



Saint Thomas & Saint Timothy School

St. Thomas the Apostle School & St. Timothy Middle School

Family Handbook

2023-2024

**St. Thomas the Apostle School
Campus**

Pre-K to Grade 5
25 Dover Road
West Hartford, 06119

St. Timothy Middle School Campus

Grades 6 to 8
225 King Philip Dr
West Hartford, 06117

*When enrolling your child at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School,
you are agreeing to abide and be governed by this Family Handbook.*

**After reviewing this handbook with your family, please submit the Family Handbook
Acknowledgement Form found at the bottom of the page to your homeroom teacher.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY and STAFF	4
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS	5
MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, ACCREDITATION	5-6
ACADEMICS	7-8
ADMISSIONS	9
ATHLETICS	9
ATTENDANCE	10-12
Arrival, drop-off/pick-up	
Absences	
Tardiness	
Dismissal/pick-up	
BEFORE/AFTER CARE PROGRAM	12-13
BULLYING	14
Reporting	
Consequences	
CELEBRATIONS/BIRTHDAYS	15
COMMUNICATION	15-16
Website	
Google Classroom	
EduConnect	
Teacher classroom websites	
E-mail, parent portal, voicemail	
Emergencies	
Phone calls	
Weekly updates	
CONFIDENTIALITY	16
CUSTODY AND DIVORCE	16
DRUGS AND ALCOHOL	17
EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR	17-18
General Rules	
Consequences	
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	18-20

FOOD SERVICES	20
GRADE PLACEMENT POLICY-ST. THOMAS CAMPUS	20
HEALTH AND SAFETY	21-23
Animals	
Emergency Forms	
Health Screenings	
Health Records	
Illnesses	
Medication	
Parking	
Physical Examinations	
HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION	23-25
HOMEROOM PLACEMENTS	25
HOMEWORK	25
LIBRARY	25
SPIRITUAL LIFE	26
STUDENT RECOGNITION	26
STUDENT RECORDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	26-27
STUDENT SERVICES	27
TECHNOLOGY	27-28
Cell Phones	
Computer Use Policy	
Google	
EduConnect	
TRANSPORTATION	28
TUITION	29
Tuition Contracts	
Tuition Collection	
Tuition Assistance	
UNIFORMS	30-33
Dress-Down Day Attire	
VISITORS	33
WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS	33
APPENDIX	34-35
Drop-off/ Dismissal Campus Maps	

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL & ST. TIMOTHY MIDDLE SCHOOL
LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Rev. Dr. Michael J. Dolan
Pastor

Colleen DiSanto, Principal	
Kimberly Kownacki, Associate Principal	Kerry Smith, STA/STM Admissions & Marketing
Sharon McHale, STM Business Manager	Terri LeDuc, RN, STA Nurse
Michelle Curley, STA Business Manager	Renata Kalinowski, RN, STM Nurse
Linda Bogli, STA Administrative Assistant	
Tracee Kradas, STM Administrative Assistant	

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL & ST. TIMOTHY MIDDLE SCHOOL
FACULTY AND STAFF**

Boers, Anne	STA Instructional Aid	LeBlanc, Brittany	Librarian
Cahill, Melissa	Teacher, Gr 4	Maidman, Mindy	Pre-K Teaching Asst.
Calitri, Cindy	Teacher, Art STA	McCarthy, Brian	Teacher, French STMS
Chamberlain, Ellen	Teacher, Gr 3	McMahon, Katherine	Teacher, Gr 1
Chavez, Sebastian	Teacher, Spanish STMS	Oates, Patrice	Gr. 2 Teaching Asst.
Cinquegrani, Fr David	Teacher, Music	Perez, Moises	Band Instructor
Connelly, Schalleen	STA Counselor	Pallotti, Deacon Robert	Teacher, Religion
Coppola, Lindsay	Teacher, Gr K	Provost, Jessica	Teacher, Pre-K 4
Croal, Joanne	Physical Education	Reneson, Rebecca	Pre-K Teaching Asst.
Dander, Michelle	Teacher, Science STMS	Sciarra, Elizabeth	Pre-K Teaching Asst.
DeGostin, Mary	Piano Instructor	Smith, Claire	Teacher, Gr 3
Dolan, Sarah	STMS Interventionist	St. Laurent, Jaclyn	Teacher, Gr 5
Dugan, Kate	Pre-K Teaching Asst.	Stuck, Lynette	Teacher, Pre-K 3
Flores, Adriana	Teacher, STA Spanish	Tarowsky, Madeline	Teacher, Gr 1
Hadyka, Kevin	Teacher, Gr 4	Tracey, Gloria	Teacher, Gr 2
Hamilton, Patricia	Teacher, Social Studies	Veronin, Caitlin	Strings Instructor
Knell, Gary	STA Custodian	Walsh, John	Art
Keegan, Patrick	Teacher, Mathematics	Watson, Gina	STMS Counselor
Kradas, Samantha	Teacher, Language Arts		
Lane, Shanikia	Gr K Teaching Asst.		
Lappe, Tyler	Teacher, P.E./Tech STMS		

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS
Rev. Dr. Michael J. Dolan, Ex-officio, Pastor
Colleen DiSanto, Principal, Exec. Officer

The St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School Board is a consultative council offering their insight and advice to our Pastor and Principal. Meetings take place throughout the school year to answer the needs of our school family and fulfill our obligations to the Strategic Plan. The dates for the meetings are included in the school's yearly calendar.

The Board's advice and counsel are an important part of our mission. We are always interested in welcoming new members to our Board. Please contact any of our members directly or contact our principal, to be included in this important process.

SCHOOL BOARD

Rev. Dr. Michael J. Dolan, Ex-officio, Pastor
Colleen DiSanto, Principal, Exec. Officer

Michael Hrach *Board Chair
Andrea Clarke

Serina Julien
Ron Lowry

Archdiocesan Vision Statement

The fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to advance the educational mission of the Church.

Catholic schools educate diverse student bodies to form Catholic, person-centered learning communities; provides quality teaching through traditional and innovative educational programs infused with Catholic Social Teachings; involve students to serve and support parish life and the local civic communities; graduate students who are critical thinkers, productive moral citizens, and spiritual leaders; and recognize and appreciate parents as the primary educators of their children.

Mission Statement

We are a Pre-K to Grade 8 diverse learning community that fosters the development of the whole person - mind, body, spirit. Grounded in our commitment to academic excellence and Catholic Social Teaching, we guide children to become compassionate and ethical citizens who contribute to a more just and peaceful world.

School Philosophy

The philosophy of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School is founded on the belief that it is the whole child being educated. Our goals and objectives reflect a deep concern for the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of all students. As educators, the staff of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School has the special responsibility of encouraging each student to achieve his or her potential within the framework of religious truths and values.

Academic excellence through the light of faith is of the highest importance at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. It is also understood that this excellence must be interwoven with Christian values and attitudes.

Our school philosophy is built on a foundation of respect within our community. This respect is evident in the relationships between teachers, staff and students. Acknowledging that parents are the first educators of the child, we strive to support families who want the Christian values that they instill at home to be fortified at school. St. Thomas and St. Timothy School is a place where parents, teachers, students and parishioners form a community that works together in charity and service.

Here we put faith into action to help the whole-child grow academically, spiritually, and socially. As a Catholic school, we guide students to understand Gospel values and demonstrate them in their relationships and service to others. We emphasize respect and fairness for all, caring for God's creation, and living and working together for a just society.

We instill an appreciation for learning. Each grade-level has rigorous, age-appropriate standards established by the Archdiocese of Hartford. Instruction is differentiated to address the range of learning styles in each classroom community. Traditional and innovative lessons integrate technology, literature, and manipulatives to promote student engagement and growth.

We are called to live as family and community. All members of St. Thomas & St. Timothy are encouraged to participate in service to school, Church, and one another. Parents, teachers, and staff work together to help all students discover their unique talents and gifts.

Accreditation

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and by the State of Connecticut Board of Education.

ACADEMICS

ASSESSMENT

DRA3 - Developmental Reading Assessments

Students in grades K-5 will be administered The Developmental Reading Assessment, Third Edition (DRA3). The DRA3 is an individually administered reading assessment designed to assess students' reading performance. The DRA3 provides teachers with information that helps them determine students' independent reading levels through observation of comprehension and oral reading fluency.

Teachers will assess all students at the beginning of the school year to gather a baseline DRA level. As we continue to monitor student's progress, teachers may administer a DRA at the end of each trimester to ensure growth.

NWEA - Measures of Academic Progress GROWTH Assessment (MAP)

Students in grades 2-8 will be administered this web-based, formative assessment to help screen and monitor reading and math skills. Teachers can use the scores to identify learning areas that their class should focus on, as well as monitor the growth of individual students. Scores are also reviewed to see the performance and progress of a grade level and school. Benchmark data is collected in September, January, and May. Results are used to help monitor and support students within the classroom setting.

REPORT CARDS

Progress Reports/Conferences/Grades

Conference times are a perfect opportunity for you to have a private conversation to discuss the successes your child has enjoyed. It will also give you and your child's teacher the opportunity to make any changes for improvement. Parents will be asked to use Sign-Up Genius through a school email several weeks before conference time to reserve their time slot.

Report cards and progress reports are distributed on a trimester basis. The dates are noted in the school calendar. The first trimester progress reports will be shared with parents at a prearranged conference. Second trimester report cards will be available on the EduConnect portal. The final report card of the school year will be distributed to each student either via EduConnect or mail on or after the last day of school

Student grades may be checked daily through the online [EduConnect](#) parent portal. Access codes will be distributed to families through the school office in an email before the new school year begins.

Midterm and Final exams are administered in grades 6-8. The dates of these exams are noted on the school calendar. Classroom teachers will ensure adequate preparation for these exams. Scheduling study time at home will be helpful as study guides will be part of the exam preparation.

Grades are determined by class work, homework, assessments, class participation, and projects. We use the standardized grading system as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Hartford. It is as follows:

The Honor Roll for the middle school students is based upon the following criteria:

1st Honors: A's in all subjects

2nd Honors: A's and B's in major subjects, A's and B's in all other subjects

Any student receiving a grade of "U" in one of their special subjects is not eligible for Honors consideration.

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The marking code established by the Archdiocese of Hartford is as follows:

A+: 98-100	C+: 77-79	Specials Teachers	For Effort
A: 94-97	C: 73-76		
A- 90-93	C-: 70-72	O: Outstanding	√+ 95
B+:87-89	D: 69-65	S: Satisfactory	√- 85
B: 83-86	F: Below 65	U: Unsatisfactory	√ 75
B-: 80-82			

Extra-Curricular Sports Eligibility In order to participate in sports programs at Saint Thomas and St. Timothy School, no student may have failing grades in any subjects. Similarly, a C- grade in any subject will make a student ineligible to participate in sports unless the parents and student agree to participate in extra help sessions arranged by the faculty of STA & STM. The length of the help sessions will depend on the level of success gained from the help sessions. These sessions may be offered at an additional cost if they cannot be scheduled during school hours.

Students become ineligible the day report cards are issued. Students who are ineligible to participate will not be eligible again until the next term's report cards are issued. Coaches and moderators must adhere to this policy. **The principal/associate principal, with the consultation of the faculty, may determine to extend or to limit student eligibility based upon the individual's progress.**

Academic dishonesty/cheating/plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are both forms of dishonesty and have no place in a Catholic school. Copying another student's work or submitting material from an electronic or print source without proper attribution falls under this category. Any student who is found cheating in any manner will receive no credit for that assignment and will be required to resubmit the completed assignment in the appropriate format for a reduced grade. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the principal/associate principal. Parents will be notified.

ADMISSIONS

St. Thomas and St. Timothy School, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits qualified students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all rights and programs. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national and ethnic origin, or gender in the administration of educational policies, admission policies and scholarship and loan programs. Because of limits in our resources and programs, St. Thomas and St. Timothy School may not be able to provide an appropriate education to all students with special needs. Students with special needs will be given the same consideration as all applicants; however, prior to admitting a student with diagnosed special needs, we will make a determination as to whether or not we believe we can provide an appropriate education for that child. Each child is considered on an individual basis. A full analysis of each student's needs and abilities will be conducted before a decision is made for acceptance. Parents and students will be part of this process.

All students new to St. Thomas and St. Timothy School are admitted on probation for the first trimester. If you don't hear from the school after the first trimester, you will be considered fully enrolled at St. Thomas and St. Timothy School.

Communication between school and home is vitally important in providing the best environment for your child. The privilege of an education at St. Thomas and St. Timothy School is measured by the commitment each family makes in its choice of a private education. Having made a conscious choice to attend St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School, students and their families agree to both our philosophy and operating procedures.

Education of each child is a partnership between parents/guardians and the school. If the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably or irrevocably broken, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of the child.

All students are accepted on an annual basis. The acceptance of the registration fee in the spring for the following year does not necessarily constitute final acceptance for continuation at St. Thomas and St. Timothy School. Re-acceptance for successive years will be based on the attitude, behavior, and achievement of the student. Re-acceptance of the student is the decision of the school, made in the best interest of the student and the family.

ATHLETICS

St. Thomas and St. Timothy School has a competitive, interscholastic sports program in the fall, winter, and spring. These sports are cross-country (6-8), soccer (6-8), basketball (4-8), baseball (6-8), softball (6-8) and tennis (6-8). The school has developed a handbook for coaches, parents and student-athletes, which reflect the guidelines of the Archdiocesan Interscholastic Athletic Conference, which is governed by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation (CCEF). At the beginning of each season, the Athletic Director will hold a mandatory meeting for all athletes and their parents. In addition, all participants in the program and their parents are expected to review the handbook and acknowledge that they have received, read, understand and agree to abide by the policies in the handbook through their signatures. This handbook primarily relates to the basketball program organized through the Center for Catholic Education and Formation, but the policies for student participation in all clubs and sports are consistent in academic and scholastic requirements.

ATTENDANCE

Drop Off Procedures

St. Thomas Campus Drop Off: 8:00am - 8:15am

The drop-off points are as follows:

Pre-K: Parents park in the school lot and escort students to their classrooms using the back entrance. Mr. Gary Knell, school custodian, will greet all families at that entrance. Pre-K parents may exit using the Dover road exit between the Church and the playscape.

Grades K-5: Parents proceed from the Farmington Avenue entrance through the campus to the north side of the building to the designated drop-off area. Please proceed with caution.

Students should exit the vehicle from the passenger side and proceed directly into the building.

The drop-off policy will be in effect beginning on the first full day of school. All parents and guardians are asked to enter the campus from Farmington Avenue. Parents of grades K-5 students proceed through the campus and exit on the north side of the school building. The drop-off route for students in grades K-5 will be used each morning from 8:00AM to 8:15AM. Parents are required to pause at this area allowing students to disembark and enter the building with the assistance of members of the school staff.

Only parents/guardians of students in the Pre-K Program will have access to the building each morning to bring their children to their classrooms. All other students will be expected to enter the building with the assistance of the school staff.

Due to the small size of the school parking lot, limited parking spaces will be available to parents and guardians of students in the Pre-K Program each morning. We ask that ALL drivers use patience and drive slowly through the school lot.

St. Thomas Campus Dismissal/Pick Up:

Pre-K Dismissal

Pre-K students will be dismissed through the gym doors, divided by program names. Dismissal begins at 2:30PM (M,T,TH,F) at 1:30PM (W) and at 11:50am on noon dismissal days. Each teacher and teaching assistant will accompany the students to the gym with all of their daily personal belongings. Students will be released to the care of their parent, guardian or car pool person who must approach the exit doors and assist their child with their personal belongings, as well as assist as they navigate the stairs. Students enrolled in the After Care Program will be escorted to the program site by a teaching assistant.

Parents will not be given access to the school building during dismissal.

K - Grade 5 Dismissal is at 2:40PM each day, with Wednesday dismissal at 1:40PM. Students will be dismissed to the After Care Program if registered, to their bus if they are registered and a resident of West Hartford, to the front walkway if they are walkers or walked from the building by the homeroom teachers to the parking lot where they will be released only to authorized adults as listed on the emergency form. The authorized adult must make personal contact with his/her child's teacher at dismissal. In order to ensure student safety, students will not be dismissed to parked cars.

Faculty on duty will remain with students until 2:50 PM (1:50 PM Wednesday). After that time, any remaining children will be taken to the office to await pick-up. After 2:50PM (1:50 PM on Wednesday) parents will be contacted and an assessment will be charged and included on the monthly statement.

During extreme inclement weather, dismissal will be in the gym. Families are asked to enter the gym and exit through the garden gym doors. Students will be arranged along the walls by homeroom for dismissal.

Noon dismissals occur occasionally during the school year and are noted on the school calendar. These generally occur before holidays. *Lunch will not be served on those days and there will be no After Care Program. All students will be dismissed at noon.*

In the event that a parent or guardian requests an early dismissal of a student, a written request or email should be sent to the office. Faculty will not release a child to anyone without the approval of the principal and/or designee. If the pick-up person is unknown to our staff, proof of identification will be required. **Please make every effort to arrange for early pick-up of your child before 2:00 PM to avoid the confusion of the dismissal time.**

St. Timothy Campus

The parking lot on King Philip Drive is the designated drop-off and pick-up area for students who are transported to and from school in cars. Please be mindful of students as you enter and leave the parking lot. **Cars are not permitted to enter via the North Main Street entrance and are not allowed in the circle in front of the building.** For the safety of all students, please honor these guidelines. Doing so will help to assure the safety of our students.

When waiting for students at the end of the day, please park in the middle section of the King Philip Drive lot, away from the driveway entrance and from the gym doors. Students will be dismissed in an orderly fashion and will not be allowed to dart in and around cars.

Unless weather is inclement, students should remain outside their designated entrances prior to the start of school.

Grades 6 & 7: Outside main entrance

Grade 8: Outside their homerooms

During inclement weather (extreme cold, rain, icy conditions,) students may be directed by the proctoring teacher to wait in O'Connell Hall (gym). The gym doors will be open on those days to alert parents dropping off students to the change.

During rainy weather, students will be dismissed from the gym.

TARDINESS

When children arrive after **7:45 AM, St. Timothy Campus**, and after **8:20am, St. Thomas Campus**, they are tardy and a late slip will be required for admission to the classroom. Tardies are reflected on the report card. Please keep in mind, tardiness interferes with a successful start to the school day. The morning routines on both campuses help our students prepare for the day. Chronic tardiness will result in a conference with the Principal and school counselor to determine the best course of action for each case.

ABSENCES

St. Thomas and St. Timothy School faculty will work in partnership with families to ensure that every student is able to participate in each school day without interruption by providing support and a welcoming environment on our campuses. Should a child miss 10 percent or greater of the total number

of days enrolled during the school year for any reason, a parent meeting will be held to determine the best plan for improving school attendance.

We set our attendance policies according to the Archdiocese: “Students must attend school punctually and regularly and conform to the attendance policies and procedures established by the school. Students are to attend school unless there are valid reasons for absence provided by the parent/guardian. If a truancy problem cannot be solved by the Catholic school authorities, the Department of Children and Families shall be notified.”

Student absences will be excused for personal illness or injury, death of an immediate family member, or other serious reasons. When a child is absent, parents should call the school office before **7:40 AM, St. Timothy Campus**, and before **8 AM, St. Thomas Campus**, to advise the school of the absence. In the event notification is not received, the school will call the parent or guardian to verify your child’s absence. The school may request a physician’s excuse for extended absences. Regular attendance is essential for scholastic progress and achievement. Prolonged and frequent absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in grade level retention.

Family Vacations

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School has designated vacations on the yearly calendar. Please be mindful in planning family trips so that students are present during scheduled school days.

BEFORE CARE AND AFTER CARE

Child-Care Programs are available to parents of current students before and after school.

- **Aftercare Phone Number: 860-904-0983**

ST. THOMAS CAMPUS

The ***Before School Program*** hours are **7:15 AM until 8:00 AM**. The entrance doors are at the back of the school, behind the gym. Parents will need to ring the doorbell for access to the building. Supervised activities in a quiet atmosphere are an essential part of this early morning program.

Before Care will be held on delayed openings. It will be delayed the same amount of time as the start of the school day.

Following dismissal, your child(ren) may be a part of the ***After School Program*** until 5:40 PM. Attendance will be taken and a snack is served. Activities with arts and crafts, free play, and homework are customary. All children need to be picked up no later than 5:40PM. Any family who has not picked up the child(ren) by 5:40 PM will be assessed \$35.00 for the first quarter hour and \$10 for each additional quarter hour or part thereof. *Please call the aftercare cell phone when arriving for pick up.*

During After Care, we try to have the children spend some time outside. Children may have a change of clothes each day, so that their school uniform will not be soiled. **Please label all clothing and uniforms carefully.** If your child is ill or injured while in the program, you will be contacted immediately. If we are unable to reach you, we will call the emergency number listed on the registration form. In the event we are unable to contact someone, we will follow emergency procedures as dictated by the Town of West Hartford and call 911.

The program is closed during holidays and teacher in-service days according to the school calendar. Likewise, if the school is closed due to inclement weather, the program will not operate. Also, when school is canceled due to an emergency, the program will be closed.

ST. TIMOTHY CAMPUS

The *Before Care Program* hours run from **7:15 AM until 7:45 AM**. The entrance doors are located at the front of school. Supervised study and activities occur in a quiet atmosphere. The Before Care Program will open 45 minutes before the announced time of school on all late opening days.

Before Care will be held on delayed openings. It will be delayed the same amount of time as the start of the school day.

Following dismissal, your child(ren) may be a part of the *After School Program* until 5:45 PM. The After Care program that takes place immediately following dismissal at 2:45PM. Attendance will be taken and students may bring their own snack and beverage. The time in the program is reserved for homework and study, although quiet socialization and games are customary when homework is completed. *Parents are responsible for texting the After Care proctor when they arrive and the proctor will walk the child to the front door.* All children must be picked up no later than 5:45PM. Any family who has not picked up the child(ren) by 5:45PM will be assessed \$35.00 for the first quarter hour and \$10.00 for each additional quarter hour or part thereof.

If we are unable to reach you, we will call the emergency number listed on the registration form. In the event we are unable to contact someone, we will follow emergency procedures as dictated by the Town of West Hartford and call 911.

The program is closed during holidays and teacher in-service days according to the school calendar. Likewise, if the school is closed due to inclement weather, the program will not operate. Also, when school is canceled due to an emergency, the program will be closed. Please note that there is no After Care on 11:45AM dismissal days.

Timely pick-up is critical to the After Care Program and the late policy will be strictly enforced. (For example: 5:45-6:00 PM pickup will result in a \$35.00 late fee and an additional \$10.00 charged at 6:15PM, 6:30PM, etc.)

*After Care is also available on a per diem basis. The per diem charge of \$20.00 is invoiced at the end of each month. **Just send a note to the office requesting this service or call in the morning of the day your child will attend After Care.***

*After Care is also available before and/or after a school sport or school club meeting/activity. The charge for this After Care Service is \$5.00 per day and **the student MUST have a parent note informing the school office that their child will be attending After Care due to a sport or club activity; otherwise the per diem rate of \$20.00 will be charged.***

On occasion, students who are in After Care may wish to assist with school-related activities such as decorating for a school dance or attending basketball games. They may do so only if an available faculty member is willing to accompany them to O'Connell Hall.

BULLYING

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools of the Archdiocese. It will not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of, "Love your neighbor as yourself," and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school, and deprives the student of a safe and caring learning environment.

Bullying/harassment is an overt act by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student while on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity, which is repeated against the same student over time. Bullying/harassment includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, or oral or written threats, teasing, putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

According to the Archdiocese, "Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student; a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student, that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics."

Reporting Bullying

In a cooperative effort to prevent and eliminate the occurrence of bullying, all students, parents, faculty, and staff who observe or become aware of bullying must take appropriate steps to report this to the school administration for further investigation. When a faculty or staff member observes or becomes aware of bullying every effort will be taken to intervene. This intervention will consist of work with the school counselor to understand the situation and work to investigate the occurrences.

All reports should be submitted in writing to the school administration. Reports will be thoroughly investigated. The investigation may include interviews with students, parents and school staff, review of records.

Consequences for Bullying

If it is concluded that an act of bullying or harassment has occurred, the parents or guardians of the student(s) who have committed such acts, and the parents or guardians of the student(s) against whom such acts were directed will be notified in writing. Consequences for students who bully others will depend on the results of the investigation and may include a parent conference, professional counseling, detention, suspension, and expulsion. If warranted, administration may implement a safety plan, which includes strict supervision of involved students, or may seek support from law enforcement agencies.

CELEBRATIONS/BIRTHDAYS

There are times during the school year when celebrations are held in the classrooms. However, when food is considered as a part of that celebration, a full evaluation of the needs of the students must be considered before the activity can be approved. **Food in the classroom is greatly discouraged, as we have many students with allergies.**

Students are encouraged to enjoy a “Dress Down Day” on the day of their birthday. Appropriate casual attire is allowed.

COMMUNICATION

School Website

The most current information about St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School is housed on our website, which can be accessed at www.stastmschool.org. The information is meant to answer questions for all members of our school family and for families who are considering St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School for the first time.. All **required forms** can be accessed through our website to allow for a smooth start to each school year.

EduConnect

The **EduConnect** Software System is used by our school’s personnel to create lesson plans, report cards, progress reports, communicate with families during the school day and maintain current family and student records. Families will be asked, each summer, to update their personal information to ensure that communication during the school year is seamless. Families will be issued an access code to allow for easy access to the most current school and family information on the family portal.

Google Classroom and Teacher Email

Updates on homework, resources for classes, schedules for long-term assignments, and other important materials can be found on each teacher’s Google Classroom or Google Site (classroom website).

Teacher email addresses are posted on the classroom websites with the title Contact Me. The goal is to connect parents with teachers so they can inquire about their child’s progress. Please adhere to the following protocol:

- Only parents should email teachers, not students
- To prevent unnecessary questions, please first utilize the school or classroom websites to find answers to questions.
- Please allow 24 hours for a response. Faculty and staff respond to emails from 8-4pm Monday - Friday.
- Occasionally emails get caught in our spam filters. If you do not receive a response within a few days, please let us know.

E-mail, Parent Portal, and Voicemail

The e-mail system is the preferred method of office communication. We also maintain our website for your convenience. You are encouraged to refer to our website for the most current school information at www.stastmschool.org. Weather-related delays and cancellations will be issued through our School Messenger Alert System. Up to date information on the family EduConnect Portal will enable us parents to be notified via email, text, and phone call.

We have a **Parent Portal (EduConnect)**, which is accessible through the EduConnect system. Parents and guardians will be given their access codes before the beginning of each school year.

Emergencies

Current family information, including phone numbers and e-mail addresses, are kept on the EduConnect Portal. *If any information changes during the school year, please update your Educonnect family information and notify the office, as soon as possible.* St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School personnel review the approved Crisis Plan on a yearly basis. The plan is shared with the faculty, staff, and students on a monthly basis through fire drills and lock down drills. Should it become necessary to close school due to a local, regional, or national emergency, you will be notified through our School Messenger Alert System.

Phone Calls

In an effort to encourage student responsibility, the use of the school phone by students will be discouraged. Forgotten items that are brought from home during school hours should be left in the school office. Students will be called to retrieve their material in a timely manner. *In addition, cell phones for students will not be permitted in school. Any student cell phones used during the school day will be held in the office until they are returned to a parent or guardian.*

Weekly Email Updates

Every Thursday you will receive an email containing the weekly update. This update will also be available on the school website.

At your earliest convenience, please visit stastmschool.org to access all current school material. To make this effort a success, we need your up-to-date email addresses. You may also need to check access to our email at your place of work. We have found that on more than one occasion, office systems have blocked our communications.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. It remains our goal to respect confidentiality as it relates to family issues and concerns. Student or family related questions and information should be shared with staff members in the privacy of the school building or through phone or email conversations.

In addition, the school will not share your personal information with any agencies unrelated to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School without your written permission. Your information, however, will be shared through the school directory, unless you decline permission by checking the appropriate box on the [EduConnect](#) site.

CUSTODY AND DIVORCE

In cases where parents are separated or divorced, the principal/associate principal should be informed in writing regarding the custody agreement. This is necessary for the safety and protection of the child. Such information is considered confidential and will be held in strict confidence by the principal/associate principal.

The school abides by the provision of the 1975 Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child as requested by the non-custodial parent. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The possession, use, or attempt to possess, use, or be under the influence of a prohibited substance on school grounds during any school term or off the school grounds at school-related activity, function, or event, will result in parent contact, an interview with parents and student and possible suspension. Professional or school counseling will be required as part of the action plan when the student is readmitted to school.

Prohibited substances include, but are not limited to:

- Any controlled substance or illegal or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to, cannabis, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Tobacco products and any electronic cigarettes such as Juuls
- Any abuse of glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for inhalation;
- Any other intoxicant or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior altering drug;
- Any prescription drugs used in amounts or purposes not intended by the prescription.
- The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of a prohibited substance is also prohibited.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to a Christian learning environment. Appropriate behavior is necessary to maintain a quality setting for all members of our community. General school rules are outlined below. Both inconsistent homework and inappropriate behaviors will be recorded for parents. As recommended, the services of our school counselor may be used to facilitate growth in any of these areas.

General School Expectations:

- To be honest, respectful and courteous
- To accept the leadership and authority of administrators, teachers, staff and volunteers
- To use good judgment in situations involving oneself and others physically and/or verbally
- To respect all school property, the property of their peers, as well as their own
- To wear appropriate uniforms
- To complete all homework assignments in a timely manner
- To replace damaged or lost books or equipment (or their monetary equivalent)
- To refrain from chewing gum and eating candy in the building
- To refrain from cell phone use during the school day

Behavioral Interventions

Guiding our students to develop strong, successful peer relationships is a top priority at St. Thomas and St. Timothy School. The core values of the Catholic faith will be used to teach, reteach and guide our students to hold themselves accountable and take responsibility for their words and actions. We seek to repair relationships when they break down and help students to forgive themselves and others to maintain a positive, supportive school culture.

- Teachers and staff will monitor student behaviors.
- Students will work collaboratively with teachers and staff to redirect their behavior when asked.
- Students demonstrating inappropriate actions or verbal exchanges will be asked to use a reflection form to help process through how to respond more appropriately in the given situation.

- The teacher and school counselor will help facilitate peer and individual conversations to aid in problem solving and understanding the impact of negative interactions among students or in a classroom.
- The leadership team, along with the school counselor, will work to repair relationships and help students understand how to more closely adhere to behavioral expectations. Parents will be notified if a student is unable to consistently adhere to school based conduct expectations via email, phone call, or parent communication notices.
- A detention may be issued if a student repeatedly fails to cooperate with specific school expectations. The Leadership Team will notify parents if detentions are to be served by students. Detentions must be served before a student is permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities.
- Actions that may result in detention, in-school suspension or suspension are: disrespect to a classmate or an adult; vandalism; cheating/plagiarism; misuse of technology.
- During an in-school suspension, students will be required to complete all class work in an area outside of his/her homeroom under the supervision of school personnel.

Conduct whether inside or outside the school that is detrimental to the dignity of another student/teacher/family or the reputation of the school, including on social media, may result in disciplinary actions including suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from school.

Upon reasonable suspicion of inappropriate activity that may subject a student to any level of discipline, or in the interests of safety of students and staff, the Principal/Head of School and/or his/her designee, may search students' desks, cubbies, personal belongings, and purses, tote bags, backpacks, clothing, cell phones or other electronic devices and the content within such devices such as emails, photos, messages, or other information. The school administration may seize any such items and retain them until the end of the school day or longer. The school administration will have the prerogative to turn over any such items to the police if there is evidence of illegal activity.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

It is the policy of the school to encourage student participation in extracurricular activities. Students who choose to participate in these programs are expected to maintain evidence of scholarship and regular classroom attendance. In addition, appropriate behavior throughout the school day and at any event or activity outside the classroom is expected. At the discretion of the principal/associate principal, a student may be excluded from participation, as necessary. If a student is absent on the day of a sponsored extracurricular activity, he/she will not be allowed to attend the activity without permission from the principal/associate principal.

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School sponsors many student-centered activities throughout the year. The best frame of reference for these activities is the weekly email communication and our website. Activities change to reflect the interests of our students. Some activities are sponsored by our Home and School Association offering many volunteer opportunities for parents and guardians.

Afterschool use of fields and basketball courts on the St. Timothy Campus

Use of these areas is limited to school-sponsored activities such as team sports, intramurals, and other approved extra-curricular programs.

Unaccompanied students at basketball games on the St. Timothy Campus.

Our staff is not available to provide supervision for your children at after-school sporting events held in O'Connell Hall. We greatly encourage you to ensure that you have an adult accompany students who wish to attend games.

Afterschool use of the playscape area at the St. Thomas Campus

Once students are dismissed to parents, playscape supervision is the responsibility of the adult that the student was released to. Please adhere to safety precautions when using the playscape equipment.

Basketball at the St. Thomas Campus

Our basketball program invites our fourth and fifth grade girls and boys to learn the basics of playing basketball and to have fun. There is a ***no cut policy*** at STA, however space is limited by the Deanery. Weekends, travel and evening commitments are required for full enjoyment. Parent volunteers work as coaches. Look for sign-up opportunities this fall.

Clubs and Intramurals

Clubs are organized throughout the school year and are reflective of the interests and skills of our faculty and students. We try to offer a variety of activities that allow our students to try something different and to have fun with their STA and STM friends. Clubs vary throughout the year and from the St. Thomas Campus to the St. Timothy Campus. The information and the opportunity to register for clubs using Sign-Up Genius will be available on the website and in the weekly email.

Dress-Down Days

Dress down days are periodically allowed during the school year. Students have permission to wear appropriate casual attire to celebrate birthdays, school accomplishments or fund-raising events. Students dressing in clothes with inappropriate slogans or gruesome pictures will be asked to change. Students should wear shoes or sneakers for dress down days, slippers or flip flops are not permitted.

Field Trips

Field trips constitute an important part of the total classroom instruction. Due to issues related to insurance and safety, all field trips where students are not walking, must involve bus transportation. **The cost of the bus and of the event will be included in your monthly statement.** Part of the organization of the field trip will include a permission slip outlining the cost and requirements for participation. Please read this carefully and return it to your child's teacher in a timely fashion. Every effort will be made to communicate field trip details in a timely manner. Each family will be responsible for any fees associated with a class trip unless written notification is provided to the Office of the Principal two weeks prior to the scheduled field trip.

Some emergency contact information may be required where accurate and up-to-date information will be necessary. If a child's behavior warrants disciplinary action resulting in the termination of field trip privileges, parents may be charged the full cost of the trip. Chaperones may be requested by the teachers to ensure the safety of the student group. Room parents will have the right of first refusal. Only adults who have completed the background check and the Virtus Training Workshop will be able to volunteer as chaperones. On some occasions more than the required number of parents may participate in the event, but they will not be considered chaperones for the group and will be required to use their own form of transportation and funds for admission.

Music Lessons

Band instruments, piano, and strings lessons are available during school hours and after school. Every effort will be made to offer a rotating schedule to prevent a negative impact on a students' daily academic instructional schedule. After school lesson times will be offered at the discretion of the music teacher.

Lesson registration occurs at the beginning of the school year. Demonstrations are shared with students and parents during the school day and at evening presentations. Please check the school website and yearly calendar for dates and times.

Scouting at the St. Thomas Campus

Both girls and boys are invited to participate in a scouting program. The scouting programs take place after school and/or in the evening. Information is shared in the fall of each school year. Parent volunteers are needed to make this a successful organization each year. Scout leaders, co-leaders and parent assistants will be required to complete the background check and attend the VIRTUS Training Workshop.

FOOD SERVICES

St. Thomas & St. Timothy Campus

The school campuses do not provide an onsite lunch program. The school has partnered with area restaurants to provide hot lunches several times during the week.

Families may order lunches on a monthly basis and will be billed through Blackbaud Tuition Management. Parents are free to send students to school with lunch as an alternative to participation in the lunch program. We ask that fast food lunches not be delivered to students during the school day. Please plan accordingly to provide healthy, nutritious lunch options for your children.

Because of allergies students may not share or exchange items from their lunches.

GRADE PLACEMENT POLICY AT THE ST. THOMAS CAMPUS

Grade placement on the St. Thomas campus is based on the following indicators:

- Children must be age eligible. Connecticut law mandates that a child is eligible to attend Kindergarten provided they are 5 years old by December 31st the year of entry. As such, each grade placement is determined based on that standard. (*i.e., students entering PreK4 must be four years old by December 31st the year of entry*)
- Current teacher's assessment of a child's academic, social and emotional readiness for promotion.
- Parents' consideration of a child's readiness.

If one of the above indicators is in disagreement, the child will participate in a screening or observation conducted by a STA-STM teacher to provide additional professional determination of readiness. Following the screening or observation, parents will be notified of the results and recommended placement for their child.

If the student being considered is a STA-STM student, the choice of placement will rest with the parents in accordance with the Center for Catholic Education and Formation Policy. If the student being considered is applying for admission for the first time, the choice of placement rests with the school personnel and may result in non-acceptance of the student.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Animals

To prevent injury and confusion, other than approved therapy pets, animals of any kind are not allowed on school property. It is especially important that animals are kept away from our dismissal yard. Even the friendliest animals can frighten children unexpectedly. ***Your cooperation is appreciated.***

Emergency Forms

WE MUST HAVE A COMPLETED “EMERGENCY SHEET” WITH YOUR HOME AND WORK TELEPHONE NUMBERS, EMAIL ADDRESS AND A DESIGNATED EMERGENCY PERSON ON FILE. E-mail addresses are requested to help in the distribution of school material and unexpected schedule changes. Each family can access their [EduConnect](#) account to update their family information any time that information changes. The school office will receive an update email and share the changes as needed. *The medical information must be completed in hard-copy format to ensure confidentiality. Please note allergies, medication, or special concerns on this form, which will be communicated directly to the school nurse. This information is not kept in the school office files.*

The parent or guardian is responsible for informing the school if there are any changes to emergency contact information.

Health Screenings

Screenings are required as part of the health assessment. Screening tests will be performed for vision, hearing, and scoliosis as mandated by the State of CT and pediculosis capitis as required by the school system. The standards and procedures employed for the visual, audiometric and postural screenings are consistent with those described in the regulations. A follow-up with your doctor or specialist must be made on any referral and the form returned to the school nurse.

For more information, please contact our nurses STMnurse@stastmschool.org or STAnurse@stastmschool.org

The Town of West Hartford provides our Nursing Service Program. Full-time Connecticut licensed registered nurses coordinate a total health program on our campuses during school hours. The State of Connecticut requires a complete immunization record for each child entering school by the first day of school.

If the school nurse does not receive this record by the opening day of school, your child may be refused admittance by state law.

Illnesses

If your child is ill and will be absent from school, please call or email the main office to let the school know. All children must be accounted for each morning at the start of school. Please help us keep our students safe by informing the school of an absence. The school will call home for any child not in attendance at the start of the school day.

Children who are ill at home (vomit during the night, diarrhea, fever) should not be sent to school the next morning. A 24-hour period should pass without illness before they return to school. A physician’s note is required to excuse and re-admit a student from physical educational programs when an injury is involved.

If children test positive for COVID, the Department of Health recommends student remain out of school for 5 days and mask for 5 days after they return. We encourage vaccinations and booster shots. Protocols are subject to change.

Since the school is not equipped to keep your child in school if he/she is ill, children who become ill during the school day must be picked up by a parent or designated adult within one hour of notification.

Please inform the nurse of any changes regarding your child's health status - new diagnoses such as: asthma, seizure disorder, diabetes, etc.; any new medication being given at home; surgery or hospitalizations; fractures or injuries; long-term absences; or communicable diseases.

Medication

According to CT State Law Sec. 10-212, the administration of medication by the school nurse or in the absence of such registered nurse, the principal/associate principal or an assigned teacher may administer medicines, as long as there is a written order from a physician or dentist on file. In the event that no school personnel are trained for the administration of medication, the medication needs to be given by the parent/guardian. If your child needs medication at school, we need a permission form signed by your physician, dentist, APRN or PA, licensed to practice in Connecticut or any other state, and instructions for giving the medication. Medications must be sent in the original pharmacy-labeled container. (Ask your pharmacist for an extra labeled container when you pick up the medicine.) If your child self-medicates with an asthma inhaler at home, we must know what it is, in case of a reaction. The school nurse must review all medications coming to school. This protects all children, including yours.

Medication and Athletics

Parents/guardians who are aware that their child has a serious allergy shall also provide written permission for the administration of an Epi-Pen® or other prescribed cartridge auto injection and shall supply the coach with that medication. In the absence of a coach who has been trained to administer such a medication, the parent/guardian shall attend all competitions. As per any time a medication delivered by cartridge auto injector is administered the coach shall see to it that emergency medical services are called.

In addition, parents must supply a separate inhaler for any student who may require it. The emergency medication within the nurse's office will not travel with the students for games or practices.

PARKING

Parking at the St. Thomas Campus

Our parking lot has been clearly marked giving our families parking spaces for drop-off and pick-up. Please enter on the south side of the property at Farmington Ave. between the rectory and the adjacent apartments. Exits are marked with arrows on the ground allowing vehicles to safely leave the property behind the church near the playground and on the north side of the building. Arrows are also fixed to signs at these exits indicating the desired traffic flow. Since we are trying to be good neighbors with our Parish and Dover Road families, your cooperation will be appreciated. A map has been enclosed in this handbook for your parking, drop-off and driving convenience.

Parking at the St. Timothy Campus

The King Philip Drive parking lot is the official parking lot for the school during drop-off and pick-up. All parents and visitors are to use this lot. Orange cones will be set in place prior to dismissal to ensure that the traffic flow allows for a safe arrival and dismissal for our students.

Parents are requested to park in the middle section of the lot to allow students enough space to exit the building and to be clearly seen before proceeding to their vehicle. Students will proceed across the grass front to a safe distance away from the flow of traffic, before entering the lot to walk to their vehicle. Teachers and administrators will be on duty to assist with the process.

The circular driveway directly in front of the school building is reserved for school buses at dismissal. However, parents may use the circular driveway for After Care pick-up and club pick-up. Parents may also use the circular driveway for picking up students for medical appointments or early dismissals. Please be mindful that buses begin to arrive approximately 20-30 minutes prior to dismissal.

Physical Examinations

Physical exams are required for ALL new students entering school, and students entering Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grade Three and Grade Seven. Please send the completed Connecticut Health Assessment Record (HAR -blue or yellow form) to the school office before school begins in August or when the physical is completed during the school year. **Both Parts I and II** of the Health Assessment Record must be filled out by both the healthcare provider AND parent/guardian, including the parent/guardian signature, or the form will not be accepted. **Forms are available on our web site for your convenience.** Completed forms should be returned to school in August to allow for a smooth transition in the new school year.

Playground Use at the St. Thomas Campus

We are blessed with a wonderful play space. Students are taught through their physical education classes, the proper use of the equipment. These lessons are reinforced during recess. Some of the equipment is not appropriate for our youngest children. Additionally, some of the equipment is too small for our upper school children. Please review the following guidelines, so we can all continue to enjoy this area.

- Students from toddler to 5 years of age should use the small structure with the rooftop addition. The clubhouse with the table is also for our youngest children.
- Students in grades 1 through 5 have the use for the largest structure.
- **Ball playing and running games should be enjoyed on the blacktop only.**

We request that you review the appropriate use of all of the equipment with your children to prevent injury after school and needless destruction of the structures.

HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

The Home & School Association is a parent organization that promotes open communication between parents, faculty and the school board of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. Monthly meetings take place during the school year. The organization hosts events throughout the year which help to raise money for the school. Funds raised over the budgeted amount each year, are directed toward the Teachers' Trust, to support our teachers.

The Home & School Association is a parent-run group whose goal is to promote friendships between parents, and facilitate communication with the faculty, as well as to direct and coordinate parental support through activities, social functions and fund-raising.

We believe that friend-making happens naturally, when people become involved in this community -- by helping in their children's classrooms, by getting to know other parents and families, or by volunteering for one of the myriad of HSA activities that occur throughout the school year. The fund-raising, critical to the school's budget, also enables people to make friends, as they work shoulder to shoulder at an event or on a committee.

The HSA meets once each month (noted on the calendar), and the meetings are open to all parents. Please try to attend, if at all possible! We welcome new ideas and fresh perspectives. If you can't make it to a meeting in person, please share your thoughts with one of the officers (whose names are listed in the front of this handbook). Remember, this is *your* organization.

Award for Extraordinary Service

This is an award given to the parent of a fifth grader (whose family is completing its tenure at STA) who, in the opinion of the Home & School Board, has given an extraordinary amount of time to the students of St. Thomas the Apostle School through volunteer efforts. The candidates will be nominated by current HSA officers and approved by the Leadership Team. An award citation and gift will be presented at Fifth Grade Class Night in June.

Fundraising at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School

One of the chief ways in which the Home & School Association helps St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School is by raising money. In fact, the HSA contribution is a part of the school budget; for the school year, the HSA must raise \$25,000 to fulfill its obligation to the school. This amount is separate and different from money raised from alumni and others through the school's Advancement efforts.

How will we do our part? In a variety of ways:

- **Fundraisers throughout the school year.** Details will be announced in the Thursday email or through our website, as they become available.
- Support St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School with your online purchases through the **Amazon Smile** program! Simply [click on the Amazon Smile icon](#) and select *Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, West Hartford* as your charity of choice. A percentage of each purchase will be sent directly to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. Thank you!

Core Value Award

The Home & School Association created what was formally known as the Pastor Award in 2001 in honor of Fr. Murphy's tenth anniversary as pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church. It seemed a fitting tribute to a man who was also a member of the St. Thomas the Apostle Class of 1943 – the school's very first graduating class!

The Core Value Award may be given each year to the one student in each homeroom who best exemplifies respect, responsibility, loving Christian behavior, and other important character traits embodied by our former Pastor. Each May, every homeroom teacher in grades Pre-K-5 will nominate a student and an award certificate will be presented.

Volunteering at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School

Like any community, ours is unique because of the people who are part of it: the administrators and school staff; the children; and you, the parents. The time and talents you share -- help to make St. Thomas the Apostle School special. **This willingness to help is actually formalized in the school contract, which requires each family to contribute their time and talent throughout the school year.** Discover the camaraderie and satisfaction that comes from volunteering at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School.

To ensure the safety of our students, background forms and participation in a Virtus Workshop are required for all employees and volunteers. Forms are available online and in the school offices.

- The [Virtus Training Workshops](#) are available online. This training is required to comply with the policies of the Center for Catholic Education and Formation and the regulations set forth by the Council of Bishops, as we seek to protect all of God’s children. Verification of attendance at the training workshops is required. All volunteers must attend, *once*.
- **Background Check:** Anyone wishing to participate in any student-centered activities in or out of school must complete the background form and submit it to the office. Background checks are required once every ten years. All new families will be charged a \$20 fee per-person processing fee. This screening only needs to be done once during your time at STA-STM.
- While we can’t hope to list every activity or volunteer opportunity that will occur during the school year, the guidelines listed in the *Parent Volunteer Guide*, available on the school website, may assist you in managing your time and talents to help our school.

HOMEROOM PLACEMENTS

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School has been fortunate to have two homerooms available for most grades. Due to fluctuations in enrollment, we understand that this situation may change from year to year. Given a two-homeroom configuration per grade, the student population is divided with the intent of creating a balanced class within each homeroom, while respecting the levels of academic proficiency in each child. Using screening tools, reviewing assessments with the help of the teachers, the school counselor, and the leadership team, the needs of each child are considered when the class lists are created. Parent requests for teachers are not accepted for this process.

HOMEWORK POLICY

As you plan for homework support at home, keep the following guidelines in mind. Homework is designed to serve a positive purpose and is closely integrated with class work.

Homework in grades 1, 2 and 3 should take about 30 minutes. Students in grades 4,5, and 6 should be spending an hour on their homework. Students in 7th grade should spend 90 minutes, and 8th graders should be spending two hours. Given individual learning styles and approaches to tasks, the time frame may vary for your child. If you have concerns about your child’s study habits and homework success, please contact your child’s teacher.

Formal homework other than enrichment reading will not be given before holidays and vacations. However, students may find it beneficial to use their free time during school break to catch up on material that may be due sometime after the holiday. This is particularly true with monthly book reports and long-term projects.

Our goal is the continued success of every child. Mentioned in the general school rules, homework is an integral part of school success. Parents will be notified if their child is regularly missing or submitting homework late. This communication may be via email or parent communication notices. parent communication or “homework” notices will be sent home for discussion and parent/guardian and student signature.

LIBRARY

Coordinated through our teachers and our media specialist, students can benefit from a scheduled library period each week. The activities during that time are coordinated between the librarian and the faculty.

Since all library materials are shared by the entire school population, it is important to remember these guidelines. When students check out reading material from the library, make a note of the due date. It is the responsibility of each student and his/her parent to return all material on the due date. This affords other students the opportunity to enjoy more time reading and less time searching for lost or overdue books. If you need more time to finish your book or magazine, our media specialist will be happy to renew it for an extended period.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

We celebrate our Catholic faith daily through prayer and classes in religion. We celebrate with Mass on a regular basis and on holy days of obligation. Through prayer, classes, liturgies, retreats, service learning opportunities, and the overall culture of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School, we seek to guide our students, regardless of their faith, toward a deeper relationship with God and with their fellow human beings.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

"Caught" cards are presented to individual students who are "caught" enhancing the school community by being a positive role model.

STUDENT RECORDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the event that a parent elects to transfer a child from St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School during the school year, a request in writing must be made to the principal. It must be understood, however, that the school's expenses do not diminish following the withdrawal of a child. Parents are responsible for the full tuition as provided in the tuition agreement. If a child moves from St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School to another school, a written request for transcripts needs to be filed. **Financial obligations to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School remain the responsibility of the family, as noted in the contract.**

Other requests for student information and recommendations must be requested in writing from the receiving institution. This includes summer camps, tutoring companies, individual tutors on letterhead, and middle schools as part of the middle school application. All requests for information must be made through the school office. All financial obligations must be resolved before records or recommendations will be processed.

There is no charge for eighth graders submitting application packets for up to three schools. For application requests beyond those three, families will be charged \$25 per application payable through Blackbaud Tuition Management.

Record Release

When the decision has been made for a student to leave St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School or when a student graduates, student records will need to be forwarded to the receiving school. Likewise, camps and other student-centered institutions may request recommendations from various members of the school staff. A formal written request from the receiving school, signed by the

parent or guardian must be completed and submitted to the school office before records or recommendations will be completed, copied and released. The release form must indicate the name of the documents requested and must be signed by the custodial parent or legal guardian of the student. **All financial obligations to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School must be up-to-date before the records will be forwarded as requested in the release form.**

STUDENT SERVICES

It is important to remember that from time to time, you and your child may require special intervention. In addition to nursing services provided by the Town of West Hartford and the screening prescribed by local and state guidelines, additional academic services are available at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School.

For students who may need some additional testing and/or other diagnostic services, the school Interventionists will work with the parents and teacher to make a referral to the town of West Hartford. Parent involvement is imperative for the success of any additional services for students, so you may be requested to attend meetings at times during the school year.

In addition to academic intervention within the classroom setting, St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School provides *a school counselor on each campus*.. The counselor is scheduled at the school three days a week. These services may include temporary support or outside referrals giving students the emotional support they need to sustain a successful approach to school life. **A copy of the referral form is included on our website.**

Mandated Reporting

The identification and prevention of child abuse and neglect is of the utmost priority in our schools. All school personnel abide by state law and Archdiocesan policy with respect to this subject. All school personnel are kept informed of their legal obligations under the law.

Under current law, Section 17a-101 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires certain individuals, called mandated reporters, to contact civil authorities whenever such individuals have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected.

TECHNOLOGY

Each student who utilizes the school's computer system and other school electronic devices will be instructed in the proper use of the network.

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School provides user accounts through Google Workspace for Education, which includes email addresses for students. These email accounts only allow students to send emails to teachers at STA-STM. These accounts will be deleted upon graduation or students withdrawing from STA-STM. **Click here for Google Workspace for Education privacy policies.**

The use of the school's computer system and electronic information resources must be in support of education and research, consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students using the school's network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules. Parents and students are required to sign a **technology agreement form** at the beginning of each school year.

Students who do not submit this contract will not be able to use any form of technology at STA-STM.

Cell phones

- Cell phones are not allowed during the school day.
- If a student needs to make a call, the phone in the main office is available. If parents decide that a student must have a cell phone for safety reasons, the phone must be powered down and remain in the child's backpack from the time they enter campus until they leave campus.
- Failure to comply with this policy will result in parent notification and phone pick up in the main office at the end of the school day..
- Use of cell phones on the bus is not permitted.
- Cell phone use is not permitted at school dances or other events.

Smart watches and fitbits--Students may use these devices only for telling time. Use of smart watches for any other purpose will result in students being unable to wear these devices.

Computer use policy

All computers used in instruction are the property of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. The administration and network support staff have invested tremendous time and energy in building and maintaining a safe and smooth functioning network at STA-STM. It is important that students and parents understand the expectation for acceptable use of computers at St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School follows the guidelines from the Center for Catholic Education and Formation for acceptable computer use.

1. A student is responsible for all content on his/her drive.
2. When a student is assigned a computer, they are expected to use that computer for class work.
3. Students must log in to computers using only their stastmschool.org email, and they must follow all log-in instructions provided at the beginning of the year.
4. Students must not share their passwords with any other student and may not log in on another student's account.
5. Students may use only those electronic devices provided by the school.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus

The West Hartford Public Schools and their transportation department provide transportation for West Hartford residents. It is necessary for all families to contact the Town of West Hartford to arrange for this service. Each spring a renewal form is sent home through our school office to help with the transition from school year to school year. This form is a requirement. Any delay in the completion of this form or its return to the West Hartford Transportation Department may result in a delay in service. If you are a new family and reside in West Hartford, please check with our administrative assistant for more information

While riding the bus, students represent St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School and must follow all school rules of safety, respect, and honesty. Students may not use cell phones while riding the bus. Students not complying with expected bus behavior may be unable to use this for transportation.

TUITION

Tuition Contracts

It is the policy of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School to remain in a healthy financial situation. To that end, according to our tuition contract, each family is responsible for complete

and timely payment of tuition and fees as described in your contract. In the event that families fail to meet their financial obligations to the school, the principal and/or pastor will make all reasonable means of collection to insure payment of said fees. Such means may include legal action or any other action as directed by the pastor or the Center for Catholic Education and Formation through the Archdiocese of Hartford. It is the policy of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School to charge a \$50.00 fee for checks returned by a bank. In the event that a bank returns personal checks written by a family in payment of fees due to the school, all future fees due to the school from that family must be paid by bank check or money order.

Tuition Collection

St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School has collaborated with Blackbaud Tuition Management to facilitate its tuition collection. School personnel have provided basic demographic information to Blackbaud Tuition Management regarding family accounts, however there are enrollment requirements from Blackbaud Tuition Management for each family to begin the process. Once a family has completed and submitted a contract with the deposit to the school business office, the enrollment process for the school year can begin. Instructions will be shared through the email system with each family to ensure confidentiality and a successful completion of this process. In addition to assistance from the Blackbaud Tuition Management coordinator online, our business manager will be available to assist families.

Tuition Assistance

Funded by our Tuition Assistance Program and other archdiocesan resources, tuition assistance may be awarded to families of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. Priority is extended to students based on the accompanying criteria for each award. Assistance may be provided in the form of reduced tuition, grants-in-aid or as a combination. Applications for financial assistance will be requested each spring. The principal and the pastor in cooperation with Blackbaud Tuition Management and Blackbaud Financial Aid Management will review all applications.

Timely completion and submission of the material will ensure a timely response from the school, once the funding becomes available. Incomplete applications will not be processed by Blackbaud Financial Aid Management.

All applicants for tuition assistance and scholarships must have processed Blackbaud Financial Aid Management application on file. Once your application is processed, a financial aid recommendation will be forwarded to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. All final financial aid decisions, including notification of an award amount (if any) will be made by St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School. If families are concerned about their Blackbaud Financial Aid Management application or disbursement of tuition assistance, please contact our business manager at the school.

Additionally, only families with a completed contract for admission to STA-STM may be considered for tuition assistance. A full listing of scholarship and tuition assistance opportunities are listed on the school website.

UNIFORMS

All uniform clothing is supplied by the Dennis Uniform Company (dennisuniform.com) Every effort is made to reduce the cost of supplying growing families with notifications of sales throughout the school year and the summer months. Please continue to check our website for this information.

Please review the St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School dress code with your child(ren) as it will be their responsibility to fulfill the obligation of wearing the correct clothing each day to school. We have tried to be as specific as possible with uniform guidelines. Our uniform defines our common identity. The Leadership Team will issue Parent Communication Notices to students out of uniform. Parents may be contacted with a request to supply the correct uniform.

Jewelry is not part of the school uniform for boys or girls, unless it is an expression of faith (i.e. necklace/one bracelet). However, girls may wear small earrings. Likewise, no make-up or tattoos should be worn by students at any time. Only clear fingernail polish is acceptable. No artificial fingernails. Hair styles should be clean and neat. Boys' hair must be styled to ensure that the length does not exceed the top of the collar of the uniform polo shirt

In addition to the dress code requirements listed above, the following additional restrictions are in place.

Girls should wear white undergarments underneath polo shirts.

Not allowed:

- Make-up of any type
- Dyed hair or streaks of color other than a student's natural color
- Additions to hair (i.e. feathers, only uniform colored headbands)
- Visible tattoos
- Slippers, sandals, crocs, boots, flip-flops

Boys should wear only white shirts underneath their polo shirts.

Not allowed:

- Visible tattoos
- Dyed hair or streaks of color other than a student's natural color
- Slippers, sandals, crocs, boots, flip-flops

	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten-Grade 5	Grades 6- 8
Girls Formal Uniform	<p>~ Gray, or pull-on pants, gray or STA gym uniform sweatpants, burgundy</p> <p>~ Gray shorts may replace pants, (4/15-10/15)</p> <p>~ Polo shirt, long or short sleeved, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Cardigan sweater, burgundy or gray with logo <i>or</i></p> <p>~ Burgundy fleece</p> <p>~ Socks or tights, white, burgundy or gray</p> <p>~Shoes: sneakers with velcro</p> <p>~ Hair accessories: white, burgundy, gray or black</p> <p><i>*It is recommended that girls wear a pair of shorts under the shift dress</i></p>	<p>~ Plaid jumper or plaid skort or gray pants</p> <p>~ Gray shorts may replace pants (4/15-10/15)</p> <p>~ Peter-pan collar shirt or polo shirt, long or short sleeved, white with logo</p> <p>~ Cardigan or v-neck sweater, gray or burgundy, with logo <i>or</i></p> <p>~ Burgundy Fleece</p> <p>~ Socks or tights: white, burgundy or gray</p> <p>~ Shoes: black mary janes, w/velcro, or sneakers</p> <p>~ Hair accessories: white, burgundy, gray or black</p>	<p>~ Irvington flat front pants, navy with black belt <i>or</i></p> <p>~ Skort or skirt, navy pleated <i>or</i></p> <p>~ Shorts, flat front w/black belt (4/15 to 10/15)</p> <p>~ Long/short sleeve jersey polo, white with logo.</p> <p>~ V-neck pullover sweater, gray with logo <i>or</i> Quarter-zip pullover sweatshirt, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Socks or tights: solid black, navy or white</p> <p>~ Shoes or sneakers - no boots, crocs, slippers, sandals, or flip flops</p> <p>~ Hair ribbons or bands in school colors only</p> <p><i>*8th graders in good standing may wear patterned belts and/or socks.</i></p>

	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten-Grade 5	Grades 6- 8
Boys Formal Uniform	<p>~ Pull-on pants, gray- elastic waist only or gym uniform sweatpants, burgundy</p> <p>~ Gray shorts may replace pants (4/15-10/15)</p> <p>~ Polo shirt, long or short sleeved, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Cardigan or v-neck sweater, burgundy or gray, with logo</p> <p>~ Socks: white, burgundy, gray</p> <p>~ Shoes: sneakers, w/velcro</p>	<p>~ Pants, gray with black belt</p> <p>~ Gray shorts may replace pants (4/15-10/15)</p> <p>~ Polo shirt, long or short sleeved (white) with logo</p> <p>~ Cardigan or v-neck sweater, gray or burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Socks: white, gray or black ankle-length</p> <p>~ Shoes: black tie shoes (non-scuff) or sneakers</p>	<p>~ Irvington flat front pants, navy w/black belt</p> <p>~ Irvington flat front shorts, navy w/ black belt (4/15 to 10/15)</p> <p>~ Long or short sleeve jersey polo, white with logo</p> <p>~ Pullover sweater, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Socks: solid navy, black, or white</p> <p>~ Shoes or sneakers- no boots, crocs, slippers, sandals, or flip flops</p> <p><i>*8th graders in good standing may wear patterned belts and/or socks.</i></p>
Unisex Gym Uniform	<p>~ Sweatshirt, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Sweatpants, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Micro-Mesh gym shorts, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ T-shirt, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Socks: white</p> <p>~ Shoes: sneakers</p> <p><i>Shorts may replace sweatpants (4/15- 10/15)</i></p>	<p>~ Sweatshirt , burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Sweatpants, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ Micro-Mesh gym shorts, burgundy with logo</p> <p>~ T-shirt, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Socks: white</p> <p>~ Shoes: sneakers</p> <p><i>Shorts may replace sweatpants (4/15-10/15)</i></p>	<p>~ Sweatpants, navy with logo</p> <p>~ Micro-Mesh gym shorts, navy with logo</p> <p>~ T-shirt, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Quarter-zip sweatshirt, gray with logo</p> <p>~ Socks, crew (white, navy, or black)</p> <p>~ Shoes: sneakers</p> <p><i>(10/15-4/15) –sweatpants are to be worn at all times except during gym class.</i></p>

Dress Down Day Attire

In keeping with the Christian values that are promoted at the school, girls and boys should dress in a manner that reflects this atmosphere. Shorts must have at least 6" inseams and must be visible. Boys and girls must wear their pants at the waist at all times.

VISITORS

To ensure the safety of our school population, visitors are required to sign in at the Main Office and wear a visitor's badge. Badges should be returned to the Main Office when a visitor signs out. In some instances, proof of identification will be required.

WEATHER RELATED ISSUES

Inclement weather that results in delayed openings or early dismissals will be communicated through the *School Messenger Alert System*. Families should have accurate and complete family information on the **EduConnect** system which will be used by School Messenger. Notifications will be sent via email, text and phone calls through the School Messenger Alert System.

Notification of snow days and delayed openings will also be communicated through TV stations. Please direct your attention to the following networks:

NBC channel 30; Fox channel 61; WFSB channel 3

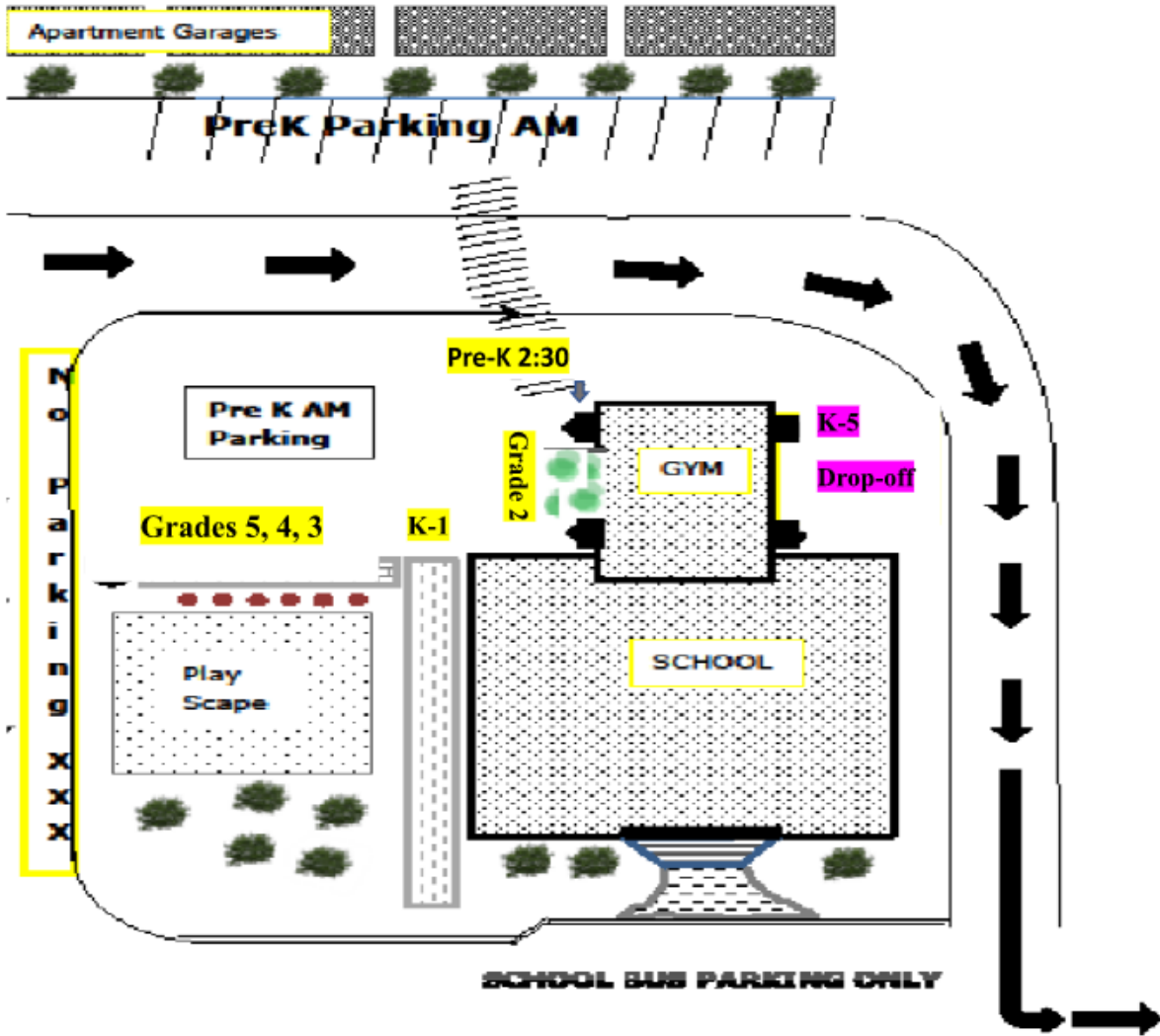
Late openings and early dismissals may not always follow the West Hartford Public Schools.

Delayed opening times will be posted on our school website. Times may vary slightly to accommodate for the needs of the buses and emergencies specifically related to St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School.

Parents must make alternate arrangements for after-school care in the event of school closings. The After Care Program will be closed in the event of an early dismissal. Before Care will be available when there is a delayed opening. It will be delayed the same amount of time as the start of school day.

Campus Maps

St. Thomas the Apostle School Campus Drop-Off and Pick-Up (Pre-K through Gr. 5)



Arrival

Departure

St. Timothy Middle School Campus (Gr. 6-8)



Thank you for taking the time to review this document with your child(ren). It is expected that you and your family will assist the school in communicating the policies of St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Timothy Middle School and that you will share your questions and concerns with the school administration.

After reviewing this handbook with your family, please submit the Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form found on the next page.



Saint Thomas & Saint Timothy School

Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form 2023-2024

After reviewing this handbook with your family, please submit the Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form to your homeroom teacher or to the main office if you have more than one child at our school.

August 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

After reviewing this handbook thoroughly with your child/children, please copy, sign and return this form to your child's homeroom teacher or main office if you have more than one child at our school.

I have read this handbook and I have discussed the contents with my child/children.
I understand my obligation to assist in enforcing the regulations stated.

(Print Student Name)

(Student Signature)

DATE

(Print Parent/Guardian Name)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

DATE