parking policies. The school is not responsible for any vehicle or its contents. Student vehicles must be registered and a parking decal must be purchased annually from the Student Activities Office. All cars must visibly display the valid decal at all times during the school day.

- Owners of vehicles without decals will be fined and administrative action will result.

- Vehicles should be locked at all times.
- The posted speed limit on campus, for all vehicles, is 5 m.p.h.
- Drivers are expected to obey directives from local law enforcement and school security while driving on and around campus.
- Numerous school zones and traffic surround the school and speed limits are enforced.
- Parking in marked disability spaces without a valid permit is subject to fines as posted.
- Marked faculty and visitor parking areas/spaces are reserved exclusively.
- Student vehicles may be searched randomly.
- Loitering in the parking areas before/after school is prohibited.
- Students are not permitted to enter the parking areas or attend to their car during the school day without permission from the Dean's Office or an administrator.
- Writing on or vandalizing vehicles is prohibited on campus.
- Any student who exhibits unsafe driving witnessed by any administrator, teacher, security, or staff will lose parking privileges on campus and will face disciplinary action.
- Reckless driving is not tolerated and disciplinary action will be taken as well as notification and engagement with law enforcement when appropriate.

Participation in School Athletics/Organizations

Parents acknowledge that participation in these sports, activities, or clubs may be inherently dangerous and, the school cannot ensure the safety of all students involved in its activities and programs.

*Prior to participation in any sport, each student must complete the Parent Consent and Release of Liability form and a physician's certificate to the effect that the student is physically fit for participation in the sport. Participation includes pre-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts and practice. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to participation in any sports, leagues, clubs, activities, or volunteer service-hour programs.***

The school is not responsible for student participation in any sports, leagues, activities, or clubs not identified above. Parents hereby acknowledge that students who participate in any such program or activity do so at their own risk. Parents further acknowledge that the school does not control or sanction any such program or activity and that it shall not be held liable for any injuries or damages sustained by students or others arising from participation in such program or activities.

For purposes of this handbook, a club is defined as a group of individuals dedicated to a particular interest or activity and a league is defined as a group of teams or individuals participating in an athletic activity.

The school recognizes the following sports, activities and clubs:

Honor Societies:

- International Thespian Society
- National Art Honor Society
- National Athletic Honor Society
- National English Honor Society
- National Forensic League
- National French Honor Society
- National Honor Society (Veritas Chapter)
- National Honor Society for Dance
- National Italian Honor Society
- National Mu Alpha Theta (Math) Honor Society
- National Science Honor Society
- National Spanish Honor Society
- National Technical Honor Society
- Quill and Scroll
- Rho Kappa (National Social Studies Honor Society)
- Tri-M Music Honor Society

School Clubs:

- Aquinas Kindness
- Art Club
- Best Buddies International
- Campus Ministry
- C.A.R.E.
- Chess Club
- Crossroads (Music Ministry)
- Digital Art Club
- Forensics & Debate
- French Club
- Friends of St. Francis Assisi
- Future Business Leaders
- Future Healthcare Professionals
- Interact
- Junior Classical League
- Marching Band/Orchestra/
Concert Band
- Marine Biology Club
- Military Affairs Club
- Model United Nations
- Photography Club
- Raider Review (Digital Publication)
- Raiders for Life
- Recycling Corps
- Silver Knights
- Social Justice
- Spanish Club
- STEM (Robotics/Engineering)

Student Council
STAsis (Film Club)
Thespians (Drama)
Veritas (Yearbook)
Witness for Christ (Liturgy Ministry)

Major School Activities:

Annual Auction
Art Shows
Back-to-School Night
Cailini
Cappies Drama Awards
Catholic Schools' Week
Class Masses
Drama Productions
Encounters and Retreats
Freshman Forum
Homecoming Week
& Dances
Honor Society Inductions
& Service Projects
Math Field Day
Miami Herald Silver Knight Awards
Open House
Parent Teacher Conferences
Pep Rallies
Senior Ring Mass
Senior Sunrise Family Mass
Senior Thanksgiving
"Feed a Family" Mass & Project
Voter Registration Drive

Athletics:

Varsity

Baseball
Basketball—Boys & Girls
Bowling—Boys & Girls
Cheerleading
Cross Country—Boys & Girls
Flag Football - Girls
Football
Golf—Boys & Girls
Lacrosse—Boys & Girls
Soccer—Boys & Girls
Softball
Swimming—Boys & Girls
Tennis—Boys & Girls
Track—Boys & Girls
Volleyball—Boys & Girls

Water Polo–Boys & Girls
Wrestling

Junior Varsity

Baseball
Basketball–Boys and Girls
Cheerleading
Football
Golf–Boys
Lacrosse–Boys & Girls
Softball
Soccer–Boys & Girls
Volleyball–Girls
Wrestling

Freshman

Baseball
Basketball
Football

Participation in athletic activities includes: pre/post-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts, practice, and competition.

Prior to participation in any sport, the following must be on file in the Athletic Office:

- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation Form (annually after June 1)
- Consent and Release from Liability Form with proof of insurance
- Parent Permission Form
- Concussion and Heat-Related Illness Form
- Affidavit of Compliance with Policy on Athletic Recruiting (transfer students only)
- Club Participation Form (Freshmen and transfer students only)

These forms are available in the Athletic Office. Additionally, a Baseline Concussion Test must be performed and all students must take three (3) courses on-line: Concussion in Sports, Sudden Cardiac Arrest, Heat Illness Prevention. Completion certificates must be submitted to the Athletic Office prior to competition.

The weight room and fitness center are open to all St. Thomas Aquinas High School students who have the above listed participation forms on file in the Athletic Office. The usage of these facilities is allowed only under proper supervision.

Students who are absent during the school day, or are suspended from school, may not participate in any practice or athletic event that afternoon or evening.

All qualified students may try out for membership on sports teams and in extra-curricular activities. The school is committed to providing everyone a fair chance to participate. Unfortunately, not everyone who tries out can be accepted. The decision of the coach, in conjunction with the Athletic Director or the decision of the moderator, in consultation with the

Principal, is final. Parents are encouraged to help their students understand that not everyone will be selected.

The athletic program is under the jurisdiction of the Florida High School Activities Association and is a member of Broward County Athletic Association. Students must meet the standards of academic achievement as set forth by the FHSAA and St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

In order to participate in marching band, dance team, flag corps, cheerleading, and athletics, a student must maintain an unweighted cumulative grade point average of 2.0.

High standards of citizenship reflective of the Christian person are expected from the student-athlete at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. These standards must be demonstrated not only during the season of activity but during the entire school year.

The school believes proper citizenship should be demonstrated by both the student-athlete and his/her coaches both on and off campus. Therefore, if a student or coach is involved in any incident that would cast an unwholesome reflection on the school and its athletic program, the student or coach will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school and any applicable FHSAA fines.

The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) has authorized a minimum of \$500 fine to be assessed for storming the playing field, court or pool during or after an athletic event. This fine will be increased based upon the severity of the incident. Individuals who violate this rule will be assessed the fine. The student will also be subject to the school's disciplinary policies.

Personal Space

Assaults, threats, or the invasion of the personal space of faculty/staff members or other students will not be tolerated. Violations will be dealt with in the most serious manner, resulting in probation, suspension and/or Administrative Review.

The teacher's desk is their private domain. Students must respect the right of privacy of each teacher. Removal of any property from a teacher's desk, without teacher permission, may be cause for Administrative Review.

Any student making or threatening to make a false accusation about a faculty and/or staff member will face disciplinary consequences including Administrative Review.

PrimeTime (iBroadcast & Test Prep: Edge in Testing)

Students are expected to be timely and maintain appropriate classroom decorum during all PrimeTime sessions. Students are expected to stand for prayer and pledge, participate fully and respectfully in all PrimeTime activities. These are mandatory academic sessions that occur during Period A. Students are expected to be seated, quiet, and attentive for all presentations. Presentations cover a variety of topics.

Freshmen, Sophomores, & Juniors

STA PrimeTime sessions present standardized testing strategies to underclassmen students, during Period A on regular scheduled school days. Monthly practice exams, relative to the presentations, will be administered in English and Math classes. Each practice exam will be graded and valued as determined by the Math and English teacher. The exam is approved by the English & Math Department Chairs and/or Administration. The Period A teacher is responsible for facilitating the presentation of the content. Review and Q & A of testing content may take place after some presentations.

Seniors

During Semester 1, Senior PrimeTime sessions will include Test Prep, focus on college counseling, and academic work with the Guidance Counselors.

Seniors will view iBroadcasts as presented by the PrimeTime Team and Administration during Semester 2.

Printing Services

The Campus Store provides printing services for students, \$.25 per page excluding cover sheet. See Canvas for details.

Privacy Statement

St. Thomas Aquinas High School values the privacy of EVERY administrator, faculty, staff member and student with respect to all school related information, data and all Google information including email and stored files. The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that ALL users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use and disclose any data found on the school's information networks or on any technological devices used by administrators, faculty or students on campus in order to address any administrative concerns. It may also use the information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence to law enforcement.

St. Thomas Aquinas High School takes reasonable steps to protect "personal information". The school uses technology and processes to secure your personal information. These technologies and methods increase the security and privacy of information traveling to, from and within the St. Thomas Aquinas School network.

The Collection and Use of Personal Information – You do not need to provide any information that identifies you to use the St. Thomas Aquinas High School website. You can visit our website without telling us who you are or revealing any personal information. If you do provide us with personal information, we may store and process that information so we may use the

information to contact you. We will also use your personal information to better understand your needs and how we can improve our products and services.

Private Tutoring, Coaching or Lessons

*Except as specifically noted in this Handbook, the school does not sponsor, oversee, or otherwise provide private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services. Parents who engage school staff members for the provision of these services do so at their own risk and expense and are hereby advised that such services are outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the school. **Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services, regardless of where they may occur.***

Probation

The Administration may place any student on Attendance, Disciplinary or Academic/Integrity Policy Probation for a severe or continuous infraction of school policy. The length of the disciplinary probation is determined by the Administration. The guidelines of the probation, including the time-line of the probation, are contained in detail in the Probation Contract. At the conclusion of the probation period, the student's record is reviewed and either the probationary status is ended or subject to Administrative Review.

The Probation Contract, once issued to the student/parent, must be returned to the Dean/Administrator within 24 hours.

Public Display of Affection

The Catholic school promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love and respect for self and others. However, inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing which connote more than simple friendship, are not permitted in school, at school dances, or at any school event. Those who violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary measures, including detention, suspension or administrative withdrawal. The administration reserves the right to determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior in a Catholic school.

Remediation

The Principal reserves the right to determine the options available for remediation.

When a student receives a semester grade of "D" or "F" in a course taken at St. Thomas Aquinas High School, the student, with administrative approval, may remediate that semester grade in a summer session at Saint Thomas Aquinas High School. The new grade earned is calculated in the GPA in place of the "D" or "F" which is bracketed on the student transcript indicating its replacement.

There will be no summer school remediation for an AP or Dual Enrollment course.

Students who desire forgiveness for a “D” or an “F” must take that remedial course at STA in the summer session that immediately follows the academic school year in which the grade was received.

Respect for School Property

Care of school property is every student’s responsibility. A spirit of pride in the beauty of the school should prompt all students to contribute their share in keeping the classroom, cafeteria, halls, stairways, and bathrooms clean. Damage resulting from carelessness requires restitution. A student defacing school property may be punished according to the seriousness of the damage, even to the point of administrative withdrawal. If students find anything out of order, they should report it to the dean, administrator, or Principal immediately.

Bathroom Protocols

Students may not socialize in any bathroom area. They must use the facilities, wash their hands and immediately exit the bathroom area. There may not be more than one student per stall. Students who loiter, socialize and/or are in a stall with another student may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Scheduling and Class Change Requests

The re-registration process involves large group presentations and a one-to-one counselor to student conference to discuss course options. Course descriptions are available on the website and course options are made available to each student digitally and hard copy. The Administration urges collaborative student and parent review of course options and decisions. These efforts are vital to a student’s successful selections of courses. The schedule of meetings and conferences during this re-registration process is restricted as such that prohibits counselor/parent meetings for each student. Questions regarding a student’s course options should be directed to the counselor via email.

The selection of courses follows administratively-approved departmental guidelines and the consultation of the student’s teachers. Scheduling requests are subject to scheduling conflicts and/or class size limitations. Every effort is made to satisfy each student’s course needs and requests.

All students take a minimum of six St. Thomas Aquinas classes each year.

Any student taking and passing a college credit course does not receive St. Thomas Aquinas High School credit (with the exception of approved dual enrollment classes).

The decision for all class changes rests with the Administration. In requesting a schedule change, students may request to change their schedule to change levels. Students may also

request to change their schedules for the purpose of changing electives if space is available. The course change fee is \$40. A schedule change fee (\$50) will be assessed. Schedule changes must be completed by the end of the third week of the first quarter of the course. Specific teacher preference, time of day, or desired lunch are not justifiable considerations for a class change. The Administration may require a schedule change, which is exempt from the change fee.

School-Sponsored Events

The school does not sponsor, oversee, or in any way control parties or social functions at private residences. School-sanctioned events, including all field trips, excursions, or parties, are specifically identified in this Handbook or are identified in the school calendar and/or written notices generated and distributed by the school.

Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to attendance at parties or social functions at private residences or from participation/attendance at events not identified in the school calendar or in written notices from the school, including field trips, excursions, or parties.

Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the school may be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a school-sponsored function.

Search and Seizure Policy

The principal and his/her designee has access to any lockers, handbags, electronic devices, cell phones, book bags, desks, cars or any other object that is brought onto the campus of the school or any school-sponsored event, and may remove or confiscate any object which is illegal or contrary to school policy.

Oversize bags, suitcases, and athletic bags are forbidden on the Main campus during the school day. Arrangements must be made for athletic bags to be brought to the locker room prior to the start of the school day. Any bag/backpack will be checked when STA Administration or law enforcement deems necessary.

The STA administration reserves the right to secure a student cell phone and review its content.

Section 504 - Policy Statement

St. Thomas Aquinas High School complies with the mandate of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in certain programs and activities. Pursuant to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, (Name) School will make those minor adjustments that can accommodate students with disabilities to the school's educational programs and activities.

The school's designated 504 Coordinator and contact information are as follows: Brenda Cummings, (305)762-1268. Parents with questions regarding the school's disability accommodations or related items should contact the 504 Coordinator. Parents may file a grievance as to any decisions related to a disability accommodation and request an internal hearing and review by sending a written notice addressed as follows:

*Jim Rigg
Archdiocese of Miami
Superintendent of Schools
9401 Biscayne Blvd
Miami Shores, FL 33138*

The internal hearing and review will seek the prompt and equitable resolution of disability discrimination complaints.

Semester Examinations

Comprehensive examinations are given at the end of each semester. Semester exams, 70 minutes in length, are administered as scheduled. Senior second semester exams are 50 minutes in length. All student financial records must be current in order for students to be cleared for exams. Attendance for Semester Exams is required. If a student must be absent for Semester Exam(s) the "Extended Absence Form" must be obtained from the Principal and submitted to Guidance prior to the week of exams. If absent, (excused or unexcused) the student will be assessed a fee, (\$50) for each exam not taken on the assigned date/time. All absences, excused/unexcused are at the discretion of the Principal/Administration.

Sexting

The electronic transmission or receipt from one minor to another of any photograph or video that depicts nudity may constitute illegal sexting. Students engaged in sexting will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences which may include administrative withdrawal from school. In addition, the school administration may report instances of sexting to the Florida Department of Children and Families or local law enforcement for appropriate investigation as to violations of law. The electronic transmission of sexually explicit language by a student may also constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct based on sex, constitute sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented “kidding” or “teasing” or “practical jokes,” jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, display of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching or brushing against another’s body.

Sexual harassment should be reported to the Principal/Administrator/Dean. Student actions or even the intent to display acts of sexual harassment of any kind are subject to disciplinary consequences as determined by the Principal, including Administrative withdrawal.

Signage and Banners

School-related or club signs and banners may be posted on campus and must have prior approval by the club moderator or Assistant Principal for Student Affairs.

Smoking/Vaping

It is a violation of Florida law for any minor to knowingly possess any tobacco product, nicotine product, or nicotine dispensing device. In addition, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and vaping carry known health risks that can be very serious. The use of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or vaping in any form is prohibited on school property and at any school events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences which may include expulsion from school.

STA Trademarks

No person(s) may use the St. Thomas Aquinas High School or STA name/logo without authorization from the Principal. No one may publish, either digitally or in print, any photo or video containing St. Thomas Aquinas High School students without permission of all parties involved.

Student Council (STASC)

Student Council is composed of Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students chosen by Administration following student body elections/nominations. Strict academic and disciplinary qualifications determine eligibility for nomination on the STASC ballot. A student's GPA, discipline record, and service hour status are the factors that the Administration uses to evaluate candidates for eligibility. Students on probation/suspension may be denied eligibility as determined by the Administration. Qualifications and election procedures are posted on Bb prior to the initiation of the ballot application process. Officers elected to STASC positions must maintain exemplary academic and disciplinary status throughout the term of office to avoid suspension or removal from the position.

Summer Institute

Enrichment courses are offered during the weeks immediately following final exams in June. These semester courses (.5 credit) provide the student with the opportunity to enhance their academic profile. The procedures and policies of this Handbook apply during Summer Institute.

Suspension

Parents will be notified by the Dean when their child has been suspended. This action takes the form of an in-school and/or out-of-school suspension. It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her teacher for assignments missed. All work must still be made up by the student for credit. After the suspension, the student is placed on probation. The Administration reserves the right to deny the suspended student participation in and/or removal from any leadership position in any athletic/extracurricular activity (i.e. Student Council, National Honor Society, athletic team/captain, club membership/officer, etc.)

Teaching Boundary Safety

All students in the Archdiocese of Miami (ADOM) schools are presented with two Teaching Boundary Safety lessons each academic year. These required lessons are a component of the ADOM Safe Environment Policy. Lessons are approved and required by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The lessons are developed to empower students to recognize inappropriate behavior and establish their own appropriate relationship boundaries.

Technology Use

In order to insure the security of the STA campus parents and students are expected to report computer security risks or violations to the Principal/Administrator/Dean. This includes the use of all social media and technology platforms, on and off campus.

The school may provide its administrators, faculty and students with access to computers and various information technology resources including email and Internet access in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school and to improve the school's operations. Students must use these resources in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the school and Catholic teachings. Therefore, students must abide by the following general rules of conduct:

- 1. Respect and protect the privacy of others:*
 - a. Use only assigned accounts and passwords;*
 - b. Do not share assigned accounts or passwords with others;*
 - c. Do not view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which you are not authorized;*
 - d. Do not share or distribute private information about yourself or others.*
- 2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources:*
 - a. Observe all network security practices;*
 - b. Report security risks or violations to the school principal;*
 - c. Do not vandalize, destroy or damage data, networks, hardware, computer systems or other resources;*
 - d. Do not disrupt the operation of the network or create or place a virus on the network;*
 - e. Conserve and protect these resources for other students and Internet users.*
- 3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others:*
 - a. Do not infringe on copyright laws including downloading or copying music, games or movies;*
 - b. Do not install, run or execute unlicensed or unapproved software of any kind, including web browser extensions and add-ons;*
 - c. Do not plagiarize.*
- 4. Respect the principles of the Catholic school:*
 - a. Use only in ways that are kind and respectful;*
 - b. Report threatening or discomfoting materials to the school principal;*
 - c. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that violate the school's code of conduct (such as indecent, threatening, rude, discriminatory or harassing materials or messages);*
 - d. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal (such as obscene, stolen, or illegally copied materials or messages);*
 - e. Do not use the resources to further any other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct;*
 - f. Do not use the resources for non-educational purposes such as visiting chat rooms, social websites or networks like My Space or Facebook;*
 - g. Do not send spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings;*
 - h. Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business or political campaigning without prior written approval from the school's principal.*
 - i. Do not engage in any form of cyberbullying.*

Supervision and Monitoring

The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks or on any technological devices used by students on campus in order to further any administrative concern. It may also use this information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence of a crime to law enforcement.

Unacceptable Use of Outside Technology

The school expects students to use information technology (including, but not limited to, the Internet, email, instant messaging and text messaging) in a responsible and ethical fashion in compliance with all applicable laws and with Christian moral principles, both in and out of the school setting. Accordingly, students may not post, place, upload, share, or communicate any images, photographs, statements or inferences relating to or including profanity, vulgarity, indecency, illegal use of drugs, illegal use of alcohol or other illegal or illicit activities. Additionally, students may not use information technology for the purpose of defaming, threatening, teasing or harassing any other student, staff member, parent, faculty member, or other person. This includes, but is not limited to, communications on social networks such as My Space and Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok. In addition, this rule applies to communications both during the school year and while students are on vacation or summer breaks. Students are responsible for all materials and communications made on personal websites and social networks and the materials and communications should be consistent with Christian moral principles, including any materials or communications posted on their sites by other individuals. Moreover, any unauthorized use of the school's name (or common names associated with the school) or any likeness or image of the school or its employees or agents is strictly prohibited.

Consent

Many technological devices used at school have the capacity to generate audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, and other similar reproductions of images, likenesses, and/or sounds. The use of any such recordings and reproductions is governed by school policy. Parental/guardian execution of this Handbook constitutes an express consent and waiver as to any such recordings and reproductions incidental to the use of any technological devices on school property or at school events.

Consequences for Violations

A violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privilege to use the school's information technology resources and any additional consequences at the principal's discretion including expulsion.

Chromebook Computer Policy

St. Thomas Aquinas High School ("STA") hereby grants the use of a Dell Chromebook to the student. By signing this Parent Student Handbook, the student and parent acknowledge the responsibilities they assume in accepting of the Chromebook. The Chromebook remains the property of STA and its use by the student is governed by the Chromebook Use policy.

The parent(s) and student assume the responsibility for the care and safekeeping of the Chromebook. STA will provide one accidental damage repair once per year, as long as Dell continues to provide that warranty coverage. Beyond this provision, the student and parent(s) are responsible for damage, loss or theft of the Chrome book up to a financial cost of \$280 to replace the Chromebook.

If the student withdraws from STA prior to graduation, the student must return the Chromebook in good operating order. If the student does not return the Chromebook, a fee of \$280 will be assessed. Transcripts/report cards and other documentation will be withheld until the Chromebook and all related accessories are returned in good working order or the \$280 has been paid.

Upon graduation, STA will relinquish ownership of the Chromebook to the student as long as all other financial obligations have been met by the student and/or parents. The Chromebook will be managed and locked until those obligations are met.

The use of the Chromebook is limited to educational purposes under the guidelines of the STA Mission, Vision Statement, Statement of Beliefs, and Goals as set forth in the Parent-Student Handbook.

Students must use THEIR assigned Dell Chromebook.

Students are responsible for bringing THEIR Chromebook fully charged and operational to every class every day. The Technical Support Office does not provide loaner Chromebooks or accessories for any and all reasons.

Students are responsible for the care and working condition of the Chromebook.

The student is responsible for any costs related to the loss, theft or damage of the Chromebook not completely covered by insurance.

Students will immediately report any damage, loss, or theft of their assigned Chromebooks to the Technical Support Office.

Only the Technical Support Office employees of St. Thomas are authorized and approved to service and repair student Chromebooks and related technology. Any and all other persons or organizations attempting to service, repair or otherwise tamper with the Chromebook will void any and all warranties assigned to it, including accidental warranty coverage.

Any and all types of graffiti, including stickers and writings, that hinder the normal operation of the Chromebook or otherwise cause damage to it will void the Chromebook's warranties, including accidental warranty coverage.

Dell Chromebook Warranty: <https://stars.aquinas-sta.org/handbook/chromebookwarranty.pdf>

Telecommunications

Repeated misuse of a cell phone will result in a parent conference with the Dean and may result in cell phone use on campus prohibited and/or Administrative withdrawal.

Students are prohibited from enabling any telecommunications device as a "hotspot" for ANY wireless capable devices provided by the school for educational purposes.

Unauthorized use of any electronic devices is strictly prohibited; this includes Apple watches, personal computers, wireless enabled devices and cell phones.

Students can not use telecommunications devices to access any unauthorized site, location, or information including but not limited to network shares, Internet content, wireless networks, Google accounts, and passwords.

The audio or video recording of classroom conversations, lectures, activities, etc. are forbidden without the teacher's permission.

Violations of telecommunications may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privilege to use the school's information technology and/or resources and disciplinary consequences at the Administration's discretion, including Administrative Review.

Games

The viewing or playing of games during school hours is prohibited. This includes electronic or web based games. The only exception would be an in-class activity or any other activity approved by Administration or a faculty member.

Google

Google Apps for Education service provides email services to support the educational, administrative and faculty activities of St. Thomas Aquinas High School. Google Apps for Education will serve as the official communication by and between administrators, faculty, staff and students of St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

St. Thomas Aquinas High School Gmail accounts are the only approved email service that is to be used for ALL related school information while employed at the school or attending the school as a student.

Do NOT access any school Gmail account other than yours, unless authorized to do so by administration or faculty member.

Always use appropriate language in ALL e-mail exchanges.

Do NOT send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings from ANY school email account.

Do NOT intentionally send any virus, worms, hoaxes or corrupted files to any member of the administration, faculty, staff or student body.

Internet Challenges

The STA Administration recommends parents to engage in conversation with each child about pranks, dares, and challenges; reminding them that they are in control and that they should not be persuaded by their peers, the internet or social media influencers to engage in this risky behavior. STA students must realize that it is important for them to step back and alert a teacher or a school administrator as soon as they can of such behavior. Any student who participates in these types of challenges are subject to disciplinary consequences including withdrawal.

Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings

The Catholic Church recognizes marriage as a Sacrament. In the Union of Christian spouses, the sacrament of Matrimony celebrates the relationship of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the school strongly supports the sacrament of matrimony as the foundation of family life and of the domestic Church. In recognition of the importance of the matrimonial sacrament to the Catholic faith, parents agree not to compel the attendance, testimony, or deposition of any school or church employee in any divorce, custody, or other legal proceedings which may in any way involve the dissolution of marriage or the determination of parental/custody rights.

In the event that a parent or legal guardian breaches this policy, any school or church personnel who are required to attend legal proceedings may be represented by an attorney. In addition, any and all legal fees and costs incurred by the school will be charged and become the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

Text Messaging/Telephone Calls

The school may use text messages and automated telephone calls to alert parents/guardians of important information related to the school's mission, operations, and activities.

Parents/guardians acknowledge and consent to the receipt of these messages when providing their telephone numbers.

Threats of Violence

The disciplinary consequences for a student whose verbal or written comments, including email messages, that threaten serious bodily harm to another student or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Immediate suspension from the school;*
- 2. Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor; both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it*

is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be administratively withdrawn from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.

- 3. If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should a similar threat occur, the child will be administratively withdrawn from school;*
- 4. The school should inform the Office of Catholic Schools of these cases. The school may submit an informational report to the police.*

School Administrators, under the direction of Ft. Lauderdale Police Department and the Broward County Sheriff's Office, will hold every person who makes a threat to the school accountable to the full extent of the law. Parents and students are responsible for knowing the proper use of social media and the lasting criminal consequences that arise from using it in such a way that threatens the safety of others. Students and parents are encouraged/responsible to report suspicious behavior or postings to local law enforcement or school administrators. Disciplinary action may include suspension and/or Administrative Review. Parents and students are expected to report security risks or violations to school administration or law enforcement.

Transportation Arrangements

Parents hereby acknowledge and agree that the school does not provide or arrange for student transportation to or from school, except as specifically set forth in writing by the school. Student transportation to and from school each day is a parental responsibility. The school does not authorize or endorse any private transportation arrangements. The parent is solely responsible to and from all school events on/off campus. In limited and documented circumstances, a parent may engage a commercial transportation company to transport a student from school; however, any such engagement requires the written authorization of the school and the execution of school documents allowing for such an arrangement.

Students are not permitted to use ride sharing services such as Lyft, Uber and others on or from STA property.

Truancy

During the school day, all students must be present in each class for which they are scheduled. If a student is not in class, he/she needs to have permission from a teacher or an administrator to be out of class that accounts for their time and location. **They must have the teacher's pass.** Any student that does not have this permission **and the teacher's pass** will be considered "skipping class". The consequences for skipping class will be a Saturday detention and loss of credit for any assignment including tests that the students missed. **Any student who expresses that they have to leave a class because of an emergency may be allowed to leave, but they must first report to the Clinic or the Dean's Office.** A student who is truant all day or any part of the day is given an automatic suspension when he or she returns to school. Repeated truancy may be cause for expulsion.

Undocumented Students

A student's enrollment and/or graduation from school does not confer a legal status nor does it serve to regularize an undocumented student. Although the Archdiocese of Miami may assist with the completion of an I-20 form, the school does not guarantee or confer any privileges or rights available to documented legal residents. Parents should consult with immigration legal counsel if they have any questions as to immigration status.

Use of Photos

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school or Archdiocesan publication including but not limited to print publications, videos, or websites including Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites. Any parent who does not want his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year.

By executing this acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, Parents HEREBY CONSENT, authorize and grant permission to the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their agents, employees or duly authorized representatives to photograph or videotape students and parents and CONSENT to their publication for any purpose deemed proper by the school, including but not limited to, use on the internet.

Additionally, Parents, by executing this acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.

Visitor Access

Visitors include potential, current and former parents, students, alumni, and other adults. In order to provide and maintain a safe environment for members of the St. Thomas Aquinas High School community, the school administration enforces a rigid protocol.

Visitors to campus must make an appointment with a specific STA employee before arriving on campus.

The following guidelines apply to all visitors on campus while school is in session:

- During school hours all visitors (parents, alumni, media, college reps, prospective students/parents, etc.) must enter the campus via the main entrance, adjacent the Main Office;
- Each guest must present a valid photo ID and clear security screening. All guests must wear the STA Visitors' Pass while on campus at all times during the school day.
- All visitors must wear school appropriate attire in order to be allowed on campus;

- Security will notify the personnel associated with the visitor;
- Visitors may not visit classrooms, teachers, or students without prior approval of an administrator;
- Visitors may not use any of the school's facilities, without administrative approval;
- Security personnel may use their discretion in denying access with administrative approval;
- Parent/guest access to school personnel/offices during the change of classes is prohibited; and
- Food delivery services are not permitted and will be turned away.

Parents that come early to wait for the regular dismissal at the Main entrance or Gym entrance, please wait for your child in your vehicle. Please share this information with anyone you have designated to pick up your child before the end of the school day.

STA cameras are used for internal purposes only. Anyone wishing to access STA cameras must have approval from the Principal/Administrator. Furthermore, STA will cooperate with law enforcement.

Weapons Policy

Weapons are not permitted anywhere on school grounds or at any school activity. Any student who brings a weapon to any school activity, who is in possession of a weapon, or who threatens others with a weapon may be administratively withdrawn from the school. Any item used to threaten or cause bodily harm may be considered a weapon. In particular, the possession of any instruments or objects that can be used to inflict serious harm on another person or that can place a person in reasonable fear of serious harm will be considered weapons. Included in this category are BB guns, Airsoft guns, and toy or replica guns represented as real guns. Also included in this category is the possession or storage of items which are prohibited at school, including but not limited to ammunition clips, bullets or cartridges, flammable liquids, combustible materials, poisonous substances, mace, pepper spray, and any other items which may result in injury.

VR Lab and AR Lab Liability Waiver

Liability Waiver and Marketing Release for the STA Virtual Reality Lab and Augmented Reality Use

We, hereby waive and release, promise to hold harmless and ceaselessly discharge St. Thomas Aquinas High School and all of its members, faculty, staff, employees, vendors, contractors and subcontractors, of and from any and all claims, demands, causes of action or injury, lawsuits, damages, and liabilities, of all natures, whether it is known or unknown, in law or in equity, that I may have or ever have in the future while participating in any on campus Virtual Reality Lab and Augmented Reality experience, class or training session.

I understand that injuries could possibly occur as a result of the use of the Virtual Reality and/or Augmented Reality equipment. On behalf of myself, my family, and representation, I waive all claims for damages done to myself or my property whether the incident is caused by an ordinary negligence of the released parties mentioned or otherwise.

By signing this waiver, I take full responsibility and waive all claims of personal injury and damage to personal property while participating in any activities, functions, or work associated with the St. Thomas Aquinas Virtual Reality Lab and/or Augmented Reality.

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school or Archdiocesan publication including but not limited to print publications, videos, or websites including Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites. Any parent who does not want his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. By executing this liability waiver and marketing release, the Student and Parents HEREBY CONSENT, authorize and grant permission to St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Xennial Digital, or duly authorized representatives to photograph or videotape student participants and CONSENT to their publication for any purpose deemed proper by the school, including but not limited to, use on the internet.

Additionally, We, by executing this liability waiver and marketing release, HEREBY RELEASE, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student photos.

St. Thomas Aquinas High School

Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgment Form 2022-23

I, as Parent or Legal Guardian, acknowledge that I have read the entire contents of the Parent-Student Handbook and understand the consequences of any violations of the rules and policies of the school.

I agree to cooperate with the school in the interpretation and enforcement of the policies outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. I also understand that the school has the ultimate authority over the administration of the school and the interpretation of the school's rules and policies. Moreover, I further understand that all of the school's policies whether written or verbal are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school with or without notice.

I also hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of the **RELEASES** outlined in the School-Sponsored Events Policy, the Participation in School Athletics or Organizations Policy, and the Use of Photos Policy.

_____ (Print Parent/Legal Guardian Name)	_____ (Date)
_____ (Signature Parent/Legal Guardian)	
_____ (Print Student Name)	_____ (Grade)
_____ (Signature Student)	_____ (Date)

