

Rapid City Catholic School System

St. Thomas More Middle School Parent/Student HANDBOOK

Revised July 2017



Official school records are kept in the protection of the school unless a student transfers to another school and an official transfer slip, signed by a parent, is submitted to release records. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 guarantees parents and guardians of students under the age of 18, and all students 18 years or older, the right to view records at any time in the Administrative Office. Parents are asked to make an appointment prior to such a visit. (For a complete reading of the law refer to: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) @ <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.htm>)



Dear Parents and Students,

“What greater work is there than training the mind and forming the habits of the young?”

St. John Chrysostom

Welcome to St. Thomas More Middle School! In choosing the Rapid City Catholic School System, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

Our mission statement "**Developing Personal and Academic Excellence in the Catholic Tradition**" guides every aspect of our life at St. Thomas More Middle School. The following beliefs inspire our learning, teaching, and community growth:

About Students and Learning, We Believe that:

- Students learn in unique ways
- Students need to be challenged
- Students must invest in their education
- Learning is a life-long process

About Teachers and Teaching, We Believe that:

- Teachers are powerful role models
- Effective teachers are fair, flexible, and challenging
- Teachers must innovate, change, and grow
- Teachers require resources and support

About our Catholic Learning Community, We Believe that:

- The RCCSS is an active, responsible partnership among the Church/parishes, parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and community at large
- All Catholics should have the opportunity for a Catholic education
- Everyone must be committed to excellence
- Schools must embody the Church's teachings and traditions
- Students must experience a safe and caring learning environment

Together, we can use these beliefs in a powerful and inspirational mission to guide our students' growth and education. On behalf of the faculty and staff thank you for choosing St. Thomas More Middle School!

God bless you,
Mary Helen Olsen
Principal

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THE RAPID CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

“Developing Personal and Academic Excellence in the Catholic Tradition”

HISTORY

St. Thomas More Middle School, a sixth through eighth grade Catholic school, is accredited locally through the State of South Dakota and globally through AdvancEd®, which sets rigorous protocols and research-based processes for continuous improvement. In addition, St. Thomas More Middle School is an institutional member of National Catholic Educational Association. St. Elizabeth Seton Elementary and Middle School was restructured into separate elementary and middle school entities in 2011. St. Thomas More Middle School enrollment continues to increase due to our dedication in assisting families in the formation of their children and serving as an educational center for the community and diocese.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Thomas More Middle School admits students of any race, religion, color, racial and ethnic origin. Students are afforded all the rights, privileges, programs and activities available. St. Thomas More Middle School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational and admission policies on scholarship and loan programs.

(BP BOD-2000-001)

ADMISSION POLICY

Families must be in agreement with the mission/vision of the Rapid City Catholic School System (RCCSS). All students new to the system must present a copy of a certified birth certificate, immunization records, a recent report card, and go through an administrative interview process before enrollment is approved.

(BP STM-2000-001)

REGISTRATION

A non-refundable registration fee of \$150 per student is required with the student application form. The Parental Agreement and Contract for Services forms must also be signed to secure class placement.

(BP BOD-2000-003)

FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

The cost of educating a student at St. Thomas More is accomplished through tuition payments, diocesan support, major fundraising events, and donations. RCCSS requires completion of the Contract for Services prior to accepting a student. A copy of this contract can be found as an addendum on the School website. At St. Thomas More, tuition covers a portion of the cost of a student's education; the remainder of this cost must be covered through donations such as the Annual Appeal and major fundraising events throughout the year. Students and parents/guardians are expected to volunteer and participate in these fundraising events.

(BP BOD-2000-009)

Tuition payment options are as follows:

Option 1: Full payment due on or before July 15th. If payment is not received by July 15th, the discount is not applicable. (For students entering school after the July 15th deadline, the payment for full tuition will only be discounted if payment is received prior to the student entering school.)

Option 2: Two payments: 1st payment due on or before July 15th, 2nd due on or before December 15th. An ACH Monthly Payment Contract form may be requested during pre-registration so that it can be processed if payment is not received by July 20th or December 20th. A \$25 annual fee will be added to the tuition.

Option 3: Tuition is budgeted over 10 months (August-May). An ACH monthly payment plan with direct withdrawal from your bank account on either the 10th or the 25th of each month is required. Missed payments will be assessed a \$35 late fee per transaction missed.

Option 4: Tuition is budgeted over 12 months (June - May) through the ACH Monthly Payment Plan with direct withdrawal from your bank account on either the 10th or the 25th of the month. Missed payments will be assessed a \$35 late fee per transaction missed.

(BP BOD-2000-002)

Any uncollected tuition or fees will be referred to the Board Finance Committee for further action. Such actions may include but are not limited to: adjusting ACH payments; applying for additional tuition assistance; an individualized, written payment plan; holding of records/report cards; not allowing students to take term exams or attend class; collection agency or legal action. Every attempt will be made to cooperate with the parents to benefit both the school and the family. A late fee of 15% per month or 18% per year will be assessed on all accounts 30 days past due.

Financial aid forms are available upon request. Students on financial aid must demonstrate regular attendance, adequate academic performance and acceptable behavioral patterns.

DISCOUNTS

Discounts are available for full payment or for multiple children enrolled in the School System. The multiple child discount and the prepayment discount MAY NOT be combined and the discount that most benefits the family will be applied. Please contact the Business Office with questions pertaining to tuition.

WAITING LIST POLICY

If a class is full and a student is placed on a waiting list, the registration fee will not be collected. To be placed on a waiting list, the parent must complete the student registration form, and the tuition payment/parental agreement forms. When an opening occurs, families/students on the waiting list will be selected on a first come/first served basis in order of application date.

Within three days of notification, the parent must pay the registration fee and tuition according to option checked on tuition payment preference form. If Option 2 was checked on tuition form, a F.A.C.T.S. application must be completed and tuition brought current to 10 month plan. Failure to do the above will result in the opening being offered to the next student on the waiting list. Any special considerations to the above policy must be approved by the Principal.

(BP STM-2000-001)

WITHDRAWAL

If a student is being withdrawn, an official transfer slip must be signed by a parent/guardian to release records to the school system the student will be attending. No records or transcripts will be forwarded by the school until all materials belonging to St. Thomas More are returned and all debts are settled. **Records are not released to parents.**

(BP BOD-2000-005)

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

St. Thomas More places great value on the involvement of parents in the educational process. We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and serve as role models for the development of their

child's life physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline to provide guidance and security. As partners in this process, we ask parents:

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time; and
- Has lunch money or a nutritious sack lunch every day.

To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences

To notify the school when the student will be absent or tardy

To meet all financial obligations to the school

To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health

To complete and return to school any requested information promptly

To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total educational process

To support the religious and educational goals of the school

To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school

To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

At St. Thomas More, we strive to enrich our students' education and experiences through the Volunteer Program. Studies have shown that children tend to do better in school when their parents take an active role in their education, whether it be helping with homework or volunteering at school. Children feel a sense of pride when their parents are involved and visible throughout the school during the day, at evening functions, or even helping out in small ways in the background. Volunteering is a good way to meet people, make friends, and network in our school community.

St. Thomas More requests that all parents/guardians volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per school year. Volunteer opportunities include but are not limited to assisting teachers in the classroom, working on school fundraisers, doing clerical work in the office, assisting or designing after school educational opportunities such as National Catholic Math League, 8th Grade Etiquette Social, 6th Grade Science Camp, playground assistant and driving/chaperoning field trip experiences.

Individuals who volunteer for driving/chaperoning will be required to attend a SAFE Environment Training and complete a background check to be in compliance with the Diocese of Rapid City. Volunteers will also be asked to review "The Code of Conduct of the Diocese of Rapid City" and "Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Diocese of Rapid City" which are located in the office or on-line at www.rccss.org.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOURS

Middle school hours are 8:15 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. Students will be allowed into the building at 8:00 a.m. and should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after dismissal. Breakfast is available at St. Thomas More High School starting at 7:30 a.m. All students must be out of the school building and off school grounds by 3:35 p.m. unless they are under the supervision of a teacher or coach. During regular school hours, all students are to be in a supervised environment at all times. There is no after school playground supervision. School Office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

(BP SES-2000-005)

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Attendance is extremely important for a quality education. We believe that absences and tardiness are a matter of concern for the student, the parents, the administration, and the faculty. Any pattern of recurring absences will necessitate an intervention by the administration. Actions may include parent conference, tutorial support, individual education plan, probation, suspension, or dismissal from St. Thomas More. Absences and tardies are only excused by administration.

Excused Absences include:

1. Doctor and Dental appointments
2. Emergencies or a death in the family
3. Illness or Injury
4. Religious Services

A parent or legal guardian must call the school office between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence and provide an explanation for the absence. Calls may also be left on the school answering machine. Please try to schedule medical appointments before or after school hours whenever possible. If a catastrophic illness results in an extensive absence, administration will deal with each case on an individual basis.

(BP BOD-2000-004)

If a parent/guardian wishes a student to miss school for any reason other than illness/emergency or school related activities and field trips (covered by the Parental Permission Form on file in the office), a **Parental Pre-Planned Absence Form** MUST be completed and turned into the office in advance of the absence.

In the event a student must be dismissed early, a parent must contact the office with details. Parents will be required to sign out their child in the office.

(BP SES-2000-003)

MIDDLE SCHOOL TARDY PROCEDURE

Being on time is a responsibility and a courtesy. A student entering a classroom after the class has begun, not only creates a disturbance and detracts from the learning process, but he/she misses important information. We believe the education process includes teaching responsibility, courtesy and consideration for others. Therefore, students must learn to exercise the necessary planning and caution to prevent tardiness.

A tardy bell rings at 8:10 a.m. to start the school day. A student will be counted tardy in the event that the student is not in the appropriate classroom at the appointed start time, which includes tardies at the start of the day and between class periods. After the 5th unexcused tardy, parents will be notified and the student will be required to attend detention.

After the 10th tardy, parents will be required to meet with the principal before the student will be allowed to return to class. If the problem persists, the student and his/her parents will be required to meet with the School Board to develop a plan of action. Excused tardies are under the discretion of administration.

SCHOOL HEALTH

In the event that your child becomes ill or seriously injured during school, an immediate effort will be made to call the parent or person indicated in the emergency file. In the event of serious injury or illness, and failure to reach a responsible party, the principal or adult supervisor will exercise reasonable judgment with reference to contacting emergency service.

St. Thomas More does have a certified nurse on staff on a part-time basis. South Dakota immunization guidelines for students are reviewed annually and students are required to meet those guidelines. A complete listing of immunization requirements can be found in the Appendix or on the website.

Prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicine should, whenever possible, be dispensed by a parent or guardian. St. Thomas More acknowledges that personnel have limited or no knowledge of administering medications to students. St. Thomas More can refuse to dispense medications to students. First aid materials are to be placed in a designated area, which should be known by all teachers. No student will be allowed to go home from school because of illness without first notifying the parents or his/her designee. Students who depend on medication in order to stay in school and whose parents cannot be present to dispense the medication will follow the following procedure:

1. Parents must bring medication to the school office with written instructions for dispensing the medication. A signed Medication Permission form for prescribed medications must also be included or on record. Forms are available in the office.
2. Prescribed medication must be in a container provided by the pharmacy with a label that includes date, student name, doctor name and dosage.
3. Acetaminophen, Motrin, inhalers, etc., will be dispensed to students upon request, provided permission has been granted as indicated on the Medication Permission form or verbal permission is obtained from the parent.
4. The school will keep a log stating who received the medication, date, time, type of medication, and who dispensed the medication.
5. Medications will be kept in a supervised container except for special medications that a physician wishes a student to carry with him/her.

Note: NO Medications will be given without a signed Medication Permission form.

(BP STM-2000-023)

STORM DAY POLICY

The following guidelines are provided to facilitate communication during times of inclement weather:

1. DO NOT rely on the decision of the public school system. Our decision involves many factors and is made independently of what other schools may decide to do.
2. If there is no announcement about closing, SCHOOL IS OPEN.
3. Administration will attempt to make the decision to cancel school or school related activities by 6:00 a.m.

4. Administration will notify parents using RCCSS School System Info app for mobile devices, the school website (www.rccss.org) and major media outlets.
5. The final decision concerning non-attendance on storm days resides with parents. If the school remains open, parents should exercise their own judgment regarding conditions pertaining to their road, car, driving skill and other factors.
6. In the event that school closes during the day, parents must have a responsible person listed on the emergency information on file in the office. Please contact the office immediately when any names or numbers change.

NO STUDENTS MAY BE LEFT AT SCHOOL IN THE EVENT OF CLOSURE.

(BP BOD-3000-005)

EMERGENCY OR DISASTER GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

(Crisis Plan available for review in the St. Thomas More office)

1. **In the case of a lockdown, no unauthorized person will be allowed to enter or leave the building.**
2. During emergency situations or a school lock down – **STUDENTS will only be released to a parent/guardian or designee on the student emergency card once authorities and/or administration have declared it safe to release students.**
3. **A STUDENT RELEASE STATION will be established**, when necessary, in an area that is accessible and in close proximity to the affected school. Such areas may include either school gym, designated parking lot areas, or the Cathedral. **All parents or designees will be required to sign out their child.**
4. THE SCHOOL will be in contact with various local emergency services during any type of emergency.

We ask for family help and cooperation in the following areas:

- *DO NOT call the school. Communication lines must remain open for emergency calls.
- *DO NOT immediately drive to the school following an emergency. The school access route and street entrance areas must remain clear for emergency vehicles.
- *Information will be available using RCCSS App, Plus Portals and/or the school website. (www.rccss.org)
- *Information will be available through local media.

(BP BOD-3000-004)

MESSAGES & PHONE CALLS

The office phone is to be used to communicate messages to and from students. Students are not to use cell phones during school hours.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

A calendar of school events and a lunch menu are available on our website <http://rccss.org>; the RCCSS mobile device app and PlusPortals. PlusPortals allows parents to also see student grades. <https://www.plusportals.com/RCCSS>. Faculty and staff e-mail addresses are located on the school website, and PlusPortals. Information is also provided through monthly newsletter, fliers and email.

(BP SES-2000-009)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

PLEASE ADVISE THE OFFICE WITH ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS, E-MAIL ADDRESS, AND/OR PHONE NUMBER TO ENSURE CONTINUED COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL.

SENDING MONEY TO SCHOOL

Money sent to school should be turned in to the office and a receipt will be given stating payment purpose.

CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

Parents are always welcome and encouraged to visit school. In order to make your visit more productive and to avoid scheduling conflicts, it is best to call, write a note, or e-mail a teacher to set up an appropriate time to visit. If it is determined that a parent visit has become disruptive to the class or individual students, a conference with administration will be necessary before arranging future visitations. Permission for student visitors must be granted by the Principal in advance. **All visitors (including parents), must check in at the office before visiting classrooms.**

(BP STM-2000-024)

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are located in a designated area near the school office. **Personal items brought to school should be clearly marked with the student's name.** Lost and found items are donated/disposed of at the end of each month.

(BP BOD-2000-024)

STUDENT DRIVERS

Driving on the school campus is a privilege and a responsibility. A **Student Driver Form** must be filed in the office prior to students driving to school. Students agree to drive in a safe, respectful manner at all times and agree to park properly in the designated area. If at any time a student demonstrates careless or reckless driving behavior or parks improperly, he/she may have driving privileges suspended or revoked. **Because of the need for safety, there is zero-tolerance for speeding or reckless driving.** Students must maintain the campus speed limit of five (5) miles per hour and adjust appropriately for weather conditions.

PLAYGROUND/INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is a parental responsibility to see that students are suitably dressed for the weather. All students are required to be on the playground during the lunch rotation. If a child is too ill to go outside, the child should be kept home. Supervisors have a list of playground rules which are shared with the students periodically. Students will only be allowed to remain inside in case of zero degree (or below) temperature or wind chill. Students will not be allowed to remain inside because of inappropriate dress.

(BP SES-2000-006)

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

CURRICULUM

St. Thomas More strives to embrace the critical elements of the Catholic Middle School concept and to meet our vision of Developing Personal and Academic Excellence in the Catholic Tradition. The Center for Early Adolescence has identified seven developmental needs for students' ages between the ages of 10 and 15. St. Thomas More looks to these needs to provide guidance in curriculum development. Our curriculum focuses on providing the following needs:

- Positive interaction with adults and peers
- Structure and clear limits

- Competence and honest sense of achievement
- Creative expression
- Noncompetitive physical activity
- Meaningful participation in families, schools, and communities
- Self-definition

The curriculum is also mapped and aligned with South Dakota State Standards. The core curriculum includes: Religion, Grammar/Composition, Literature, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education and Technology Education. All students have daily Religion class and are asked to participate in the faith experience through study of scripture, church doctrine, Christian values, and liturgical services. Students can choose one enrichment option per semester from the following: Art, Band, Choir, Orchestra, Keyboarding& Coding, Sign Language, Robotics, Yearbook, World Language/ Culture. Study Skills and Early bird Keyboarding are available by faculty recommendation. A full description of courses is available on the school website (www.rccss.org).

An emphasis is placed on team planning and shared decision making in both academic and co-curricular activities. Our middle school faculty are certified to work with the unique development of students in this age group. A family perspective is maintained throughout the middle school program and parents are encouraged to take a meaningful role as partners with the school in the spiritual, academic, social, and service formation of their child. Service projects and other collaborative efforts are undertaken to enhance the development of connectedness with the community.

ACADEMIC SERVICES

Academic resources are available for middle school students who need extra assistance. Students who have been tested through the Rapid City Public School System, professional medical institutions, or have been identified by our staff as requiring special needs, are eligible for individualized instruction, resources, and/or assistance.

(BP BOD-3000-001)

COUNSELING

The Counseling Department is available for the academic and emotional needs of your child. Collaboration is encouraged between teacher, parent, child, and our counselors whenever appropriate to help families adjust to societal pressures and difficult challenges. St. Thomas More counselors serve the needs of students and parents through class and individual consultation.

(BP BOD-3000-002)

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

The Rapid City Catholic School System is committed to providing a safe and secure environment to educate students. The faculty and staff at St. Thomas More are required by law to report any suspected child abuse. The Protection of Children From Abuse or Neglect statutes of South Dakota Law will be strictly followed whenever we have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. Any school official who intentionally fails to make the required report is guilty of a Class I misdemeanor. Anyone who participates in making a report in accordance with the law and good faith is immune from any civil or criminal liability that may otherwise arise from reporting or from any resulting judicial proceeding even if the suspicion proved to be unfounded (SDCL 16-10-14).

The Board will support any employee making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect until and unless it is determined that the employee was acting in bad faith in making the report.

(BP BOD-2000-011)

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are given to reinforce the skills and lessons taught in class. Homework may include, but is not limited to

1. Review of previously-learned material
2. Daily assignments not completed in class
3. Supplemental and enrichment materials
4. Special projects

Homework is an opportunity to extend the learning experience and deemed an important aspect of quality education. Homework is monitored and evaluated by the teacher by whom it is assigned. Homework grades are an important factor in the final grade, both directly and indirectly. Homework is an individual task and is of little value to the student if the student does not do it. Students should expect to spend between one to three hours each evening on homework.

Parent participation may sometimes be necessary for the completion of homework assignments and is encouraged, but it is important that students do their own work. Students should have a quiet place set aside to do their homework. A regular time should be established and followed.

St. Thomas More is a community of faith with its primary mission being transmission of this faith to our students. To assist our parishes in the development of this faith, Wednesday evenings are designated as “Faith Formation” evenings. All scheduled activities by staff, faculty, administration and volunteers will conclude by 5:00 pm on these days. Any homework given on this day will not be due until Friday of that week unless it is a multi-day assignment.

(BP BOD-3000-003)

MAKE-UP WORK

School work missed because of an excused absence must be made up. The student is responsible for scheduling make-up work, test(s), and other class activities with the teacher(s) upon his/her return. Make-up work must be completed in a timely and reasonable manner as agreed upon by the teacher and student. If a student does not complete work in the allotted time frame, no credit will be given.

Students who will be absent for pre-planned family trips and school-related functions should meet with the teacher prior to the function to make arrangements. Projects and homework will still be due on scheduled due dates. In absences due to illness, the student will have the number of absent days plus one extra day to make up work. For example, if a student was absent two days, he/she would have two days plus one, or three days total to make up work. All unexcused absences will result in zeros in the classes missed.

When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 a.m. to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORT

Report cards are available on-line at the end of each nine-week grading period. Parents/guardians can also access their child’s current grades at their convenience using Plus Portals (<https://www.plusportals.com/RCCSS>). Plus Portals is to be used as a communication tool for parents, students and teachers to monitor missing work, late work, and student progress in each individual class. During the middle school experience, St. Thomas More hopes that parents will not only utilize this information, but will gradually help their child learn how to monitor their own grades and effort for future success in the academic arena.

Report cards and other student information are provided to parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of a court order if information is not to be shared with parents/guardians. Student information will not be released to other parties unless written permission is obtained and is on file from the custodial parent/guardian.

The ACT Aspire®, as well as math diagnostic exams, are given to all middle school students in the spring. The Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) is given to all 6th grade students. Benchmark reading comprehension and math skills will be assessed throughout the year and student keyboarding assessments will be given to ensure grade level requirements are met.

(BP BOD-2000-018)

HONOR CONCEPT

The principles of respect and virtue are integrated into all facets of the curriculum and life of the school. The St. Thomas More Middle School Honor Concept has been instituted to help provide each member of our school community a safe, respectful and equal environment for the educational growth of our students. Honor, personal integrity and loyalty to each other, the school, and its developing traditions are fundamental characteristics in a successful St. Thomas More student.

St. Thomas More students are expected to reflect Christian ideals, attitudes and values in their lives. They are expected to:

- ✓ Be persons of integrity and stand for that which is right
- ✓ Tell the truth and ensure that the full truth is known
- ✓ Embrace fairness in all actions
- ✓ Ensure that all work submitted is their own
- ✓ Respect the property of others and the school

Honor helps to build a healthy and strong community. The Honor Concept describes a way of life in our school community. Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, prohibition of participation in activities or performances, suspension, and/or expulsion.

GUIDELINES REGARDING CHEATING

Note: These are presented as “guidelines” to assist students in understanding what does/does not constitute a violation of the honor concept. The list is representative and does not include all examples. Teachers may have more specific information regarding how these guidelines pertain to their class or may have guidelines or restrictions that are stricter than these. In such cases the stricter guidelines apply. As always, the best guideline for students is to use common sense and follow their informed consciences.

HOMEWORK

The following are “**NOT**” permitted and “**DO**” constitute a violation:

- Having another person, including parents, do any portion of the work for you
- Copying or paraphrasing any portion of another student’s homework in your possession
- Comparing answers and then changing them
- Not counting a problem wrong when correcting your own or someone else’s paper
- Any changing of answers while correcting your own or someone else’s paper
- Copying answers while you are supposed to be correcting the assignment
- Changing an answer without changing corresponding work
- Plagiarizing material without citing source and giving credit to author

TESTS/QUIZZES

The following are “**NOT**” permitted and “**DO**” constitute a violation:

- ANY use of ANY unapproved assistance to determine answers – calculators, notes, book, other students, “cheat sheets”, “wandering eyes”, notes on hands, shoes, etc.
- Answers without corresponding work if required by teacher
- Answers from one test version found on another test version
- Sharing any test information not provided by the teacher to another student and learned by taking the test; e.g. – number and/or types of questions, details, length, etc.
- Making any comments or using gestures or “signs” during a test/quiz
- Using a “Key” or old test to study unless approved by teacher

GRADING/HONOR ROLL CRITERIA

Students maintaining a 3.0 grade point average in **all** classes and having **no D’s or F’s**, will be placed on the Honor Roll. There are three Honor Roll designations: Honors (3.0 – 3.45), High Honors (3.5 – 3.99), and Very High Honors (4.0). The following grading scaled is used:

A	—	93 - 100%
B	—	86 - 92%
C	—	78 - 85%
D	—	69 - 77%
F	—	Below 69%

An incomplete is given only in cases of long illness or emergencies when the student has not been able to complete his/her assignments. Unless the work is made up within two weeks, the incomplete automatically becomes an “F”.

(BP STM-2000-003)

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled for all students during the first and third quarters. Throughout the year, individual conferences may be requested by a parent or a teacher. If a student's work drops below the level at which he/she has been working or is capable of working, the teacher will notify the parents.

(BP BOD-2000-018)

PROMOTION & RETENTION POLICY

Promotion/retention is essentially a matter of placing a student where he/she can work most effectively. If for some reason acceptable progress is not made by the student; the parent, teacher, academic services representative and principal will confer and if at all possible, reach a consensus on proper placement of the child. Considerations for promotion/retention shall include, but are not limited to: mastery of skills, attendance, physical, emotional and social maturity, and the potential for individual growth. The administration retains final authority in regards to retaining any student for low achievement.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and/or parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade. If the school formulates an agreement with the student and/or parent regarding promotion to the next grade level and this is made contingent on summer school courses, or specially designated courses/programs, or through course requirements, the school must adhere to the agreement and the student will not be advanced unless the conditions are met.

Decisions regarding acceleration will be made in consultation with professional institutions, as mutually agreed upon, and shall include outside testing and documentation of the student's IQ. The IQ level must deliver evidence that the student is well advanced from the upper end of his/her fellow classmates. This evidence does not necessarily include the testing of all students within a grade level, but are reflective of the norms for our students. Finally, the results are strongly indicative of success in an accelerated environment.

If conflicts concerning promotion and retention cannot be solved, the School Board has the authority to make the final determination.

(BP STM-2000-015)

CLASS PLACEMENT REQUEST POLICY

A request for class placement will be considered only if there is an extenuating circumstance or serious matter involving this request. Written requests should be addressed to the principal. Requests made for other reasons will not be considered, i.e. child/parent preference; recommendation from another parent; discipline procedure; class structure. Many factors are involved in making class assignments. Teachers, staff, administration and other necessary resource people provide the information necessary to determine the best placement and balance within classes.

(BP SES-2000-011)

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

St. Thomas More offers the opportunity for its students to participate in various clubs, sports, academic activities, and leadership positions. A faculty member or approved community leader moderates each activity or student organization as coach, advisor, or sponsor (CAS). Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities to enhance the academic/educational experience and to assist them in spiritual growth. Improved social skills, increased communication skills, emphasis on physical fitness, and an extended academic program are all reflected in participation in a well-rounded co-curricular schedule of activities. Students participating in any co-curricular activity will be given the RCCSS Activity Code of Conduct requirements. Students are expected to adhere to the Code during the entire time of participation in the school activity.

(BP SES-3000-003)

ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY POLICY

The St. Thomas More Eligibility Policy, like the curriculum, is strict and challenging. The Eligibility Policy is based on what is considered to be in the student's best interest; however, eligibility ultimately begins with and is the responsibility of each student. Because academics are foremost, a student must abide by the established criteria if he/she has a failing grade in the classroom curriculum.

(BP STM- 2000-034)

1. Each Tuesday at the end of the school day, student academic progress is reviewed by administration. The administrator sends the Eligibility Report to the Activity Director who sends the Eligibility Report on to the CAS. The CAS will then notify the student they are on probation or are ineligible.

2. Eligibility assessments are done on a Wednesday to Wednesday basis; ineligibility is from Wednesday to the next weekly assessment review.
3. If a student has earned his/her first F, the CAS notifies the affected student that he/she is on academic probation until the next grading period. During the first academic probation, the student will be able to practice and participate in any activities contest.
4. If a student earns two or more F's in one eligibility period, the student is unable to compete in the co-curricular activity for that Wednesday to Wednesday period, but may continue to practice at the coach's/advisor's discretion.
5. If the student earns an F in the specific classroom curriculum for the second consecutive week, or has received an F from another class, the CAS notifies the affected student that he/she may practice but will not compete in the activity until the next eligibility assessment period.
6. The teacher must give the student three graded opportunities to improve their F in the specific classroom curriculum. If the teacher is unable to provide the three graded opportunities, the student will become eligible for the next assessment period.
7. One day prior to any SDHSAA State-Sponsored tournament activity, a re-evaluation of the student's eligibility may be initiated. This re-evaluation is done between the principal and the failing subject area teacher.
8. The student may be assigned to an academic intervention program, which may involve peer tutoring, teacher assistance, and/or study skills instruction to be mutually determined by the student, teacher and principal. However, the academic intervention program is the student's responsibility.
9. Final decision on eligibility shall rest with administration.

*Demonstrated Effort will only be determined by the principal and/or teacher. Under no circumstances should the teacher be involved with the coach, the student or the parents when determining demonstrated effort. The parents and/or student need to schedule a meeting with the Principal if an issue arises. The Activities Director shall deal with the coach's awareness of probationary or ineligible students and enforcement of the Eligibility Policy.

Demonstrated effort that a teacher may use to alert the principal that the student is eligible may include, but is not limited to the following criteria along with good attendance, positive class participation and a positive attitude towards the classroom curriculum:

- Assessment in at least three graded assignments since last grading period
- Documented tutoring sessions
- Positive assignment record (homework completed and handed in on time)
- Supplemental education resources are being utilized (ex. Sylvan Learning Center)

ATHLETICS

The school offers interscholastic competition for 7th/8th graders in the following sports:

Boys: Baseball, Basketball, Cross-country**, Football, Golf, Soccer, Tennis, Track**, and Wrestling**

Girls: Basketball, Cross-country**, Dance/Cheer, Golf, Soccer, Tennis, Track**, and Volleyball

*Students may also be asked to participate on the high school teams at the discretion of the high school coaches.

**6th Grade program offered

(BP SES-3000-003)

Middle School Athletic Objectives:

1. To keep the athletic program within the bounds of wholesome educational experiences.
2. To develop fundamental skills in sports included in our program
3. To provide desirable athletic participation for as many boys and girls as possible (The System maintains a "no-cut" policy which means that any student who wants to participate on an athletic team is allowed to do so, provided that student makes a full commitment to the activity and meets all eligibility requirements.
4. To develop good health habits and an appreciation of the physical and mental preparation required for skilled athletic performance.
5. To develop qualities of sportsmanship, sociability, self-control, cooperation, leadership, and respect for rules.
6. To develop an interest in and an appreciation of an excellent athletic performance.
7. To provide a wholesome means of recreation for the student body, the faculty, and the school families and general community.
8. To recognize shared responsibilities involving coaches, students, parents, and teachers in a sincere effort to cooperate in providing extra-educational experiences in a Christian manner.

Playing Time: Every player in good standing shall play in every game

Exceptions: A player may be held out of a game/activity/event for the following reasons:

1. Missing practice or not participating fully in practice
2. Grades that do not meet eligibility standards
3. Misconduct in the classroom, lunchroom, playground, or other school areas

(Participation in other co-curriculum activities will also follow these same exceptions.)

(BP STM-4000-001)

PHYSICAL /ATTENDANCE REQUIRMENTS

- Physical examinations are required prior to any and all participation in the athletic program. Doctor's approval and/or waiver signed by parents must be kept on file in the school office. (Physical requirement packets are available on the school website; www.rccss.org).
- Student must have a release form (includes insurance, etc.) on file in the office.
- Athletic fees, when applicable, must be paid prior to participation.
- The student must be in attendance the morning of an afternoon activity or the afternoon prior to an all day event unless a serious illness or emergency situation can be documented. A meeting with the principal, activities director, and coach, advisor, or sponsor will result from a violation and a consequence will be determined.

ATHLETIC TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS/OUTSIDE EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

Students represent their school and their family when away from school. Information pertaining to athletic activities, field trips, and other educational opportunities will be sent to parents. A signed parental

permission form must be obtained for each field trip or outside educational opportunity taken. In order to provide for the safety of our students, we require each driver to complete the Volunteer Driver's Form on a yearly basis and have taken the Safe Environment Training to fulfill Diocesan requirements.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

It is important that parents, students, and all school staff work together to maintain a positive educational atmosphere. Courtesy and respect for all individuals and honesty towards others are expected qualities aligned with the Rapid City Catholic School System vision. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. Each child deserves to be in an excellent and safe learning environment. St. Thomas More stresses positive and consistent support for appropriate behavior emphasizing inner discipline and self-control

EXPECTATIONS

- **Mass/Prayer Services Conduct:** This is a time for prayer, introspection, and spiritual reflection. Students are encouraged to participate fully in the experience. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.
- **Assembly/Field Trip Conduct:** Students represent St. Thomas More Middle School on all occasions and are expected to behave with respect to visitors or as they represent the school to the wider community
- **Academic Conduct:** Students should be on time for classes, have the appropriate learning materials, and exhibit a willingness to learn.
- **Appropriate Language:** Students will use appropriate language at school and at co-curricular activities. At all times the student's behavior should be courteous and respectful to fellow students and adults.
- **Gum chewing:** Gum chewing is not allowed. Gum on carpets, floors and school furniture is unsightly and time consuming to remove. Repeated violations of this rule will result in detention.
- **Afternoon Snacks:** Snacks may be consumed at the discretion of the classroom teacher during the F class period. Otherwise, all food must be consumed at lunch time in the school cafeteria. Snacks are not allowed during recess.

DISCIPLINE

Self-discipline is essential to an integrated Christian life. A major goal of STM MS is to help guide our students to grow in virtues and self-discipline. The discipline process starts at the classroom level. Parents can expect this:

- Teachers will provide specific behavior expectations to be followed in their classrooms in their parent letter and classroom Plus Portals page.
- The teacher will counsel students failing to meet the behavior expectation.
- Teachers will contact the parent/custodial guardian of students who fail to respond to counseling to improve behavior.
- Teachers may refer the student to the School Counselor for intervention
- A student whose behavior is not improving, is chronic or severe will be referred to the Principal. Parents will be notified and the Principal may decide to place the student on one of the following disciplinary actions:

Detention: Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the Principal who monitors the detention. Saturday

morning is often the time for detention in the Middle School. Appointments, practices, lessons, etc. do not take precedence over detention.

In-School Suspension (ISS): The student will be assigned to an isolated closed study hall. Make-up work must be completed during that time. The student may face a loss of grades.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): The student is not to be in the school building or on school property during this suspension, including school-sponsored evening or weekend activities. The student will receive a grade of zero in all subjects for the suspension dates.

Expulsion: Expulsion is an extreme, but sometimes necessary, disciplinary measure for the common good. Any student will be subject to expulsion for any conduct which is of such a nature as to jeopardize the good name of the school community or which is detrimental or harmful to any member of St. Thomas More Middle School. Defiance of authority, overt disrespect for the laws of attendance, drinking, drug use, vandalism, theft, or possession of weapons may demand permanent expulsion. The Administration may make a referral to the School Board in regard to expelling a student.

(BP BOD-2000-008)

PROBLEM SOLVING

- If you have a question concerning discipline or curriculum assignments, first consult with your child's teacher.
- If information is needed or the concern is unresolved, a conference may be scheduled with the Principal.
- For further action a meeting with the Principal and all parties involved can be requested.
- If after following these steps the matter is still unresolved, a hearing with the Superintendent will be arranged through the Principal.
- If the matter is still unresolved, a hearing with an appropriate board committee or the full board may be arranged through the Superintendent. A board hearing will require at least 2 weeks' notice.

SCHOOL SAFETY/HARASSEMENT AND/OR BULLYING

In accordance with our Christian ideals, St. Thomas More strives to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. This policy prohibits any verbal, physical, or visual conduct on the part of an individual(s) that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This policy extends to inappropriate behavior at school, including school grounds, parking lot, school-sponsored activities, and field trips or co-curricular activities outside of the school building. Faculty and staff are trained in and use the international Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. St. Thomas More will investigate all complaints and will endeavor to handle each complaint in an expeditious, professional manner so as to respect the rights of all parties concerned.

Students making such threats (seriously, in jest, online, or electronically) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace®, Facebook®, Twitter, Snap Chat, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the school community.

(BP BOD-2000-007)

INTERNET

St. Thomas More students have access to the Internet. Training and proper supervision will be provided by staff, teachers, and/or advisors. It is essential, however, for all users to recognize their responsibilities in having access to vast services, sites, systems, and people. All students are required to abide by the Computer Use Agreement Policy. Students are ultimately responsible for their actions in accessing network or global services during school hours. Both the selection and use of materials must be consistent with the mission of the Rapid City Catholic School System.

It is understood that the student will abide by all rules and expectations written, implied, or expressed orally by administration, teachers, or staff. It is further understood that failure to do so may result in suspension from, or a permanent loss of, computer and Internet privileges and any necessary disciplinary action.

(BP BOD-2000-025)

SCHOOL DANCES

The expectation for dress, appearance and behavior at dances is the same as for all other St. Thomas More classes, activities, and functions: respectful, safe and Christian. It is the responsibility of parents to see that students meet the St. Thomas More standards of dress and appearance for all school dances and activities.

The following guidelines and requirements are provided to assist students and parents/guardians:

1. Students are to be signed out by a parent/guardian for evening events.
2. Provocative, erotic, and moshing-type dancing are prohibited.
3. All students must be well-groomed and clothing must be neat, clean, and in good condition.
4. Each dance will be chaperoned and the chaperones will be expected to intervene and take appropriate action to maintain St. Thomas More rules, standards, and guidelines.

The following items are not allowed:

1. Any clothing that would make a student conspicuous, provocative, or immodest.
2. Any top that is too tight, low-cut, reveals mid-drift, or reveals underwear.
3. Any dress, skirt, or top that when standing, bending, or sitting would make a student conspicuous or immodest.
4. Baggy pants or pants worn to reveal underwear.
5. Chains, hats, or caps.

(BP STM-2000-019)

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY/VANDALISM

Students whose actions intentionally, or by failure to exercise caution, cause damage to property will be responsible for the replacement value of the item damaged and will be referred to administration for disciplinary action, if necessary.

(BP BOD-2000-022)

BOOK DAMAGE

Students are expected to make restitution for damaged/lost textbooks, library books, or workbooks. Lost workbooks are the student's responsibility; a new one will need to be purchased at the student's own expense.

(BP BOD-2000-021)

INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS

Items that are misused for a purpose other than that they were intended will be collected and returned to the student's parents. Equipment for playground use, such as basketballs, footballs, or soccer balls, is permitted.

TELEPHONE USAGE AND CELL PHONE POLICY

Students are allowed to use the office phone during school hours with permission. Students will not be called to the phone during class time except in case of emergency. Student messages will be delivered to students between classes.

Cell phones or any other communication device must be off and stored during school hours unless the student has permission for use by a teacher. Cell phones in use without adult permission or in a student's possession will be confiscated and the following policy will be enforced:

1st Offense – Cell phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day.

2nd Offense – Cell phone will be returned to the student at the end of five school days.

3rd Offense – Cell phone will be returned to the student at the end of the school year.

(BP STM-2000-026)

LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned a locker. Combination locks may be used, but combinations must be given to the student's homeroom teacher. Under certain conditions, school personnel have the right to remove locks and/or search lockers.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We appreciate your continued support in helping your child follow the dress code guidelines. Middle school students are at an age where they continue to struggle with individualization. We hope to create an environment that has less distraction and competition over who is wearing the latest fashion.

STM Middle School Uniform Policy

GIRLS:

- **A-line Plaid Skirt, plaid kilt or Khaki Chino Skirt worn 2" above the knee**
- **Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts with STM emblem**
- **White, Gray, Black or Navy Socks without a logo are required unless wearing dress flats**
- **White, Gray, Black, or Navy Tights or Leggings-Solid color**
- **Solid White or Blue Oxford shirt with STM emblem (short, 3/4, or long sleeves)**
- **Solid White or Navy collared polo shirt with STM emblem (short or long sleeves)-worn tucked in**
- **Solid White Scalloped Dress Shirt can be worn untucked with Skirt or Pant**
- **Navy Button Front Cardigan or Sweater Vest**
- **Plaid or Navy Tie (optional); Plaid Belt (optional)**

BOYS:

- **Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts with STM emblem**
- **White, Gray, Black, or Navy Socks without a logo are required**
- **Solid White or Blue Chambray Oxford shirt with STM emblem (short or long sleeves)**
- **Solid White or Navy collared polo shirt with STM emblem (short or long sleeves)**
- **Brown or Black Belts are to be worn through pant or short loops**
- **Navy Sweater Vest**
- **Plaid or Navy Tie (optional); Navy Blazer (optional)**

Additional Uniform Regulations:

- All shirts must be worn tucked into pants or shorts.
- School Designated STM Uniform Sweatshirt only. STM Hoodies may be worn on Spirit Days only.
- Closed Toed Shoes are required. Sandals, open-backed shoes, boots, or shoes with a heel over 2” may not be worn.
- Solid colored undershirts should be white, navy blue, or black.
- PE UNIFORM: Designated STM t-shirt and STM gym shorts

Uniforms may be purchased locally from Rushmore Embroidery or on-line from Land’s End School Uniforms. Please order early!

DRESS-UP DAYS:

GIRLS: Appropriate, tasteful slacks or dresses. Legging pants may be worn with tops that provide appropriate coverage. Shoe policy still applies.

BOYS: Dress pants; no jeans. Collared shirt preferred.

SPIRIT DAYS: Students may wear blue jeans in good condition and a shirt that supports our school community. Jean Capri pants and/or shorts are acceptable. Shirts may include STM co-curricular activity wear. Students may also wear jeans with a regular uniform shirt.

OUT OF UNIFORM: Students who are out of uniform will be allowed to change into uniform during first period. If the student cannot meet the uniform requirements during that time period, he/she will receive a violation. Students will also receive a violation when shirts are chronically un-tucked or when a uniform is not worn in the intended manner. Repeated uniform violations will result in Saturday detention.

ABUSE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

POLICY /STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Rapid City Catholic School System recognizes the hardships alcohol can create to individuals and communities. So, we provide an alcohol free environment, safe for student growth and learning. For the benefit of all of our students, staff, fans, and guests, students may not use alcohol at any time while on campus or at any off-campus school sponsored event. In accordance with this, we will maintain a NO TOLERANCE policy toward student alcohol use.

The Rapid City Catholic School System (the School) has the following guidelines relating to its alcohol policy.

GUIDELINES

Possession/Use First Offense

When a student is found for the first time, in possession of, under the influence of, or using alcohol, on the way to or from school, at school, before, during, or after a school-sponsored event, the alcohol will be taken away from the student. The use of a Breathalyzer may be employed to students suspected of being under the influence of alcohol at school or school related activities. The police may be contacted whenever any individual is found in possession of illegal substances or is in violation of the law, including a minor in possession of alcohol. Parents will be contacted to take the student home. If emergency services are needed, such services shall be contacted and the expenses will be incurred by the student and their family.

Disciplinary Action First Offense

Any student who is found in possession of or under the influence of alcohol shall be suspended from school for **2 school days, which results in zeroes in all class work missed and extra-curricular activities according to the Blue Packet.** The school is bound by law, as are individuals and families, and it will act in compliance with the law when circumstances indicate certain actions are necessary. If applicable, the student will be removed from National Honor Society and any offices held by the student.

Possession/Use Second Offense

A 2nd offense during a student's enrollment in the RCCSS will result in **5 days of suspension from school, which will result in zeroes for all work missed in classes, along with extra-curricular activities as written in the Blue Packet.** As a condition of continued enrollment, the student, at the expense of the student's family/guardian, is required to complete the Lifeways Path II Class. Upon completion of the class, the student must submit the certificate of completion to the building principal. The student shall be subject to random drug/alcohol testing, also at the family's expense, for the duration of enrollment at RCCSS. (If the student drives to school, they will be required to park on campus.) There will be a meeting with the RCCSS school board to discuss future enrollment.

Note: Should a family refuse the recommended professional treatment, (including random drug testing), the school may permanently dismiss the student from RCCSS.

Possession/ Use Third Offense

If a third offense occurs, the student will no longer be enrolled in the RCCSS school system.

(BOD-2000-030)

WEAPONS POLICY/ILLEGAL POSSESSION

Any expression by a student of intentions to harm another student or staff member will warrant investigation, administrative review, and disciplinary action. Legal authorities may be involved in cases of threats of violence toward students or staff of St. Thomas More. Possession of or use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol or a weapon (knives, sharp instruments, as defined in SDCL 22-1-2-(10) under Weapon's Policy) is strictly forbidden on school premises. Any violations will be subject to immediate suspension from school and possible recommendation of expulsion to the Board.

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE STATUTE 13-32-7:

Any person, other than a law enforcement officer, who intentionally carries, has in his possession, stores, keeps, leaves, places or puts into the possession of another person, any firearm or air gun, whether or not the firearm or air gun is designed, adapted, used or intended primarily for imitative or noisemaking purposes, or any dangerous weapon, on or in any elementary or secondary school premises, vehicle or building or any premises, vehicle or building used or leased for elementary or secondary school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions, is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. This section does not apply to starting guns while in use at athletic events, firearms or air guns at firing ranges, gun shows and supervised schools or sessions for training in the use of firearms.

The above law defines firearm with a broad interpretation including the words: “used or intended primarily for imitative or noisemaking purposes.” The Catholic School System will not tolerate weapons or imitative weapons on school premises. Violation of State Statute 13-32-7 in any manner will result in an expulsion recommendation to the School Board.

SDCL 22-1-2-(10)

This statute defines the term “dangerous weapon” to include: any firearm, knife or device, instrument, material or substance, whether animate or inanimate, which is calculated or designed to inflict death or serious bodily harm, or by the manner in which it is used is likely to inflict death or serious bodily injury.”

(BP BOD-2000-010)

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

The Rapid City Catholic School System strongly disapproves of and does not tolerate sexual misconduct of any kind. All employees, students and volunteers must avoid offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior at school and are responsible for assuring that the schools are free from sexual misconduct at all times.

This statement prohibits (1) sexual advances; (2) requests for sexual acts or favors, with or without accompanying promises, threats or reciprocal favors or actions; (3) other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards or among employees, students or volunteers when such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment; and (4) any inappropriate sexual behavior or conduct between students on school property or at a school sanctioned activity.

The laws of South Dakota pertaining to reporting and confidentiality in matters of abuse, neglect, and sexual misconduct will be fully observed.

Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to, lewd or sexually suggestive comments, offensive language or jokes of a sexual nature; slurs and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual’s gender; or any display of sexually explicit pictures, greeting cards, articles, books, magazines, cartoons, or notes; physical assaults, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation; intentional inappropriate touching to another person’s body.

Copies of the “Code of Conduct of the Diocese of Rapid City” and “Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Diocese of Rapid City” are available in the office for review or on the school website.

(BP BOD-2000-006)

LUNCH PROGRAM

PAYMENTS & CHARGES: Please ensure that your student has money in their lunch account on or before the first day of school. Lunch payments may be mailed, dropped off in the main office, given to the classroom teacher or paid on-line. You may put as little or as much money in your individual student account. We recommend that you have at least 5 meals per student in your child’s account, even if your child eats only occasionally or just takes milk. Students on free or reduced meals are encouraged to carry an account balance as well. Any money left in the account at the end of the year will carry over to the next school year. If you leave the school system, your money will be refunded. We use an I.D. record keeping system. Students in grades 6-8 who do not bring a lunch will have a school lunch provided and charged to the student’s account.

Checks are payable to: ST. THOMAS MORE LUNCH

PLEASE PUT FIRST AND LAST NAMES OF ALL STUDENTS ON MONEY SENT TO SCHOOL.

FREE AND REDUCED APPLICATION: Applications are available for St. Thomas More Middle School students at the school website, Plus Portals or in the main office. This federally funded program is a **very vital part** of our lunch program. If you feel that your family may qualify for free or reduced meals, please fill out the application as soon as possible and return it to the attention of the lunch program to the school office or by mail. You will pay full price for your meals until your application is returned and approved. If you have any questions regarding this application, you may call Barb Fritz (Food Service Director).

All information on the application is kept confidential.

SERVICE CHARGE AND ACCOUNT NOTICE POLICY: We will use e-mail to notify families of the status of family lunch accounts. **Printed reminders are not sent home.** This message will inform you if the family account is less than \$20.00 or if the account is negative. If negative, a weekly service charge of \$5.00 will be applied. **EXACT BALANCES WILL NOT BE RECORDED.** Families on free meals that have a negative balance are also subject to negative service charges. If you are having financial difficulty for any reason, please call the Food Service Director or the Business Office and this fee can be temporarily waived.

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS: It is required by the State of South Dakota to have on file a medical statement that is updated annually and signed by a Medical Doctor. If your child has any special dietary needs, you may pick this form up at the main office. Handwritten notes or statements signed by parents are not accepted.

COMPETITIVE FOODS: The National School Lunch Program does not allow competitive foods in the cafeteria when hot lunch is being served. Competitive foods consist of foods that have minimal nutritional value, including "fast food." This could consist of many food items; however, we are mostly concerned about pop and candy. Please do not send or bring pop and candy to the lunchroom for students to eat with their lunch. If any one brings pop into the cafeteria during lunch, it will be removed. (THIS INCLUDES STUDENT'S SACK LUNCHES FROM HOME, PARENTS AND ANY GUESTS).

OUTSIDE FOOD: If you are bringing in outside food for your child to share with the class and the entire class will not be coming to the cafeteria for lunch, please inform the classroom teacher, the food service staff, and the office at least two days in advance.

JOINING YOUR CHILD FOR LUNCH: Parents are always welcome to join us for lunch. To ensure that we have prepared enough food, please call the office by 9:00 and tell us how many and what times you are coming. Please check in at the main office upon your arrival.

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERPRETATION OF POLICIES

The administration of Rapid City Catholic School System reserves the right to interpret rules and policies of this handbook as individual situations and needs arise. Such interpretations will be made on the basis of the following principles: all questionable and enabling behavior must be addressed and confronted for the good of the individual; when there is a conflict of interests, the common good shall prevail. Additionally, from

time to time, circumstances arise in which current policies and practices need modification or in which no policy or practice exists. In these cases, the spirit of a Catholic school guides us to ensure the dignity of each student and individual in our community.

As a member of the Rapid City Catholic School System community, you will be expected to follow the guidelines outlined in this handbook. These rules have been established to help ensure that all students at St. Thomas More Middle School are provided with an educational environment, which fosters “Academic and Professional Development in the Catholic Tradition.”

(BP BOD-1000-006)

APPENDIX

6TH GRADE VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

South Dakota Department of Health administrative rules require both the Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) and MCV4 (Meningococcal ACYW) vaccines for 6th grade students. The requirement is a result of legislation passed in 2016 adding meningococcal infection to the list of diseases specified in South Dakota Codified Law 13-28-7.1 for which DOH can require vaccination for school entry in South Dakota.

School entry requirements for South Dakota 6th grade students include:

- One dose of Tdap vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- One dose of MCV4 vaccine (meningococcal ACYW)
- The requirements apply only for 6th grade entry and transfer students 6th–12th grade
- If a child is 10 years old when entering the 6th grade they have 45 days after their 11th birthday to be vaccinated

The DOH utilizes the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to determine which vaccines are necessary.

See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/who/teens/downloads/parent-version-schedule-7-18yrs.pdf>.

While only Tdap and MCV4 are required for middle school entry, parents are encouraged to talk with their provider about immunizing their child with other recommended vaccines. Additionally the ACIP also recommends that adolescents receive a second dose of MCV4 at age 16. Check this schedule from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for a complete listing of recommended immunizations.

Contact the South Dakota Department of Health, Immunization Program, at 1-800-592-1861 (in SD only), or email with your questions.