

RAPID CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

# ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL

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## Student Handbook

School Year

2019-2020



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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement.....	3
Beliefs.....	3
Vision Statement.....	3
Accreditation.....	4
History and Religious Tradition.....	4
The Second Century Tradition.....	4-5
Administration Interpretation of Policies.....	5
Non-Discriminatory Statement.....	5
Financial Obligation.....	6
STM Contract for Services.....	6
Student Withdrawal Policy.....	7
Counseling.....	7
Honor Concept.....	7
Summary of the St. Thomas More Honor Concept.....	7-8
Guidelines Regarding Cheating.....	8
Test/Quizzes.....	9
Honor System.....	9-10
Curriculum.....	10
Homework.....	11
Drop/Add Policy.....	11
Grading Scale.....	12
Wednesday Night Activity.....	12
Honor Roll and Class Rank.....	12
High School Graduation Requirements.....	13
Course Schedule Requirements.....	13
Promotion and Retention of Students.....	14
Dual Enrollment.....	14
South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship.....	15
Attendance and Absence.....	15
Tardy Policy.....	16
Permanent and Student Records.....	16-17
Non-Custodial Parent.....	17
Parent/Guardian Communication.....	17
Progress Reports, Report Cards and Rediker, Portal Plus.....	18
Storm Day Policy.....	18
School Board Meeting.....	18
Student Responsibilities and Expectations.....	19
Standard of Conduct and Character.....	20

Uniform and Personal Appearance Code.....	20
Additional Uniform Information.....	20-21
Consequences for Uniform Policy.....	21-22
School Dance Guidelines.....	22
Activities-Requirements for Participation.....	23
Student Council.....	24
National Honor Society.....	24
Field Trip Rationale.....	24-25
Student-Provided Transportation.....	25
School Property.....	25
Lockers.....	25
STM Library.....	26
Lunch Program.....	26
Fire, Emergency or Disaster Guidelines.....	27
Accidents.....	27
Illness.....	28
Visitors Procedure.....	28
Closed Campus.....	29
Telephone Usage and Student Messages.....	29
Fine Arts Club.....	29
Athletic Booster Club.....	30
Automobile Policy.....	30
Computer Use Policy and Guidelines.....	30-31
Internet.....	31-32
Activities Rules and Regulations.....	32
South Dakota High School Activities Association Rules.....	32
STM Activities Rules.....	33-34
STM Activities Eligibility Policy.....	34-35
Alcohol/Tobacco/Vaping Policy.....	35-36
Drug Policy.....	36-37
Student-to-Student Harassment Policy.....	37
Sexual Misconduct Policy.....	38
Weapons Policy.....	38
Child Abuse.....	39
Right to Amend Handbook.....	39
Appendix A.....	40

# PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

## Mission Statement

“Developing Personal and Academic Excellence in the Catholic Tradition.”

## Beliefs

The process of setting a Strategic Direction for the Rapid City Catholic School System (RCCSS) begins with the identification of our strongest Catholic beliefs regarding learning, teaching, and Catholic learning communities.

These beliefs inspire and inform the system mission and vision, and consistently serve as our decision screen.

### **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

## Vision Statement

The RCCSS planning group chose to create vision statements for the following nine critical aspects of our schools:

<b>Campus Ministry</b>	How we nurture spiritual life and worship
<b>Curriculum</b>	What we teach/learn
<b>Instruction</b>	How we teach/learn
<b>Assessment</b>	How we measure success and accountability
<b>Technology</b>	How we use technology to customize and increase learning
<b>Stakeholders</b>	How we involve all members of the RCCSS community
<b>Personnel</b>	Whom we employ as an ideal staff
<b>Leadership</b>	How we provide support at all levels
<b>Finance</b>	How we provide the means to implement all other visions

## **Accreditation**

Full accreditation with the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs (DECA) is vital to our vision of education excellence. St. Thomas More High School is officially accredited in the meaning and interpretation of the law and according to the rules and standards of the Division of Education as established by the South Dakota State Board of Education. In addition, St. Thomas More High School is an institutional member in good standing of the National Catholic Education Association, National Association of Secondary Principals, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, South Dakota Christian School Association and Rapid City Chamber of Commerce.

## **History and Religious Tradition**

St. Thomas More High School represents the dedication, faith and work of many individuals in western South Dakota. When St. Martin's Academy closed at the end of the 1990-91 school year, the future of Catholic secondary education in western South Dakota was uncertain. Parents, students, community leaders, and church members voiced the need for preserving the quality educational alternative to the public high schools. A fully accredited private high school, anchored in the Catholic tradition of academic excellence, service and sound Christian values, was considered vital to students, the Church and to the economic development of a well-rounded community. Today, students of varied religious, economic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds enjoy a full program of spiritual formation, academic classes and co-curricular activities.

The core of the school is its religious foundation. The school focuses on four major areas: spiritual, academic, service and social interactions through activities.

## **The Second Century Tradition**

Many of the Catholic schools existing in this region today have roots that go back 100 plus years. "Second Century" vision means the model to be used during the second 100 years of these Catholic schools. Meeting the needs of the whole student in order to prepare him or her to serve the local, regional and world community defines St. Thomas More as a Second Century Catholic institution.

### ***Goals of St. Thomas More:***

1. To develop in teachers the sense that their teaching is a form of ministry and service;
2. To provide a required religious educational program for students enabling them to make decisions which reflect Christian ideals, attitudes and values in their lives;
3. To develop in students a sense of global responsibility through active involvement in the Christian community;
4. To provide opportunities for participation in worship, retreats and community service;
5. To diversify the curriculum sufficiently to meet the needs of all students, fulfill the state requirements and prepare them for post-secondary careers;
6. To provide academic, personal and career counseling to aid students in their development;
7. To provide opportunities for cultural growth and enrichment in the fine arts;
8. To encourage the development of proficiency in a second language;

9. To develop an understanding of and respect for our American heritage and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society;
10. To provide students an opportunity to enhance their sense of values by introducing them to various cultural heritages;
11. To provide opportunities for students' physical and social development through their participation in athletics, organizations or other activities where the emphasis is on the learning experience of the student;
12. To provide social activities designed to create and develop a Christian attitude and sense of community among students, faculty and staff;
13. To develop effective human relationships and an attitude of respect for the worth and integrity of each individual regardless of race, creed, economic status, physical impairment or place of residence.

## **ADMINISTRATION INTERPRETATION OF POLICIES**

The administration of RCCSS 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.

As a member of the RCCSS 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 high school are provided with an educational environment, which fosters academic, spiritual and social growth.

### **Non-Discriminatory Statement (BP BOD-2000-029)** **Admissions Policies (BP STM-2000-001)**

St. Thomas More does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, sex, national origin, age (in accordance with South Dakota law) or physically impaired condition. However, St. Thomas More does follow a set procedure for admission in order to best match the gifts of the student with those of St. Thomas More.

The admission process includes:

1. Admissions Director contact and initial communication;
2. Explanation of school programs, expectations and financial obligations;
3. Review registration process with Admissions Director;
4. Administrative interview;
5. Review transcripts/grade reports with administrator to ensure proper placement and attention to any special needs;
6. Completion of registrations forms and payment of registration fees;
7. Formal acceptance and letter of welcome.

Admittance of a student is based on the balance of what is in the best interest of that student and what is in the best interest of the school community.

### **Financial Obligation (BP ADM-2000-002)**

The cost of educating a student at St. Thomas More is accomplished through tuition payments, diocesan support, major fundraising events and donations. At St. Thomas More, tuition covers a portion of the cost of a student's education; the remainder of this cost continues to be a challenge and must be covered through donations such as the Diocesan Appeal and major fundraising events, such as Mayfest. Students and parents/guardians are expected to volunteer to serve in these fundraising events.

Tuition may be paid monthly through FACTS, bi-annually, or annually. A registration fee of \$200 must be paid and a Contract for Services must be signed by the deadline date to secure class placement. This fee is non-refundable. Because of the added expense to process late registrants, an additional late registration fee will be charged. A late fee of 1½ % per month or 18% per year will be assessed on all accounts 30 days past due.

Payment of tuition shall be made according to the following:

- a. Option 1- A discounted payment is offered if the discounted payment is made in full on or before July 15<sup>th</sup> of the current year. Failure to remit payment in accordance with this option requires selection of either Option 2 or 3 prior to beginning classes.
- b. Option 2 – Two equal payments (no discount). The 1<sup>st</sup> payment is due on or before July 15<sup>th</sup> of the current year. The 2<sup>nd</sup> payment is due on or before December 15<sup>th</sup> of the current year. Failure to remit payment on or before July 15<sup>th</sup> of the current year will require selection of Option 3 prior to beginning classes. Failure to remit the second payment on or before December 15<sup>th</sup> of the current year will result in a \$100.00 late fee and holding of grades until payment is received.
- c. Option 3 – Tuition is budgeted over 10 months (August-May) an ACH Monthly payment Plan with direct withdrawal from your account on either 10<sup>th</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month is required. Missed payments will be assessed a \$35.00 late per transaction missed.
- d. Option 4 – Tuition is budgeted over 12 months (June-May) an ACH Monthly Payment Plan with direct withdrawal from your bank account either the 10<sup>th</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month is required. Missed payments will be assessed a \$35.00 late per transaction missed.

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

Waiting List – If grade levels are full, we will implement a waiting list. We will put families on the list according to who contacted us first.

### **St. Thomas More High School** **Contract for Services (BP BOD-2000-009)**

Vital to our vision as a Catholic school is sound stewardship of the resources we receive from parents and benefactors. We strive to allocate and manage every dollar in a way that assures the viability of our school while bringing the maximum benefit to your child. Budgeting is the key to good stewardship. It seeks to establish the cost per pupil of operating the school and then project the income necessary for meeting these costs. These figures in turn are based upon enrollment. Families agree to abide by and comply with the terms and conditions stated in the Contract for Services signed during registration. See Appendix A to review the entire Contract for Services.

## **Student Withdrawal Policy (BP ADM-2000-005)**

Families leaving St. Thomas More must follow the school's checkout procedures. These procedures include obtaining and completing the St. Thomas More High School withdrawal form and arranging an exit interview with the Admissions Director. St. Thomas More will forward no student records or transcripts until all books, equipment and materials belonging to the school have been returned and all financial obligations have been settled.

## **Counseling (BP ADM – 3000-002)**

The Counseling Department is available for the academic and emotional needs of your children. Collaboration is encouraged between teacher, parent, child, and counselor wherever appropriate. There are tapes and books available, for your review, to help with everything from homework, academic courses, to attention-deficit disorder.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Honor Concept (BP STM-2000-035)**

The principles of religion are integrated into all facets of the curriculum and life of the school. The St. Thomas More High School Honor Concept is based on the Ten Commandments and the principles of Saint Thomas More. Students whose actions reflect negatively on St. Thomas More will be referred to Administration for disciplinary action.

### **Summary of the St. Thomas More Honor Concept**

On average, students at St. Thomas More High School will spend 1400 hours together this school year. They will invest at least another 360 hours doing homework. The Honor concept has been instituted to help provide each member of our school community a safe, respectful and equal environment in which to spend this time.

The Honor Concept is positive and represents the standard for St. Thomas More students. Honor, personal integrity and loyalty to each other and the school and its developing traditions are fundamental characteristics essential to 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
- ✓ Ensure that others are able to benefit from the use of their own property

Living out the virtue of honor means treating all persons with great value and respect. Honor helps to build a healthy and strong community. The Honor Concept describes a way of life in our school community.



A student not living the Honor Concept offends himself or herself and the school community. Therefore, the Honor Concept also sets forth a procedure for handling violations. This procedure maintains confidentiality and assures a student's right to be heard. When intervention or assistance with self-discipline becomes necessary, corrective measures will be exercised. Procedures shall be flexible enough to allow for individual fairness and consistency. The welfare of the school is always paramount.

Sanctions for violating the Honor Concept may include prohibition of participation in activities or performances; prohibition of official representation of St. Thomas More; loss of position of authority; delayed graduation if the offense is committed by a senior; assignment to a remediation program; honors probation; expulsion.

The Honor Concept has been instituted primarily to describe our expectations for living a respectful way of life during your time together at this school and then to clearly outline the procedure for handling violations of that way of life.

### **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 GUIDELINE APPLIES. AS ALWAYS, THE BEST GUIDELINE FOR STUDENTS IS TO USE COMMON SENSE AND FOLLOW THEIR INFORMED CONSCIENCES.

### **Homework**

THE FOLLOWING IS "**NOT**" PERMITTED AND CONSTITUTES 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 papers 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

THE FOLLOWING IS PERMITTED AND "**DOES NOT**" CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION:

- Working together when approved by teacher if none of the above guidelines are violated
- Working together when approved by teacher on process and not on answer, e.g.—lab experiments, teacher-assigned group project, helping a student understand math formula or concept
- Sharing notes if approved by teacher when student has been absent (excused)
- Discussing homework with another student to share and learn process/method/concepts, e.g.—lab work, understanding formula, helping someone understand the distinction between affect/effect
- When working together each individual does all the work assigned
- Inspiration, ideas from each other's or artist's work (e.g.—in art, music project).

### Tests/Quizzes:

THE FOLLOWING IS “**NOT**” PERMITTED AND “**DOES**” 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 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
- Asking leading questions out-loud during a test/quiz; e.g. – “Is it right if we include the fact that St. Thomas More died in 1535?” (Knowing the date is an answer to another test question.)
- Using a “Key” or old test to study unless approved by teacher
- Taking or copying any items from test/quiz

THE FOLLOWING IS PERMITTED AND “**DOES NOT**” CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION:

- Telling other students general level of difficulty; e.g. – “hard”, “easy”

## **St. Thomas More Honor System**

The Honor Concept is positive and represents the standard for St. Thomas More students. Honor, personal integrity and loyalty to each other and the school and its developing traditions are fundamental characteristics essential to a successful student.

A student at St. Thomas More will observe at all times the principles of honor and integrity. A St. Thomas More student will not lie, steal, cheat, or engage in any other dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (i.e., intentional use of others’ words or ideas without documentation), nor will he/she assist others in the commission of these acts.

Each student at St. Thomas More High School will adhere to the spirit of the following statement:

*As a student at St. Thomas More, I hereby pledge my full and hearty support to the Honor System. I pledge to be honest myself, and in order that the spirit and integrity of the Honor System may endure, I pledge that I will give no unauthorized assistance to other students.*

Each student turning in tests or other work designated by an instructor will write out and sign the following pledge on his/her paper:

*On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work, nor will I discuss it until all have completed it.*

### Reporting:

- Faculty should report all cheating offenses to the faculty advisors, who will bring it to the Honor Council
- If a student has violated the Honor System or has seen any other student violate it, he/she should report this to the teacher, to a member of the Honor Council, or to one of the faculty advisors to the Honor Council.
- Offense is brought to the attention of the faculty advisors, one or both meet with the student.

- The advisors determine whether there is sufficient cause for the case to proceed to the Honor Council.
- If so, a hearing is held.
  - All 9 members and 1 or 2 advisors
  - Closed to ALL others.
  - First task in a hearing is to determine whether a student has violated the Honor System pledge.
  - After gathering information, the Honor Council may determine (1) that the student is innocent of the charges; or (2) that the student is guilty of the charges; or (3) that, while important questions about the charges remain unresolved, the student is at least “guilty of negligence” in allowing the situation to arise.
  - Consequences are decided in the same manner. If the student is found guilty of any charge, the Honor Council then proceeds to the penalty phase. Only then will the student’s past record be taken into account. Past records are cumulative and remain on a student’s record throughout their high school career.
- The identity of all students will remain confidential.

Consequences may include (but are not limited to)

- prohibition of participation in activities or performances
- prohibition of official representation of St. Thomas More
- loss of credit on an assignment or test
- loss of position of authority
- delayed graduation if the offense is committed by a senior
- suspension; expulsion.

\*NHS, Spanish and French Honors programs are separate bylaws

Cheating is a violation of the Honor System. Cheating is wrongfully using the work or ideas of others and includes but is not limited to the following:

- Plagiarism, representing the work of others as one’s own.
- Giving to or receiving from others unauthorized aid on an assignment.
- Using or consulting unauthorized sources on an assignment.
- Using papers or portions of papers to fulfill the requirements of more than one course, unless specific permission to do so has been granted.
- Sharing any information about tests or quizzes which gives or gains unfair advantage.

Members

- 9 members: 4 seniors, 3 juniors, and 2 sophomores, all of whom are chosen through an application process.
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of each academic year, 2 freshmen will be added to the council and they will continue to serve on the council the following academic year.
- Council is a recommending body, which passes its recommendations to the principal for final approval

### **Curriculum (BP ADM-2000-016)**

St. Thomas More’s curriculum is mapped and aligned with South Dakota State Standards.

### **Homework (BP STM-2000-036)**

Students should expect daily homework in most classes. Homework is an opportunity to extend the learning experience. It is 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 and three hours each evening on homework.

Some schedules may be homework intensive (i.e., AP or accelerated courses). In situations where a student is unable to consistently meet the homework requirements, rather than compromising homework standards, intervention may be necessary.

In addition to homework, special projects and papers are a requirement in many classes to familiarize students with a multitude of educational resources. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of learning experiences and learn to synthesize information. Through homework and special projects, students also practice self-discipline and the efficient use of time, necessary skills for work and college success.

St. Thomas More believes that the influence of parents/guardians with respect to homework is an essential element in the academic success of that student. Students who will be out for school-related functions should go to the teacher prior to the function and get the homework assignments and make arrangements accordingly. For every illness or trip that results in an absence, the student is responsible for scheduling make up work, test, and other class activities with the instructor(s).

**Make up** work must be completed in a timely and reasonable manner as agreed upon by instructor and student in order for credit to be given. If the student does not complete work in the allotted time frame, then no credit will be given.

All **unexcused** absences will result in zeros in the classes missed.

### **Drop/Add Policy (BP STM-3000-001)**

Any course change should be made, if at all possible, prior to the start of school. The only changes that will be made once school starts will be those deemed necessary by the principal. Changes will be made only with administrator approval. If this occurs the student will bring a note signed by the parents to drop or add a class if it is possible to work it into the student's schedule and the change does not disrupt the student's career goals. All changes must be made during the first five days of the semester. If a student drops after five class days, they will then receive a "W/F" on their report card and it will be figured into their Grade Point Average (GPA).

Students enrolled in yearlong courses must complete the full year in order to receive credit. If a student withdraws from the class at any time before the end of a semester, he/she will receive a "WF" (Withdrawal-F) . This will be placed on the transcript and figured into GPA. If a student drops a yearlong course at semester time, he/she will not receive credit or the grade received for the semester completed. The full year must be completed to receive credit and to have the grade count towards the student's GPA. If the student drops the class at the end of the first semester, there will be a "W" (Withdrawn from class) placed on the transcript for both semesters.

Administration discretion may be used in extreme circumstances.

### **Grading Scale (BP STM-2000-003)**

Letter grades are used in each course to denote student progress, attitude, and ability to work to capacity. The grading scale is as follows:

A+	100	C+	84 – 85
A	95 – 99	C	79 – 83
A-	93 – 94	C-	77 – 78
B+	91 – 92	D+	75 – 76
B	88 – 90	D	71 – 74
B-	86 – 87	D-	69 – 70
		F	68 and below

An “I” for a grading period indicates that the student has not completed required work for the course. The work must be completed within a time frame agreed upon by the teacher and the student. An “F” for semester grade results in no credit earned. If the failure is in a course required by St. Thomas More for graduation, the student must make up the credit before graduation.

### **Wednesday Night Activity (BP BOD-3000-003)**

The RCCSS 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.

1. Faculty will not assign homework on Wednesday’s that is due on Thursday.
2. All scheduled activities by staff, faculty, administration and volunteers will conclude by 5:00pm.
3. In the event activities must be scheduled on a Wednesday evening in conflict with the intent of the policy the superintendent must approve the activity.

### **Honor Roll and Class Rank (BP STM-2000-004, 2000-005)**

At the end of each quarter, St. Thomas More publishes the Honor Roll. To qualify for St. Thomas More Latin Honors, a student must have no failing grade. The following scale will be used to determine the student’s placement for honor roll.

Honorifice – 3.0-3.49

Cum Laude – 3.5-3.74

Magna Cum Laude- 3.75-3.99

Summa Cum Laude – 4.0 and above

Students who take college classes that are vertically stacked above our AP level courses that we offer at St. Thomas More will be able to receive AP weighted GPA points. This must first be approved by the STM administration. Again, this only applies to classes at the college level that are vertically stacked above AP classes offered at St. Thomas More High School. The following are the AP’s offered at STM- AP Calculus, AP English 12, AP English 11, AP US History, AP Government, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science. (This is in effect starting with freshman entering the school year 2018-19.)

The students are ranked based on cumulative GPA. Pass/Fail courses are not used when figuring GPA. Credits used to replace a credit will not be used in GPA.

## **High School Graduation Requirements (BP STM-2000-006)**

Twenty-six (26) units are required for graduation from St. Thomas More High School. St. Thomas More students are required to register for seven courses each semester, except seniors, who may engage in a flexible afternoon schedule. A student must have a minimum of six units to be considered a sophomore; a minimum of twelve units to be considered a junior, and a minimum of eighteen units to be considered a senior. Individual consideration is given to transfer students concerning St. Thomas More required units and courses.

The following are the specific number of units and courses required by St. Thomas More for graduation. Any failure of a required course (i.e., religion, English, math, etc.) must be made up in order for the student to graduate from St. Thomas More.

### **Graduation Requirements**

4 units of religion  
(30 hours minimum senior service project)  
4 units of English  
4 units of social science  
3 units of mathematics  
3 units of laboratory science  
2 units of a foreign language  
1 unit of technology  
1 unit of fine arts  
3 or more units of electives  
1 unit of Physical Education

### **STM Recommendations**

4 units of religion  
(30 hrs min. senior serv. proj)  
4 units of English  
4 units of social science  
4 units of mathematics  
4 units of laboratory science  
3 units of foreign language  
1 unit of technology  
1 unit of fine arts  
3 units of electives  
1 unit of Physical Education

Students must be in “Good Standing” to graduate from St. Thomas More. In order to be in “good standing,” seniors must meet all academic requirements and the following stipulations:

- Pass all courses during the senior year
- Complete all financial/tuition obligations
- Pay all fees/fines/assessments
- Successfully complete the senior service project
- Fulfill all discipline obligations
- Maintain a satisfactory attendance/tardy record

## **Course Schedule Requirements (BP STM – 2000-007)**

St. Thomas More students are required to take a full load of classes as described by the following:

- Freshmen – Minimum of 7 classes and Study hall or 8 Classes
- Sophomores – Minimum of 7 classes and Study hall or 8 Classes
- Juniors – Minimum of 7 classes and study hall or 8 classes
- Seniors – Minimum of 4 classes and an Internship or 5 classes

## **Promotion and Retention of Students (BP STM-2000-015)**

Promotion or retention at St. Thomas More shall be based upon the individual needs of the student and shall take into consideration all conditions affecting the student. If a student is absent from any class 20 or more times, they will not receive credit for the class. A doctor's excuse will be the only exception. Families will receive letters after 5, 10 and 15 absences. Problems of promotion or retention shall be addressed by those most knowledgeable about the student: the teacher(s), the Administration, the Building Principal, the parent(s)/guardian(s), the Counselor, and other available school and community services and agencies. If conflicts concerning promotion and retention cannot be resolved otherwise, the Rapid City Catholic School System Board has the authority to make the final determination.

## **Dual Enrollment (BP STM-2000-010)**

### **Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Policy**

**Dual Enrollment** refers to students being enrolled concurrently in two distinct academic programs or educational institutions.

**Dual Credit** refers to students who have the opportunity to receive academic credit at one or both institutions.

Due to the demanding nature and the maturity level that is required beyond normal academic standards and course load requirements, St. Thomas More High School will allow dual enrollment and/or dual credit courses based upon the following criteria:

1. Students must be a junior or senior in good academic standing having passed all classes from the previous semester.
2. Classes offered at STM including core classes and/or required classes for STM graduation are not eligible.
3. Enrollment requires a pre-approval process by administration and completion of a Student Contract with parental/guardian signature.
4. Courses may be taken on-line or on-campus of another institution.
5. High school credit will be awarded based upon STM grading standards on a 4.0 scale and will factor into GPA and class ranking.
6. Students may earn AP Weighted GPA points for college level courses that are vertically stacked above the AP classes offered at STM. (This is in effect starting with freshman entering the school year 2018-19.)
7. Dual credit courses will be considered into a student's eligibility for school activities.
8. All expenses and resources for the course are the responsibility of the student/parents/guardians.

Qualifying factors for dual credit vary from year to year and school to school; please refer to SDMyLife for the most current eligibility factors. Additional information can be found online and with the school counselor.

### **South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship (BP STM-2000-014)**

The South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship is a new program that awards a \$5,000 scholarship over four years to qualifying high school graduates, beginning with the Class of 2004, who attend an eligible higher education institution in South Dakota. Eligibility is based on an application submitted to the South Dakota postsecondary institution by the student, along with an official high school transcript and verification of a minimum ACT score of 24 (or a SAT score where the sum of the verbal and mathematics scores is at least 1070) and with no grade below a “C” and a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better..

- ◆ 4 years of Science (3 must be in lab) ◆ 2 years of Foreign Language
- ◆ 4 years of Math (Algebra or higher) ◆ 1 year of Fine Arts
- ◆ 4 years of English ◆ ½ year of technology (which must be taken at the high school)
- ◆ 3 years of Social Studies

These are also the classes recommended as a college pre core curriculum by the American College Testing (ACT) Program.

### **Attendance and Absence (BP ADM – 2000-004)**

Attendance is extremely important to a quality education. St. Thomas More believes that absences and tardiness are a matter for concern by the student, the parents/guardians, the administration and the faculty. When a student misses school, he/she misses classroom experience that cannot be recaptured. In addition, the student may have difficulty completing assigned make up work with the same level of achievement had the absence not occurred.

Illness or emergencies may necessitate a student absence. **A parent/guardian MUST call the school office (343-8484) between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence or tardy.** If no call is received within 24 hours, the student will be considered unexcused.

If a student “*Skips*” class(es), that student will be suspended for up to one day. If there is a second offense then, the principal will meet with the parents to discuss further disciplinary action. Dental, doctor, counseling, hair and other appointments should be scheduled before or after school hours. We recommend that family vacations coincide with school vacations. If a student is absent from any class 20 or more times, they may not receive credit for the class. Parents and students will receive letters when a student is at (5), (10) and (15) absences. After the letter for the (10<sup>th</sup>) absence we will have a meeting with the parents and the student. If illness results in an extensive absence, the situation will be dealt with by the administration on an individual basis.

The student is responsible for scheduling make up work, test, and other class activities with the instructor(s).

**Make up** work must be completed in a timely and reasonable manner as agreed upon by instructor and student in order for credit to be given. If the student does not complete work in the allotted time frame, then no credit will be given.



### **Tardy Policy (BP STM-2000-002)**

Being on time is a responsibility and a courtesy. A student entering a classroom after the class has begun creates a disturbance that detracts from the learning process. Moreover, the student misses the information given at the beginning of class. The St. Thomas More philosophy includes teaching responsibility, courtesy and consideration. Therefore, students must learn to exercise the necessary planning and caution to prevent tardiness. Parental cooperation is essential in helping St. Thomas More fulfill its obligations to the students' development as responsible citizens.

After the third unexcused tardy (this consists of tardies to school in the morning and tardies between classes), the student will be required to attend Friday detention from 3:30-4:30pm.

Student will receive Friday detention for the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> unexcused tardies. After the 6<sup>th</sup> tardy the parents will be required to meet with the principal before the student will be allowed to return to classes.

If the tardy problem persists, the student will go before the Board with their parents and provide a plan on how they will address the problem. If the problem persists then the Board will have final action.

The only excused tardies are for doctor appointments and the parents must provide a call or a note in advance.

**"Late Start"** by a parent does not excuse a tardy.

Any other situations will be under the discretion of the administration.

#### **The policy for seniors tardy from open campus lunch is as follows:**

After the third unexcused tardy the student will lose the open campus privilege for the remainder of the semester. After the fourth unexcused tardy the student will lost the open campus privilege for the remainder of the year.

### **Permanent and Student Records (BP ADM-2000-012)**

The Student Permanent Record is a documentation of a student's high school career. It includes grades in each course taken, GPA, class rank, standardized test scores, co-curricular activity participation, the number of absences and tardiness, awards and achievements earned and other pertinent information. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to recognize the importance of a permanent record.

The Board designates the following personally identifiable information in a student's education record as "directory information," which may be disclosed without prior written consent:

Student name	Name of parent/guardian	Participation in school recognized activities
Address	Dates of attendance	Weight and height of members of athletic teams
Date of birth	School attending	Photographs pertaining to school activities
Grade in school	Religion/parish	Awards, achievements or honors

A parent/guardian or student over 18 years of age may notify the school in writing of his/her refusal to permit the release of any or all of this information.

Original school records will be released to other schools only upon written request. Transcripts will be sent to colleges or employers upon request from the student or parents/guardians. St. Thomas More personnel may review student records as it may pertain to the educational process and is required to keep all such information confidential. All student permanent records are open to both students and parents/guardians by appointment with the administration. A student may obtain up to 5 transcripts at no charge. Thereafter, there will be a \$2.00 charge for every transcript requested. Charges for graduate students from previous years will be \$5.00 per transcript.

### **Non-Custodial Parent (BP ADM-2000-014)**

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

If there is a court order specifying that a child cannot be released to the non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Parent/Guardian Communication**

Open communication between the school and the home is essential to our Second Century vision for St. Thomas More. In keeping with the Church's Principle of Subsidiary, problems should be solved at the lowest level whenever possible. Many times communication is all that is necessary to clarify a situation.

Many items require a direct contact between teacher and parents/guardians. Teachers may communicate to parent(s)/guardian(s) by informal contacts, phone calls, letters, formal reports, e-mail and/or scheduling appointments. We encourage parents to use e-mail by accessing our web site at [www.rccss.org](http://www.rccss.org)

Communication will also occur but not limited to by the following:

- a. Monthly newsletter
- b. Email
- c. Rediker
- d. Portal Plus
- e. Fliers
- f. School APP
- g. Twitter
- h. Facebook

A parent/guardian may contact a teacher by calling the school during that teacher's plan period or by leaving a message for the call to be returned. School office hours are 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

## **Progress Reports, Report Cards, and Rediker, Portal Plus**

Progress reports, which include grades, absences and tardiness, are emailed out at mid-quarter to indicate the student's progress at that point. Report cards are emailed out at the end of each quarter and semester. Only Semester grades are transcribed.

Plus Portal is an avenue in which you may check your student's grades at anytime. They are updated at least once a week. You will be given a password to have access to your Plus Portal account. You may call the teacher or email the teacher if you need any further assistance.

## **Storm Day Policy (BP 3000-004)**

"Storm days" are always a cause for concern. It is vital that timely and accurate information be disseminated during those rather hectic and often confusing times. The following guidelines are provided to facilitate communication during the times when the question arises, "Do we have school today?"

1. If there is no announcement about closing, **SCHOOL IS OPEN.** Most often, we will inform media either way, but sometimes stations list only closings and do not pass on the openings. If station announcements do not include us in their closings, and then assume we are open.
2. We will do all we can to make our decision by 6:00 a.m. the day of the storm. Our decision involves many factors and is made independently of what other schools may decide to do.
3. We will inform the following stations of our decision on storm days: KOTA, KIMM, KKLS, KEVN, KTOQ, and KGGG. Please turn to one of these stations for the announcement and other pertinent information.
4. No students may be left at school if it closes on a storm day. Please make sure to have arrangements made with your child in the event that school closes during the school day.

Inclement weather is typical in South Dakota. Families are expected to plan ahead for road conditions so that students are not tardy. The final decision concerning non-attendance on storm days resides with parent(s)/guardian(s). If we decide to stay open, parent(s)/guardian(s) should exercise their own judgment regarding the conditions of the road, car, driving skill and other factors.

## **School Board Meeting**

School Board meetings will be announced. Except for the Executive Session, the Board meeting is open to our families to observe. Board minutes are available in the main office. Requests to be on the agenda must be made through the administration at least two weeks prior to the Board meeting.

## **Student Responsibilities and Expectations (BP STM-2000-016)**

St. Thomas More believes that self-discipline is essential to an integrated Christian life, to good citizenship and to personal fulfillment. Self-discipline can be learned. A major goal of St. Thomas More is for the student to achieve self-discipline. St. Thomas More will assist in the student's growth in that area. ***The building principal reserves the right to suspend a student from one (1) to five (5) days for any disciplinary issues and if the expectations are not being met.***

Admission to St. Thomas More High School is a privilege, not a right. Since St. Thomas More is a private school, the school administration understands that parent(s)/guardian(s) who freely choose to send their students to St. Thomas More are in effect supporting the regulations of the school in all areas, academic and disciplinary. Therefore, the student is expected to abide by the following:

- **Mass Conduct.** Mass is a time for prayer, introspection, and personal spiritual communication. Students are encouraged to participate fully in Mass. Before and after Mass is time for silent reflection. Talking is inappropriate and disrespectful behavior.
- **Assembly Conduct.** Students represent St. Thomas More on all occasions and are expected to be courteous during any and all assemblies. Student attitude and behavior must reflect the high standards of St. Thomas More.
- **Academic Conduct.** Students should attend classes daily, be on time for class and have the appropriate learning materials. Students should exhibit a willingness to participate in learning tasks and additional enrichment activities.
- **Policies Adherence.** Students are expected to be in compliance with all Board approved school policies and the St. Thomas More Honor Concept at all times while in school, at school activities or on the way to or from school activities.
- **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.
- **Tobacco Products.** Use of tobacco products is illegal under age 18 and it is a serious health risk at any age. The campus is smoke free at all times. Student use of tobacco products is not allowed in the building, on the grounds, during activities, nor while representing the school.
- **Gum chewing.** Gum on carpets, floors or school furniture is unsightly and expensive to remove. Moreover, gum chewing is distracting and hinders articulation. Therefore, gum chewing is not allowed.
- **Eating, Drinking, and Snacking.** Food and beverages are confined to the designated eating areas in the Commons and courtyard.
- **Trash and Litter.** Students are responsible to dispose of garbage and trash in the appropriate trash containers.
- **Fine Obligations.** Fines for property damage or loss are important financial obligations. Failure to pay fines may result in not taking finals, in report cards and/or diplomas being withheld. Excessive fines may lead to further administrative intervention and disciplinary action.
- **Cell Phones.** Cell phones may not be used during school hours. See Phones for rules.

## **Standard of Conduct and Character (BP STM-2000-017)**

Every student is entitled to an education offered in an orderly and safe environment. All students are expected to treat persons in the best Christian spirit of kindness and consideration. The student of character:

- ❖ Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- ❖ Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior
- ❖ Upholds principles of morality and ethics
- ❖ Cooperates by complying with school regulations, policies and programs
- ❖ Shows courtesy, concern and respect for others
- ❖ Observes instructions and rules, punctuality and faithfulness, both inside and outside the classroom
- ❖ Has powers of concentration and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
- ❖ Actively helps to rid the school of negative influences or environment
- ❖ Demonstrates honesty and integrity in every manner and complies with the Honor Concept at all times.

## **Uniform and Personal Appearance Code (BP STM-2000-018)**

The underlying reasons for establishing a uniform and personal appearance code at St. Thomas More are the following:

- ◆ Reflects the pride that students have in themselves and in their school
- ◆ Limits the need for a larger, more expensive wardrobe
- ◆ Eliminates competition among students to “out dress” one another
- ◆ Simplifies the daily decision of “What to wear”
- ◆ Provides a safe environment for education

We have kept our requirements to a minimum in the belief that students will cooperate to maintain the spirit and intention of this code. Parents, however, have the primary responsibility to see that the uniform and personal appearance guidelines are being followed.

Uniforms are available through:

- Lands End at [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com)
- Uniform Swap at the Middle School

## **Additional Uniform Information (BP STM-2000-018)**

Girls:

- A-line Plaid Skirt, Plaid Kilt, Pleated Plaid Skirt or Khaki Chino Skirt worn 2” above the knee
- Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts with STM emblem
- Navy, Black, Grey, or White Tights
- Solid White or Blue Chambray 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)
- Solid White Scalloped Dress Shirt can be worn untucked with skirts, kilts, shorts or pants
- Navy Button Front Cardigan or Sweater Vest with uniform shirt worn underneath
- Plaid or Navy Tie (optional)
- Plaid Belt (optional)
- School Designated STM Uniform Sweatshirt Only (Available to purchase in the STM High School Office)

Boys:

- Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts with STM emblem
- 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)
- All shirts must be worn tucked into pants or shorts
- Navy Sweater Vest with uniform shirt worn underneath
- Brown or Black Belts are required to be worn through pant or short loops
- Plaid or Navy Tie (optional)
- Navy Blazer (optional)
- School Designated STM Uniform Sweatshirt Only (Available to purchase in the STM High School Office)

Other Uniform Regulations:

- Closed Toe Shoes are required. NO sandals, NO open-backed shoes, NO boots, or shoes with a heel over 2” may be worn.
- Hoodies shall NOT be worn as classroom attire. Unless it is a non uniform day.
- Undershirts must be a solid white, black or blue

Layering is allowed for approved uniform items and each piece must be tucked in. Plain white, black or blue undershirts, without writing on them, are acceptable under uniform clothing.

*Spirit days* – Jeans with St. Thomas More shirt or sweatshirt.

The following items are not allowed at any time:

- Baggy clothing
- Mutilated or altered articles of clothing such as cut pant legs
- Clothing that has outlived its life.

While we have no specific grooming guidelines, students are expected to be clean, neat, and well-groomed. Fads and extremes in hairstyles, hair color, make-up, jewelry and other aspects of personal appearance are not acceptable. All hair colors must be within natural hues. Body piercing, visible tattoos (permanent or temporary), body writing, signs or symbols are not allowed.

### **Consequences for Uniform Policy (BP STM-2000-018)**

In attempting to create a comprehensive and consistent school uniform policy, we have consulted several other Catholic schools in South Dakota. We feel the following is a healthy compromise.

Parents are the first to help in creating a consistent school uniform. Teachers are asked to send students that do not have the proper uniform clothes to the office. Students who are out of uniform will be made to comply with the uniform policy immediately. The student will have to call his/her parents to bring the acceptable uniform. The office will provide a uniform the student may wear during the day if they come out of uniform.

After the third violation, of wrong uniform, the student will serve out of school suspension. Following a fourth violation, a meeting will be required with the principal and parents.

Teachers are to address the student with untucked shirts or other irregularities of the uniform by asking them to solve the problem. If the student refuses to resolve the problem or has been chronic then please adhere to the following.

Students who are “**chronic offenders**” will serve one hour Friday detention, and will also they forfeit the next scheduled spirit/jean day. If a student has served three detention hours and another violation occurs, then the student will serve one day of “Out of School” suspension. If the problem still persists then the student and his/her parents will go before the Board to discuss further enrollment.

### **School Dance Guidelines (BP STM-2000-019)**

The expectation for dress, appearance and behavior at dances is the same as for all other St. Thomas More classes, activities and functions; respectfully, safe and Christian. The following guidelines and requirements are provided to assist students and parents/guardians to meet these standards.

#### **GENERAL**

Students are to arrive within the first half-hour of the beginning of the dance and are expected to stay until the last half-hour of the dance. Students leaving the dance may not return.

- ❖ Students from other high schools are welcome if they are accompanied by a St. Thomas More student and are registered in advance. These guest students must abide by St. Thomas More’s rules and standards, including arrival/departure times, dress, appearance, and behavior.
- ❖ Provocative, erotic and moshpit-type dancing are prohibited.
- ❖ 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.

#### **SEMI-FORMAL DANCES**

**Students are recommended to dress as follow:**

**Females** – dress, skirt and top, or dress slacks and top

**Males** – shirt, coat and tie; shirt and tie; shirt and sweater; dress pants. Shirts tucked in.

**The following items are not allowed:**

- ❖ Any clothing that would make a student conspicuous, provocative, or immodest.
- ❖ Any top that is too tight, low-cut, reveals mid-drift, or reveals underwear.
- ❖ Baggy pants or pants worn to reveal underwear.
- ❖ Chains, hats, or caps.
- ❖ Inappropriate jewelry, inappropriate items used as jewelry, or any jewelry used in body piercing such as nose, navel, tongue, lip, or eyebrow.
- ❖ Females – any dress, skirt or top that when standing, bending or sitting would make a student conspicuous or immodest.

#### **HAIR AND GROOMING FOR ALL STUDENTS**

- ❖ Extremes in haircuts or colors are not allowed.
- ❖ All clothing must be neat, clean and in good condition.
- ❖ All students must be well-groomed.

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.

# ACTIVITIES

## Requirements for Participation (BP STM-3000-002)

St. Thomas More is a member of the South Dakota High School Activities Association. Therefore, our activities are sanctioned by that association and abide by the rules and guidelines set forth by that association. Students who participate in the sanctioned SDHSAA activities are covered under the SDHSAA catastrophic insurance policy.

St. Thomas More offers the opportunity for its students to participate in various clubs, athletics, academic activities, and leadership positions. A faculty member or approved community leader moderates each student organization as a coach, advisor or sponsor. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities to enhance the academic educational experience. Improved social skills, increased communication skills, stress on physical fitness and an extended academic program are all reflected in participating in a well-rounded co-curricular schedule of activities.

According to the SDHSAA, the three major benefits of activities are:

1. Activities support the academic mission of schools. They are not a diversion, but rather an extension of a good educational program.
2. Activities are inherently educational, providing valuable lessons for many practical situations such as teamwork, sportsmanship, winning and losing, and hard work.
3. Activities foster success in later life. Participation in high school activities is often a predictor of later success in college, career and becoming a contributing member of society.

Academic, leadership, social and athletic areas are included in the St. Thomas More co-curricular offerings.

### **St. Thomas More activities:**

<u>Academic Activities</u>	<u>Leadership Activities</u>	<u>Social Activities</u>	<u>Athletic</u>
Chadron Academic Contest	Student Council	Drama	Boys Basketball
West River Math Contest	Class Officer	Language Club	Girls Basketball
West River Science Contest	Club Officer	Society of Savio	Football
Science and Engineering Fair	National Honor Society	Art Club	Track
Essay Contests	Boy's and Girl's State	Talent Show	Volleyball
Debate	HOBY	School Dances	Golf
Knowledge Bowl	Youth Business	Prom	Tennis
Oral Interpretation	Summer Enrichment	Homecoming	Drill Team
National French Contest			Cheerleading
National Spanish Contest			Cross Country
National History Day			Wrestling
			Soccer

Each activity has an information packet that includes the criteria necessary for participation, lettering and successful completion, physical information and forms, the length of the season, the practice and performance schedule and any school days involved. This pertinent information is given to students and parents/guardians at the beginning of the activity season during a mandatory activity orientation meeting.

To maintain a safe environment within the school, no activity will be allowed to practice without a coach/advisor or a designated adult in a supervisory capacity. The school reserves the right to discontinue any activity or practice if a supervisor is not present. Only supervised students may remain after school.



### **Student Council (BP STM-3000-003)**

The student government consists of an elected Student Council. It aims to serve as a medium of communication between the student body and the faculty and administration of the school. It strives to promote and maintain high standards of individual responsibility, initiative, cooperation and maturity among the students; to share in the development, promotion, coordination and management of school activities; and to nurture in all students the traits of good citizenship.

Students run for and are elected to Student Council office in the spring of the year. Elections are school-wide. Representatives from each class are elected in the early fall. Student Council meets periodically throughout the year and sponsors a number of student activities and events.

All Student Council Officers and representatives are expected to be exemplary leaders and positive citizens of the community. Students serve under the supervision of the Student Council Advisory Committee and the administration and can be dismissed from office for failure to meet academic or behavior standards.

### **National Honor Society (BP STM-3000-004)**

National Honor Society is a prestigious organization open to students who maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above (no grades below a “C”) and demonstrate positive leadership, service and character.

Membership in the Doyle Chapter of the National Honor Society is based on these four criteria: Academics, leadership, character, and service. An invitation for membership is issued to students who have junior standing or above, have earned a cumulative 3.0 GPA (no grade below a “C”), have attended St. Thomas More at least one semester, and have earned a 3.9 GPA at St. Thomas More.

Membership is granted to students who have met the 3.5 minimum standards in scholarship, leadership, character, and service; have a 3.5 overall assessment as determined by a faculty council, and have completed the application process as determined by the National Honor Society. Members of National Honor Society are monitored to ensure that they continue to demonstrate these high qualities through graduation. Any member not maintaining the high standards may be placed on NHS probation or removed from NHS membership.

A formal ceremony and Mass are celebrated to induct new members in the spring of each year.

### **Field Trip Rationale (BP STM-3000-005)**

Instructional field trips at St. Thomas More are privileges afforded to students. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation in a field trip if they have failed to meet academic or behavioral requirements. However, instructional field trips, such as Red Cloud and retreats, are neither casual nor optional when scheduled during the school day. They are the lesson for that day or time period and should be considered as such. Students are expected to participate in field trips. All school policies are in effect.

The same school policies are in effect for activity field trips as for instructional field trips and regular school. Violations of school policies will be dealt with as though the violation occurred in school. The administration reserves the right to deny any student participation in an activity field trip if that student has not met academic or behavioral requirements.

Attire for field trips will consist of either full St. Thomas More uniform or a St. Thomas More shirt or sweatshirt and appropriate jeans. The decision will be at the discretion of the administration and advisor.

### **Student-Provided Transportation (BP STM-2000-021)**

Parent permission and signature are required to have their child ride with a student driver, to have other students ride with their child, or to have their child ride with a teacher. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to withhold permission for their child to ride with a student driver. In that case, the child must ride with a teacher or supervisor. Signed parent permission forms are kept on file in the office and are available for review.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY AND USAGE**

### **School Property (BP STM-2000-011)**

School property and facilities at St. Thomas More represent a large investment of time and money. We are expected to be good stewards of the resources we have received through the sacrifice and generosity of many people. In order for school property to serve the students in their education, it must be respected and maintained. Students are responsible for any intentional and/or careless damage to structure, furniture, equipment, books, etc. Appropriate fines will be assessed by the administration for such damage. If payment is **not** received or the damage not corrected, students are not be allowed to take final examinations or receive class credit. In addition, grades and/or transcripts may be held until payment is received or the damage corrected.

### **Lockers (BP STM-2000-012)**

Lockers are the property of St. Thomas More High School. Students have the privilege and the convenience to use lockers during the school year. Students have the responsibility to keep lockers clean and orderly. Food may not be kept in the locker unless it is a lunch brought from home. Students have the financial responsibility to cover any unwarranted damage to the assigned locker. Students are assigned a locker number. If a situation arises that requires a locker change, the student must request this change through the office. Unassigned lockers are not available for student use.

Students are recommended to lock their lockers for their own protection. The school provides locks for every student who requests a lock. Only St. Thomas More locks may be used. Students will not be charged a fee for the usage of locks; however, students will be charged \$5.00 at the end of the year if they do not return their locks.

**The St. Thomas More administration reserves the right and the responsibility to check lockers periodically or as the need arises.**

## **St. Thomas More Library (BP STM-2000-013)**

The St. Thomas More library is the primary resource for information and curriculum support for our staff and students. This facility enables our students and staff the opportunity to work as individuals and as classrooms as we cover material to make us lifelong learners. No one is allowed in the Library without staff supervision.

Food/Drinks are never allowed in the library unless granted by special permission.

## **Lunch Program (BP STM-3000-006)**

The lunch program has a computer system that handles the lunch accounts. Everyone is issued an ID number that will stay the same from year to year and needs to be memorized. After the students have made their food selections, the cashier will enter them into the system. The students then enter their own ID number. The cashier will verify the number with a matching name and picture that will appear on the screen. At that point the cashier will validate the meal selection. **THIS SYSTEM WILL NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO CHARGE TO ANYONE ELSE'S ACCOUNT.** At the discretion of the cashier, the students will not be allowed to run their account balances into more than a negative \$10.00 balance. The cashier will have the authority to deny anyone the right to run an account into a negative balance. Students will be told their accounts are running low when the account has a positive \$10.00 balance. If you want to have your students accounts limited in any way (i.e. set spending limits per day) we have that ability. Please contact us with this information.

At the end of the school year all money will remain in the students account and will be carried forward to the next year. If a student is moving or graduating, balances over \$5.00 will be refunded.

A check may be sent to the school with you student, given to the main office, or given to the lunch cashier at lunchtime. Checks **NEED** to be made payable to “**STM Lunch Program**”. Cash deposits are accepted but checks are preferred as they are much easier to trace if lost or an error occurs.

Meal prices vary. We may find that some prices need to be adjusted throughout the year as our food costs may change. Please have at least \$20.00 on each student's account before the first day of school. This will help everyone during the first couple days of school. Most students spend between \$2.00-\$4.00 a day.

Some basic rules for the lunch program: (1) everyone must know their ID number when they come through the lunch line. (2) There will be no charging over \$10.00 (cashiers discretion) to the lunch accounts (3) It is up to the discretion of the cashier to make change for pop, phone, etc. (4) The entire amount of the check written to the lunch program will be deposited into the appropriate account (5) No money will be taken out of the account and given back to the students. (6) Any student that needs to pay with cash will be asked to wait in line. If a student makes a habit of paying in cash they may be refused service. (7) Students **are not allowed to order in nor have any kind of fast food delivered to them. This includes seniors that have open lunch. No outside food may be brought into the lunch room unless it is food (lunch) brought from home.** The commons is the only area designated for food/drink consumption. Before, after, and during school, food/drinks must be kept in the commons area. Any food/drink found outside the common area will be confiscated. Consistent violators may receive detention.

## **Fire, Emergency or Disaster Guidelines (BP BOD-3000-004)**

**St. Thomas More's "Crisis Plan" is available for review upon request in the front office.**

**FIRE** – A loud alarm in the hallway will indicate a possible fire. Instructions for evacuation are given by teachers at the beginning of the year and are posted in each room. In case of a fire, students will move quickly and quietly along prescribed routes and far away from the building. They will stay outside until the signal to return is given.

**NATURAL DISASTER** – An intercom system warning will indicate a disaster situation. Instructions for the school disaster plan are given by teachers at the beginning of the year and are posted in each room. In case of a disaster, students will proceed to the designated safety areas.

**EMERGENCY** – In the case of an emergency the following guidelines and procedures will be followed:

1. No student will be dismissed from school unless a parent is present to pick them up.
2. No student will be allowed to leave with another person, even relative, unless they have written permission to that effect or that particular person is listed on the student's emergency card in our files.
3. All parents or designees who come for students must have them signed out at the office or at the temporary student release station as may be designated. The designated release station will depend upon the nature and the location of the disaster. It will be an area that is accessible and in close proximity to the affected school. Such areas may include school gym, designated parking lot areas, the hospital or the Cathedral.
4. The school will be in contact with various local emergency services during any type or emergency.

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

- ◆ **Please do not** call the school. We must have the lines open for emergency calls.
- ◆ **Families will be briefed regarding the crisis through School Reach, School App, communication system or Rediker.**
- ◆ **Please 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 through the local media.

## **ACCIDENTS OR ILLNESS**

### **Accidents (BP STM-2000-022)**

If a student is injured during the school day, the student should report the accident to the teacher if he/she is in a classroom, to the coach/advisor if he/she is in a sport or activity, or to the office. If medical care is necessary, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be immediately notified, and the correct procedure for the injury will be followed.

## **Illness (BP STM-2000-023)**

A school nurse is available to the Catholic school system, but not on a regular basis. The school nurse maintains the student health records and the immunization records of students; helps provide health screenings and assists school staff in diagnosing and treating injuries or illnesses.

If a student is running a temperature, suffering from nausea, is coughing and sneezing, the student should remain at home because we have no facilities for ill students. If a student becomes ill during class, he/she must notify the instructor, and then report to the office to call the parent/guardian for permission to go home. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student will go back to class or wait in the office

Prescription drugs and over the counter medicine should, whenever possible, be dispensed by a parent or guardian. STM acknowledges that Personnel have limited or no knowledge or administering medications to students. STM 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 and principal 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 this procedure:

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

## **SCHOOL VISITORS AND GUESTS**

### **Visitors Procedure (BP STM- 2000-024)**

All visitors, including parent(s)/guardian(s), must report to the office. Forgotten lunches, books, assignments, etc., are to be brought to the office and the student will be notified.

Students may invite friends or relatives to come to school with them on designated “Guest Days” or any special day that is arranged by the administration and parents. Students are not to encourage or invite friends to drop in for lunch or any other time of the day.

Students who invite guests to school dances and parties must sign the Guest List in the office before the event. If a guest’s name does not appear on the list, the guest may not remain in the building.

Visitors may not loiter in the parking lot, the courtyard, or in the school building. Violators will be reported to the police authorities.

### **Closed Campus (BP STM-2000-025)**

St. Thomas More is a closed campus for the safety of the students and for parental peace of mind. Once a student arrives at school, he/she may not leave without permission. **Seniors with a failing grade will lose their open campus privileges.** In order to leave campus for a justifiable reason, a note or telephone call from a parent/guardian must give permission. Students are allowed to leave campus for lunch ONLY if accompanied by a parent. This will be kept to a minimum or for special occasions and plan in advance. No parent is allowed to excuse their student to go to lunch with other students. Students are not allowed to go to the parking lot and their cars without first checking in the General Office.

### **Telephone Usage and Student Messages (BP STM-2000-026)**

Students are allowed to use the office phone during school hours with permission.

Students will not be called to the phone during class time unless in case of emergency.

Pagers, cellular phones and other communication devices are **not** allowed to be used during school hours.

- (1) Phones must be kept off from 8:15am-3:30pm.
- (2) No cell phones may be used for picture taking during school hours.
- (3) No harassment or threatening of person(s) via the cell phone is permitted
- (4) Cell phones may not be used for game playing, Internet or e-mail access, gambling or making purchases of any kind.
- (5) Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones: 1<sup>st</sup> time phone is taken away for 1 day. 2<sup>nd</sup> time the phone is taken away for 2 weeks. 3<sup>rd</sup> time phone is taken away for remainder of school year.

## **FINE ARTS PATRONS AND ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB**

### **Fine Arts Club (BP STM-2000-028)**

The Fine Arts Club's purpose is to promote art, music and theatre activities. One of the goals is to provide more participation and performance opportunities for students.

Officers are selected during the summer, and meetings are scheduled throughout the year. Dues are set by the officers and the administration and will be used to promote the St. Thomas More Fine Arts.

### ***Athletic Booster Club (BP STM-2000-029)***

The objectives of the St. Thomas More Athletic Booster Club are to arouse and maintain an interest and support for athletic and other extracurricular activities of the St. Thomas More High School system. The membership of this organization is not limited. Anyone interested in furthering the aims of this organization shall be eligible to join. However, all parents with students participating in athletics are expected to be active members of the Athletic Booster Club.

The St. Thomas More Booster Club officers are selected in the spring. Meetings are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year. Dues are set annually by the St. Thomas More Booster Club Board of Directors and the administration.

### ***Automobile Policy (BP STM-2000-030)***

All students who drive to school must have a St. Thomas More automobile permit on file and display a St. Thomas More driving permit in their vehicle. The St. Thomas More automobile permit includes the make and year of the vehicle, license number and the signature of the parent/guardian giving the student permission to drive. The permit includes all vehicles driven by the student on campus. Students must have proof of insurance and drivers license number on file.

Students are not allowed to go to the parking lot during the school day without permission from the school office. The vehicle may not be driven during the school hours without permission from the office, nor may a student take another student off campus without permission.

Driving on the school campus is a privilege and a responsibility. Students agree to drive in safe, respectful manner at all times and agree to park properly in the designated area for their grade level. 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 and the number of young children on campus, there is a zero-tolerance for speeding or reckless driving.** Students, parents and staff are expected to maintain the campus speed limit of five (5) miles per hour and to adjust appropriately for weather conditions.

### ***Computer Use Policy and Guidelines (BP ADM-2000-025)***

St. Thomas More High School has been greatly blessed with quality technology in both software and hardware. This technology is a great benefit to students, faculty, staff and our Diocesan community. The expectations for student behavior on the computer network are the same as the expectations for student behavior in all areas of student life. Violations and misbehavior in the use of computer technology will be processed through the administration.

Due to the sensitivity and value of our technology, the following policy has been established to insure the proper use of software and hardware so that all will be able to benefit from the availability of our system. This is not a complete list of all the possible conditions and problems, which may arise on the St. Thomas More computer network, but these situations, require a specific description.

1. The use of the system is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct or violation of computer use rules and guidelines.
2. All users must be properly instructed in use and care of software and hardware before access is allowed.

3. Permission must be obtained before computer access is allowed and an approved supervisor must be present. The system may be used only for a school related assignment approved by a teacher. It is not for personal use.
4. No software or files from home may be loaded on the computers without permission by the supervisor and a virus scan. Viruses can be unintentionally spread and they are expensive to cure.
5. Students may not utilize, try to decode or “hack” the password access codes, files, or computers of other students, faculty members or Internet servers. If you accidentally run into something you do not understand on the system, notify the supervisor immediately.
6. Students may not copy software from the computers. Copyright laws protect the software. All problems with computer hardware or software must be reported to the supervisor immediately upon encountering. If problems are not reported immediately, it may be assumed that the action causing the problem was willful and intentional, and disciplinary action may result.
7. Deliberate damage of hardware or software will be grounds for disciplinary action that includes full restitution and may include permanent loss of computer privileges, suspension or recommendation of expulsion to the School Board.
8. Computers make it easier to bring information from other sources and use it in student work. Plagiarism is the use of works, ideas, or information of another without informing the reader/listener of the source of these words, ideas or information. It is claiming the work of another as your own. Be very careful to cite your sources as you locate information on disks, CD-ROMs or on the Internet to use in your work.
9. Engagement in on line blogs such as but not limited to My Space, Xanga, Bebo, Face Book, etc, may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the students blog contains defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty or other students.

### **Internet (BP ADM-2000-025)**

St. Thomas More students have access to the Internet. Training is provided and we also supervise student’s access to the Internet. It is essential, however, for all users to recognize their responsibilities in having access to vast services, sites, systems and people. The users are ultimately responsible for their actions in accessing network services. Both the selection of materials and the use of materials must be consistent with the mission of St. Thomas More. Each student should answer the question, “Is this material appropriate to the school?” Remember that you represent our school as you take your part in the global network.

Following are suggestions for using common courtesy and common sense on the Internet:

- ◆ Check e-mail regularly and delete unwanted messages immediately since they take up disk storage. Keep messages remaining in your electronic mailbox to a minimum?
- ◆ Give the school address if you need to use the regular mail. Do not give out your home address or phone number. Do not place unlawful information on a system.
- ◆ Keep files to a minimum.
- ◆ Cite all quotes, references and sources. Check with the network administrator before downloading information to avoid violating copyright laws.
- ◆ Never send or keep anything that you would not mind having your teachers see. Do not use profane, abusive, harassing or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages. If you cannot say the word(s) out loud, then you cannot expect to type the word(s). Your files may be accessible by persons with system privileges, so do not maintain anything private in your disk storage area.



- ◆ Be professional and careful in what you say about others. E-mail is easily forwarded.
- ◆ Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communication, your tone or joke may be viewed as criticism.
- ◆ Do not send “chain letters” or “broadcast” messages to lists of individuals or other types of use, which could cause congestion of the networks or interfere with the work of others.
- ◆ Do not access sites, which are inconsistent with the philosophy of a Catholic school. The sites could include information on drug use, pornographic materials, bigotry or hate, violence or other criminal behavior. Students doing research on controversial issues must always check with their teacher before using Internet sites on these on these issues. If a student accidentally enters an objectionable site, close the screen immediately and notify the teacher immediately. If the site is not reported immediately, it may be assumed that the site was intentional and disciplinary action may result.
- ◆ Chat rooms should be entered only after receiving permission from the teacher. These areas are not always safe or suitable for students.

It is understood that the student will abide by all rules and expectations written here, 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.

### **Activities Rules and Regulations (BP STM-2000-031)**

For student participation in co-curricular activities at St. Thomas More High School, rules and regulations required by the state of South Dakota and specific rules and regulations approved by St. Elizabeth Seton Central School Corporation must be observed. The St. Thomas More activities governed by these rules and regulations include, but are not limited to: football, girls’ basketball, boys’ basketball, volleyball, wrestling, track, tennis, golf, debate, oral interpretation, Knowledge Bowl, cheerleading, drill team, band and choir competitions.

The St. Thomas More student is expected to reflect Christian ideals, attitudes and values in his/her life, is expected to be a person of integrity, and stands for that which is right. The St. Thomas More student is expected to treat officials and opponents with respect and courtesy and demonstrates fairness in victory or defeat.

### **South Dakota High School Activities Association Rules (BP STM-2000-032)**

The following are mandatory South Dakota High School Activities Association requirements for activity participation:

1. The student must not have reached his/her twentieth birthday.
2. The student must not have attended more than four first semesters and four second semesters of school in grades 9 through 12.
3. The student must not be a member of an independent or non-high school team, not participate independently in a sport during the high school season in that same sport.
4. The student must pass a physical exam and bring the completed exam and pre-history form to the Activities Office.
5. The student must have insurance coverage through a family policy or purchase the school-designated plan. Verification of coverage must be on file in the Activities Office.

## **St. Thomas More High School Activities Rules (BP STM-2000-033)**

The following are additional St. Thomas More High School requirements for activities:

1. The student must be presently enrolled at St. Thomas More or St. Elizabeth Seton Middle School and meet the St. Thomas More Eligibility Policy guidelines.
2. The student shall not, during the school year or during the season of practice, play or rehearsal, use a beverage containing alcohol, use tobacco; use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away marijuana or any controlled substance defined by law as a drug. Medication specifically prescribed for a student by his/her physician is not included in the category. Any violation will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy. All students involved in extracurricular activities and who violate the policy must also follow disciplinary action that is outlined by the Activities Director and/or Administration. This policy will be handed out at the beginning of every season.
3. The student must take care of school equipment and uniforms and be financially responsible for equipment and uniforms lost or damaged.
4. The student must have the St. Thomas More Pre-Planned Absence Form signed by a parent/guardian on file in the office.
5. A student must be in attendance the day before, of and after the day of an activity unless a serious illness or emergency situation can be documented. A meeting with the Administration, Activities Director, and coach/advisor will result from a violation and a consequence will be determined.
6. The student must attend every activity practice and actively participate unless previous arrangements have been made with the coach/advisor.
7. The student must be transported to the activity in the method provided by the school. If the student is to return home from the activity with the parent/guardian, the coach/advisor must have written permission from the parent/guardian prior to the trip. If the need develops at the activity site, the coach/advisor must have verbal contact with the parent/guardian before the student is released.
8. Fine Arts – The student must be enrolled in the STM Fine Arts class in order to participate or audition in a SDHSAA sanctioned Fine Arts Activity.

The student shall not, at any time, use a beverage containing alcohol; use tobacco; use or consume, have in possession, buy sell, or give away marijuana or any controlled substance defined by law as a drug. Medication specifically prescribed for a student by his/her physician is not included in the category. Any violation will result in disciplinary action according to the RCCSS Alcohol and Drug Policy.

**Public Websites** - The RCCSS reserves the right to monitor student Web site access and to take the necessary steps to prohibit access to certain inappropriate sites or to provide consequences for access to such sites. The RCCSS may also monitor public sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, etc. to ensure that information placed on those sites does not violate any school policy such as, but not limited to, drug or alcohol use. The RCCSS also requires that students agree not to place anything on public sites that slander, or libel of students, staff members, coaches and community members, or other information deemed inappropriate or illegal. All reports of rule violations will be investigated. The RCCSS reserves the right to provide consequences for any and all rule violations.

Failure to follow these rules and regulations will result in immediate consequences that will reflect the severity and frequency of the action and may result in revocation of activity privileges.

The rules and regulations for participation in St. Thomas More activities extend for the entire year. Violations are cumulative and apply to all activities in which a student participates.

Each St. Thomas More student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall read and sign a St. Thomas More Activity Participation Agreement before the activity commences. A copy of this signed agreement must be on file with the coach/advisor before the student will be allowed to participate in the activity.

### **St. Thomas More Activities Eligibility Policy (BP STM-2000-034)**

The Rapid City Catholic School System offers the opportunity for its students to participate in various clubs, sports or academic activities and leadership positions. A faculty member or approved community leader moderates each student organization as a 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, stress on physical fitness and extended academic program are all reflected in participation in a well-rounded co-curricular schedule of activities.

The RCCSS 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 following criteria if he/she has a failing grade in classroom curriculum.

The RCCSS Activities Eligibility Process includes the following steps:

1. Each Tuesday at the end of the school day, teachers will notify the principal(s) of any student earning a cumulative failing grade in a class. The principal(s) sends the failing grades on to the Activities Director who sends the failing grades 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 Wednesday.
3. If a student has his/her first (F) the CAS notifies the affected students that he/she is on academic probation until the next grading period. During the 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.
5. If a student has an (F) in the specific classroom curriculum for the second consecutive week, or has an (F) in 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 Wednesday to Wednesday 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 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 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 educational resources are being utilized.

## **ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/VAPING POLICY**

### ***Philosophy***

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, tobacco, or any electronic devices for vaping at any time while on campus or at any off-campus STM sponsored event. In accordance with this, we will maintain a NO TOLERANCE policy toward student use of any of these items.

### ***Policy***

#### **Possession/Use First Offense**

When a student is found for the first time, in possession of, under the influence of, or using alcohol, tobacco, or vaping 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, or use of tobacco or vaping 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 or any offices held by the student.

#### **Possession/Use Second Offense**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in **5 days of suspension from school which will result in zeros 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 meet with a drug/alcohol counselor or psychologist. Upon completion of counseling the student must submit a professional assessment 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 STM. (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 St. Thomas More.**

#### *Possession/ Use Third Offense*

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

### **DRUG POLICY**

#### ***Philosophy***

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

#### ***Policy***

##### *Possession/Use First Offense*

When a student is found for the first time, in possession of, under the influence of, or using drugs, on the way to or from school, at school, before, during, or after a school-sponsored event, the drugs will be taken away from the student. The police will 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 drugs 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 or any offices held by the student.

##### *Possession/Use Second Offense*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in **5 days of suspension from school which will result in zeros 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 meet with a drug/alcohol counselor or psychologist. Upon completion of counseling the student must submit a professional assessment 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 STM. (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 St. Thomas More.**

### *Possession/ Use Third Offense*

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

## ***SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING***

### ***Student-to-Student Harassment/Bullying Policy (BP ADM-2000-007)***

#### **Statement**

The St. Elizabeth Seton Central Catholic School Corporation strongly disapproves of and has no tolerance for student-to-student harassment of any kind. All students must avoid offensive or inappropriate behavior toward peers at school including school grounds, parking lot, school sponsored activities, field trips and all parts of school buildings including hallways, classrooms, restrooms, entryways and lockers.

This policy prohibits any verbal, physical or visual conduct on the part of students that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive education environment.

#### **Examples**

Examples of prohibited conduct include intentional physical, visual or verbal harassment such as **(Physical)** hitting/kicking, spitting/pushing, shoving/punching, beating/slapping, jabbing/bumping, hair pulling, damaging property, spoiling homework, tearing clothes, hazing/initiation, invasions of space; **(Visual)** gestures, facial sneering, body postures, graffiti, pictures/notes, exposing of personal items of clothing; **(Verbal)** profanity, name calling, teasing, taunting, laughing at, threatening/ordering, degrading/mockng, rumors/gossiping, ridiculing. This is not an exhaustive list of prohibited actions under this Policy, but is for illustration purposes only.

#### **Reporting**

We will investigate all complaints and will endeavor to handle each complaint expeditiously in a professional manner so as to respect the rights of all parties concerned by carefully following the steps here outlined.

#### **Harassment Counseling**

The purpose of harassment counseling is to address concerns arising from a student's behaviors, to educate the student on the importance of the Harassment Policy and Christian behavior, and to provide the opportunity to formally document the behavior of the student. Harassment counseling may be conducted by the Building Principal, administration, counselor or teacher. All harassment counseling requires a written report to the Administration, who will inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) that he/she has been involved in an incident that led to harassment counseling.

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy (BP ADM-2000-006)**

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 policy prohibits (1) unwelcome sexual advances; (2) requests for sexual acts or favors, with or without accompanying promises, threats or reciprocal favors or actions; and (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.

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, off-color 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 picture, greeting cards, articles, books, magazines, cartoons, or notes; physical assaults, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation; intentional touching, pinching, patting or poking at another person's body.

The above is not an exhaustive list of prohibited acts under the policy. Copies of the Sexual Misconduct Policy are on file in the office or available upon request.

### **Weapons Policy (BP ADM-2000-010)**

State Statutes 13-32-7 states:

“Possession of firearms on elementary or secondary school premises or vehicle is a misdemeanor. Any person, other than a law enforcement officer, who intentionally carried, 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 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 airings 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, imitative weapons or dangerous weapons as defined in SDCL 22-1-2-(10) on school premises. Violation of State Statute 13-32-7 or 22-1-2- (10) in any manner will result in an expulsion recommendation to the school board.

## **Child Abuse (BP ADM-2000-011)**

RCCSS is committed to providing a safe and secure environment to educate the students. The faculty and staff at RCCSS 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 a reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

## **Right to Amend Handbook**

The administration of St. Thomas More High School under the approval of the St. Elizabeth Seton Central Catholic School Corporation retains the right to amend the handbook and/or school policies for just cause and that parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

For any items that are not covered in this Handbook or in another Board approved policy, the St. Thomas More administration will follow the guidelines listed in the Policy in Lieu of No Policy.

“In the absence of a Board policy specifically covering any action that the Building Principal must take for the orderly execution of his duties or orderly transaction of normal school business, he may take action that he feels will be in harmony with the overall policy of the Board. In cases in which the Building Principal must take such action, he will discuss his actions as soon as possible with the President of the Board and present the matter to the Board at its next meeting. If the action may result in a strong reaction by students, staff or patrons, the Building Principal will inform all Board members as soon as possible.”



## APPENDIX A

### **CONTRACT FOR SERVICES ST. ELIZABETH SETON ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL FY 2015-16**

There are two primary reasons our Catholic School System has instituted this Contract for Services:

**First**, rigorous academics and a structured school environment require a full-year commitment in order to be most effective. Research shows that effective schools possess a “total environmental quality” within the school. This environment encompasses the school’s belief systems, values, cognitive structures and meanings. This school culture, or way of doing this, requires a yearly commitment from students for the bonding spirit that helps teachers to teach and students to learn.

**Second**, we strive to allocate and manage every dollar in a way that assures the viability of our school while bringing the maximum benefit to your child. Sound budgeting is the key to good stewardship. Our plans for staffing, purchasing of materials and supplies, book orders, room assignments, tuition assistance and many other budget areas are directly dependent upon the number of students enrolled in the school.

Subject to the provisions herein, the undersigned agrees to pay the tuition and fees as established by the Board for the 2015-2016 school year.

When students enroll for the year, we make our plans and commitments for the year. When a student or family chooses to leave the school, our annual commitments do not change. Request for adjustments or waivers of the parental agreement must be made in writing to the Board Finance Committee. The Board Finance Committee will research each request and make a recommendation to the full Board for final consideration. A waiver from the Contract for Services is considered justified by the Board for two serious circumstances: 1). If the family makes an unforeseen move from the community that prevents the student from attending the school, or 2). If there is an unexpected medically diagnosed illness of the student and it is mutually agreed by the school officials and parents that the student’s needs can no longer be served by the school. The Board retains discretion to waive the requirements of the parental agreement where it deems it necessary for the welfare of the school and/or the family involved.

If the Board does not waive the contract, the family has the option to start school as planned, continue to be enrolled, or exercise a contract buy-out. For the purpose of this policy, a contract buy-out is defined as: Payment of earned tuition calculated on a prorated basis and payment of a \$1,000 per student buy-out fee.

Earned tuition will be calculated by dividing the tuition by the number of weeks in the school year times the number of weeks attended. For the purpose of this policy, a week attended is defined as a whole week or any part of a week the student attends class.

**I/We agree to abide by and comply with the terms and conditions stated in the Contract for Services. We understand this is a legal, binding and enforceable contract.**