

RAPID CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

# ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL

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## Student Handbook

School Year  
2023-2024  
(Updated 9-11-2023)



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.

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# 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 vision

## **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 and potentially the school; 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 (DISTRICT 2000-01)***

Rapid City Catholic School System admits students of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin. Students are afforded all rights, privileges, programs, and activities available. Rapid City Catholic School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational and other school administered programs, or admission policies or scholarship (tuition assistance) and loan programs.

### ***Admissions Policy/Statement Of Purpose (District 2000-029)***

The Rapid City Catholic School System 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.

Rapid City Catholic School System requires the following procedures be met for admission in addition to other RCCSS registration and admission criteria.

1. The admission process includes:
  - a. Admissions Director contact and initial communication;
  - b. Explanation of school programs, expectations and financial obligations;
  - c. A copy of all permanent records must be received prior to attendance;

- d. Administrative interview;
  - e. Review transcripts/grade reports and other educational records with administrator to ensure proper placement and attention to any special needs;
  - f. Review registration process with Admissions Director;
  - g. Completion of registrations forms and payment of registration fees;
  - h. Formal acceptance and letter of welcome.
2. 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.
  3. All new students to the school system must submit the following:
    - a. Copy of certified birth certificate;
    - b. Copy of immunization record or signed **medical** waiver.

RCCSS will implement a waiting list when maximum capacity has been attained.

Waiting list procedures:

1. Parents must complete the student registration form and tuition payment/parental agreement forms. NO registration fee is collected for students completing the forms to be placed on a waiting list.
2. Upon an opening, registration will be selected on a first come/first served basis.
3. Selection of the family/student will be processed according to Admissions Procedures already in place.
4. The selected parent/student will be notified by telephone by the Admissions Director.
5. Within 3 days of notification, the parent must pay the registration fee and complete the tuition transactions.
6. Failure to complete any or all of the above requirements will result in the withdrawal of the offer.

### **Tuition (BP District 2000-02)**

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, 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.

The RCCSS Board of Directors shall approve and assess a per pupil tuition rate. The tuition rate shall cover the expenses necessary to educate the pupil.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. The Finance Committee will recommend an annual budget to the RCCSS Board of Directors.
2. The annual budget will include per pupil tuition rate recommendations based upon per pupil budget expenses.

3. All pupils are assessed an annual tuition rate. The responsible party must abide by the RCCSS Contract for Services. Tuition payments will be made in accordance to procedures as listed below. Persons unable to meet these procedures must receive an exception from the Finance Committee of RCCSS:
  - a. All relatives (includes step-parents) are eligible to remit tuition payments on behalf of the pupil.
  - b. Payment of tuition shall be made according to the following:
    - i. Option 1. A discounted payment is offered if the discounted payment is made in full on or before July 15th of the current year. Failure to remit the discounted payment in full by July 15th will result in the loss of the discount. Failure to remit payment in accordance with this option requires selection of either Option 2 or Option 3 prior to beginning classes.
    - ii. Option 2. Two equal payments (no discount). The 1st payment is due on or before July 15th of the current year. The 2nd payment is due on or before December 15th of the current year. Failure to remit payment on or before July 15th of the current year will require selection of Option 3 prior to beginning classes. Failure to remit the second payment due on or before December 15th of the current year will result in interest charged.
    - iii. Option 3. Tuition is budgeted over 10 months (August- May). An ACH Monthly Payment Plan with direct withdrawal from your bank account on either the 10th or the 25th of each month is required. Missed payments will be assessed a \$20.00 late fee.
    - iv. Option 4. Tuition is budgeted over 12 months (June-May). An ACH Monthly Payment Plan with direct withdrawal from your bank account on either the 10th or the 25th of each month is required. Missed payments will be assessed a \$20.00 late fee.

Failure to elect and participate in one of the approved payment plans will result in the student not being placed in a class.

- c. Students enrolling August 1st or later will pay their registration fee and at least the first month of tuition upon registration.
- d. New families electing Option 3 may only select the 10th of the month as a payment date. This restriction is lifted after the first year.
- e. A \$50.00 late registration fee will be assessed on all current year students who do not register by the returning student deadline.
- f. Failure to remit tuition may result in the following actions:
  - i. Adjusting ACH Monthly Payment amounts to pay remaining balance in full.
  - ii. Need for application for tuition assistance.
  - iii. A Finance Committee-approved individualized payment plan.
  - iv. Use of a third party collection agency.
  - v. Legal action.
  - vi. Denying student from participation in graduation activities.
  - vii. Disenrollment and termination of all services provided by RCCSS.

### **Registration (BP DISTRICT 2000-02)**

Rapid City Catholic School System requires all students to complete a registration form to begin the enrollment process.



## PROCEDURES

1. Families with students currently enrolled in RCCSS will receive registration information in January of the current school year.
2. Registration fees will be assessed.
3. Application and fees must be submitted in accordance with the dates provided by RCCSS to reserve the potential student's place in the RCCSS.
4. Students are not considered registered unless the registration fee has been paid. Students of RCCSS employees are excluded from this (see number 6).
5. Students registering during the 4th quarter for both the current school year and the following school year will only be charged one registration fee. The registration fee charged will be based on the following school year grade level.
6. School employees have the option to include the registration fee into their monthly tuition payments. This option is limited to only school employees.
7. Summer child care registration is not included in this policy.
8. Registration will not be processed on delinquent accounts.

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

Rapid City Catholic School System requires completion of the Contract for Services prior to accepting a student. A copy of all school records must be received prior to attendance.

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 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 \$1000 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.

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

Families withdrawing a student(s) from the Rapid City Catholic School System must follow the school's withdrawal procedures.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. Completion of the RCCSS withdrawal form.
2. Completion of an exit interview with the Principal or designee.
3. All books, materials, and equipment belonging to RCCSS must be returned.
4. All financial obligations must be satisfied.
5. Upon early withdrawal, a formal letter stating the reasons for withdrawal must be written to the RCCSS Board of Directors. The RCCSS Board Finance Committee will make a recommendation(s) to the full Board of Directors for consideration of a contract buy-out or contract waiver.
6. Upon completion of the above, student records and transcripts will be released.

### **Counseling (BP DISTRICT 2000-34)**

The Counseling Department is available for the academic and emotional needs of the RCCSS community. Collaboration is encouraged among teacher, parent, child, and counselor, wherever deemed appropriate.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Honor Concept (BP STM HS 6000-019)**

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; detention; suspension; and/or 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.

### **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, who may meet with the student prior to convening the Honor Council.
- The advisors determine whether there is sufficient cause for the case to proceed to the Honor Council.
- If so, a hearing is held.
  - All 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.
  - Suggested 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.

Members of Honor Council

- 9 members: 4 seniors, 3 juniors, and 2 sophomores, all of whom are chosen through an application process.
- 4th 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 and implementation. The school Administrator has the final determination of the consequences.

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

Curriculum consists of all the skills, concepts, and learning experiences within the RCCSS. The RCCSS Board recognizes that the primary purpose of curriculum development is to ensure that spiritual and educational programs fulfill the needs of students served within RCCSS. The Board believes that an up-to-date, effective curriculum is necessary, and supports and encourages the certified staff and administration to evaluate, investigate, develop, and improve the curriculum. The Board will consider the recommendations of the administration and staff and may authorize the establishment of task forces to work on curriculum development areas. The Board also supports student and public participation and will be receptive to the input of these constituencies in considering curriculum development proposals.

## PROCEDURES

The RCCSS curriculum will be established and maintained in conformity with the following general principles:

1. It shall include, at a minimum, all courses recommended by the South Dakota Department of Education and aligned with South Dakota State Standards.
2. It shall be consistent with the stated philosophy and objectives of RCCSS.

### *Homework*

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 makeup work, tests, and other class activities with the instructor(s).

**Makeup** 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 HS 6000-020)*

Students may elect to drop or add a course of study.

## PROCEDURES

1. Students must bring a note from their parent/guardian requesting the change in course.
2. Administration will verify the change will work into the student's schedule.
3. Administration will verify the change will not disrupt the student's career goals.

4. Course changes are to be made prior to the start of school. The only changes that will be made once school starts will be those deemed necessary by the principal.
5. Changes will be made only with Principal approval.
6. All changes must be made during the first five (5) school days of the semester.
7. If a student drops after 5 (five) school days, they will receive a "W/F" on their report card and it will be figured into their Grade Point Average (GPA).

Administration discretion may be used in extreme circumstances.

### **Grading Scale (BP STM HS-6000-001)**

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

		C+	84 – 85
A+	100	C	79 – 83
A	95 – 99	C-	77 – 78
A-	93 – 94	D+	75 – 76
B+	91 – 92	D	71 – 74
B	88 – 90	D-	69 – 70
B-	86 – 87	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/Sunday Activities (BP DISTRICT-2000-035)**

The Rapid City Catholic School System is a community of faith with its primary mission of developing personal and academic excellence in the Catholic tradition. This mission includes the transmission of this faith to RCCSS students. To assist parishes in the development of the faith of our students, Wednesday evenings and Sundays are designed as times for families and students to engage in spiritual and formation events and activities in their parishes or homes.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**

1. Faculty will not assign homework on Wednesday that would be due the next day (on Thursday).
2. All RCCSS scheduled activities by staff, faculty, administration, parents, and volunteers of the school community will conclude by 5:00 pm.
3. In the event activities must be scheduled on a Wednesday evening in conflict with the intent of the policy, **the Superintendent must pre-approve the activity.**

### **SUNDAYS**

1. Any school sponsored or sanctioned activity scheduled on a Sunday must be pre-approved by the Superintendent.
2. Activities scheduled on Sunday must allow the participants the opportunity to celebrate Eucharist. When students are under the supervision of a faculty advisor, coach, or school volunteer during the normal hours when Sunday Eucharist is celebrated, the faculty

- advisor, coach, and/or school volunteer is required to make sure that all Catholic students participating in activities are assisted in finding and celebrating Eucharist.
3. As a general guideline, those activities approved for Sunday will be those activities which do not separate families, but rather invite and encourage families to come together with other members of the Catholic community. Exceptions may occur when the development of the student's participation in certain activities requires additional practice in anticipation of unforeseen participation in meets, games, or events.

### **Honor Roll and Class Rank (BP STM HS-6000-002 STM HS 6000-003)**

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 student must have a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale, *except* Advanced Placement (AP) courses, which use a 5.0 scale. The following scale will be used to determine the student's placement for the 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 on a 4.0 scale (effective with the graduating class of 2012 and thereafter). Students will be ranked by GPA on a 4.0 scale of classes that are taken through St. Thomas More or approved by STM Administration. GPA is determined by taking the total of all grades earned by the student and then dividing by the total number of classes taken. Advanced Placement (AP) classes are weighted and will receive an extra point per grade. Classes taken for remedial purposes will not be figured into the GPA unless the classes are taken at STM during the school year. The student with the highest GPA will be ranked number one. 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 HS 6000-004)**

Students must achieve specific requirements as defined by the State of South Dakota and St. Thomas More High School in order to graduate. ***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  
(50 hours min. 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  
(50 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” in order to participate in the graduation ceremony for St. Thomas More. In order to be in “Good Standing,” seniors must meet all academic requirements and the following stipulations:

- Pass all courses during their senior year, including remedial classes by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of their senior year.
  - If a senior has failed any of their 1<sup>st</sup> semester classes, they are required to meet with the administration, parents, and the teacher(s) of the class. This meeting will determine if the student will be able to earn a passing grade by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. Another meeting will be held after the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter to monitor the progress of that class.
- 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

\* If a senior does not meet all of the requirements and the administration makes the decision that the student will not be able to participate in the graduation ceremony, the family may appeal this decision to the Board of Directors. The only appeal that can be made is if there were circumstances that were out of the student’s control, which did not allow them to complete a class or attend the required amount of days. The family must provide documentation of these circumstances.

### **Course Schedule Requirements (BP STM HS 6000-005)**

St. Thomas More students are required to accumulate 26 credits to graduate. Guidelines below indicate the number of credit hours to be scheduled each year.

STM students are required to schedule a minimum of seven courses per semester. Students electing to exceed seven courses, must seek approval from the principal.

Seniors may engage in a flexible schedule. The requirements are:

- 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 HS 6000-009)**

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 and the Counselor, and other available school and community services and agencies. If conflicts concerning promotion and retention cannot be resolved otherwise, the RCCSS School Board has the authority to make the final determination.

## **Dual Enrollment (BP STM HS 6000-06)**

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

St. Thomas More students are granted dual enrollment only for approved college courses. High school dual enrollment is permitted by St. Thomas More in limited and unique circumstances approved by the administration.

**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.
7. 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 Dual Credit Information (<https://sdmylife.com>) for the most current eligibility factors. Additional information can be found online and with the school counselor.

## **South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship (BP STM HS 6000-007)**

The South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship is a program that awards a \$6,500 scholarship over four years to qualifying high school graduates, who attend an eligible higher education institution in South Dakota. Recipients may participate in the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship

program for the equivalent of four academic years (eight consecutive fall and spring terms), or until attaining a baccalaureate degree. During each academic year, one-half of the annual scholarship award will be distributed at the beginning of the fall semester and the other half is distributed at the beginning of the spring semester.

## PROCEDURES

### Initial Eligibility Requirements

Students may establish their initial eligibility in the Opportunity Scholarship program by meeting the requirements in one of two ways:

#### Option 1

- **RESIDENT STATUS:** Be a resident of South Dakota at the time of high school graduation.
- **ACT SCORE:** Have an ACT composite score of 24 or higher before the beginning of postsecondary education. If using a SAT score, the sum of the verbal and mathematics scores on the SAT must be at least 1090 (testing before January 2016) or 1180 (testing after March 2016).
- **CURRICULUM / GPA:** Complete the high school course requirements (see Curriculum Requirements webpage) with no final grade below a "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) and a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (grade of "B") prior to graduation (NOTE: One unit of high school credit equals one year of instruction).
- **ATTENDANCE:** Attend a university, college, or technical school accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota.
- **TIMING:** Enter into the program within 5 years of high school graduation, or within 1 year of the student's release from active duty military service (if that release is within 5 years of the date of the student's high school graduation). Students seeking to transfer from a regionally accredited university, college, or technical school located outside of South Dakota may do so within two years following high school graduation and be eligible to receive partial award.

- OR -

#### Option 2 (has a higher ACT requirement, but no curriculum or GPA requirement)

- **RESIDENT STATUS:** Be a resident of South Dakota at the time of high school graduation.
- **ACT SCORE:** Have an ACT composite score of 28 or higher and meet the ACT college readiness benchmarks scores equaling or exceeding 18 for English, 22 for Reading, 22 for Math, and 23 for Science. If using an SAT score the sum of the verbal and mathematics scores on the SAT must be at least 1260 (testing before January 2016) or 1310 (testing after March 2016).
- **ATTENDANCE:** Attend a university, college, or technical school accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota.
- **TIMING:** Enter into the program within 5 years of high school graduation, or within 1 year of the student's release from active duty military service (if that release is within 5 years of the date of the student's high school graduation). Students seeking to transfer from a regionally accredited university, college, or technical school located outside of South Dakota may do so within two years following high school graduation and be eligible to receive partial award.

**NOTE:** The requirements listed above are established by the South Dakota Legislature and must be met in order to qualify for the scholarship.

### **Coursework Eligibility Requirements**

To meet the curriculum requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship, all recipients must receive a "C" or higher on all coursework including:

#### **Courses of Study:**

- **4 units** of English (courses with major emphasis upon grammar, composition, or literary analysis may be included to meet this requirement).
- **3 units** of Social Studies (such as history, economics, sociology, geography, U.S. government, and similar courses).
- **4 units** of Algebra or Higher Mathematics (algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or other advanced mathematics, as well as accelerated or honors mathematics [algebra] at the 8th grade, shall be accepted). NOT INCLUDED are arithmetic, business, consumer, or general mathematics or similar courses.
- **4 units** of Science, including 3 units of approved laboratory science (courses in biology, chemistry, or physics in which at least one regular laboratory is scheduled each week).
- **1 unit** of Fine Arts (in art, theatre, or music, as well as approved extracurricular activity).
- **2 units** of either of the following or a combination of the two:
  - Approved Career and Technical Education Courses
  - Modern or Classical Language (Includes American Sign Language; all units must be in the same language)
- **1/2 unit** of Personal Finance or Economics
- **1/2 unit** of Physical Education
- **1/2 unit** of Health or Health Integration (Students entering high school after July 2013)

Visit South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship for updated eligibility.

<https://sdos.sdbor.edu/Pages/default.aspx>

### **South Dakota Regent Scholar (BP STM HS 6000-08)**

In 1988, the South Dakota Board of Regents identified the Regents' Scholar Curriculum which is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in their high school coursework providing the necessary skills for college and career readiness.

This curriculum includes coursework in six content areas including:

- **4 units** of English: Courses with major emphasis upon grammar, composition, or literary analysis; one year of debate instruction may be included to meet this requirement.
- **4 units** of Algebra or Higher Mathematics: Algebra, geometry, trigonometry or other advanced mathematics including accelerated or honors mathematics (algebra) provided at the 8th grade level; not included are arithmetic, business, consumer or general mathematics or other similar courses.
- **4 units** of Science including 3 units of approved laboratory science: Courses in biology, chemistry, or physics in which at least one (1) regular laboratory period is scheduled each week. Qualifying physical science or earth science courses (with lab) shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- **3 units** of Social Studies: History, economics, sociology, geography, government--including U.S. and South Dakota, American Problems, and similar courses.
- **2 units** of a Modern or Classical Language (includes American Sign Language) OR Two (2) Units of Career and Technical Education (CTE) OR a combination of One (1) Unit of Modern or Classical Language and One (1) Unit of Career and Technical Education: If taking two language courses, the two units must be in the same language.

- **1 unit** of Fine Arts: Coursework in art, theater or music. Such credit may be in appreciation, analysis, or performance.

Effective in 2001, the Regents' Scholar Diploma program was established as an academic letter that school districts use to recognize graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated academic excellence through the completion of coursework in the six content areas. Additionally, high school graduates designated as Regents' Scholars automatically are admitted to all six public universities.

For students to be nominated as a recipient of the Regents' Scholar Diploma, they must have:

1. Graduated from a South Dakota high school
2. Completed the coursework identified in the six areas outlined above
3. Receive a "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) or higher on all required coursework
4. A cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (grade of "B") prior to graduation

Traditionally, school districts present Regents' Scholar Diplomas to eligible seniors during graduation or academic award ceremonies each year. To receive the Regents' Scholar Diploma, high school administrators must submit the names of all eligible students to the South Dakota Board of Regents. Excel files should include the name of each eligible graduating senior, the student's SIMS ID number, and the anticipated high school graduation date. An Excel template can be found at the link posted below. Upon receipt of the school district list, the Board of Regents will print Regents' Scholar Diploma certificates that can then be presented to students. Visit South Dakota Board of Regents | Regent Scholars for updated information.

<https://www.sdbor.edu/teachers-counselors/Pages/Regent-Scholars.aspx>

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

Attendance is extremely important for a quality education, and the Rapid City Catholic School System believes that absences and tardiness are a matter of concern for the student, the parents, the RCCSS Board, the administration, and the faculty.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. **The Rapid City Catholic Schools will abide by State of South Dakota statutes and Administrative Rules with regard to attendance.**
2. Patterns of recurring absences are a cause for concern and will require an intervention by the administration, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - a. Parent Conferences
  - b. Tutorial Support
  - c. Student Contract
  - d. Probation
  - e. Suspension
  - f. Dismissal (Expulsion)
3. Perfect attendance designation requires "O" absences and "O" tardies
4. A parent or legal guardian must call the school office between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. for each day of absence:
  - a. Explanation for the absence can be provided via a phone call or email.
  - b. If necessary, calls may be left on the answering machine.
5. **Administration excused absences and tardies.** Excused absences and tardies include, for example:
  - a. Doctor and Dental Appointments
  - b. Emergencies (undefined)
  - c. Death in the Family
  - d. Illness or Injury

- e. Religious Services
6. Parents/Legal Guardians should make every attempt to schedule medical/dental appointments before or after school hours and not during Mass times.
7. Extensive absences, such as catastrophic illness, will be dealt with by administration on an individual basis. Documentation from a physician may be required.
8. Tardy is defined as not present in the classroom at the designated time.
9. Truancy is a serious offense and may involve contacting law enforcement.
10. The Building Principal of RCCSS will send a letter(s) in accordance to the following:
  - a. Letter 1- 5 absences recorded.
  - b. Letter 2 - 10 absences recorded.
  - c. Letter 3 - 15 absences recorded.
  - d. Letter 4 - 20 absences recorded.

### **Tardy Policy**

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 serve detention from 3:35-4:35pm.

Students will receive 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.

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

Mass is an important part of our school and students are required to attend. Missed Masses will be made up whether excused or unexcused.

#### **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 lose the open campus privilege for the remainder of the year.

### **Unexcused Absence Policy**

1. After the first unexcused absence, the student will be notified by the office of their unexcused absence and they will serve detention.

2. After the second unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the student's parent(s)/guardian and the student will serve detention.
3. After the third unexcused absence, the student will have a one day suspension.
4. After the fourth unexcused absence, the student will meet with the Principal with their parent(s)/guardian before the student can return to class.

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

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

Official school records are kept in the custody of the RCCSS schools unless a student transfers to another school and an official transfer slip, signed by a parent, is submitted to release records. A copy of school records must be received prior to attendance. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) 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.

### **PROCEDURES**

- 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.
- All changes of address must be reported. Any change in student information including, but not limited to; address, phone number, etc., must be reported to the appropriate office.
- Original school records will be released to other schools only upon written request by parent or guardian.
- RCCSS personnel may review student records as it may pertain to the educational process and are required to keep all such information confidential.
- All student permanent records are open to both students and parents/guardians by appointment with the administration.
- Transcripts will be sent to colleges or employers upon request from the student or parents/guardians.
- A student may obtain transcripts at no charge.

#### **A. FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

##### **Notice of Rights - Student Records**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the RCCSS receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the RCCSS to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing

- procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
  4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the RCCSS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202  
Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

FERPA permits the disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, FERPA regulations require the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. The RCCSS may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that certain conditions are met.
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to certain requirements. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State Educational Agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's SEA. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures

- of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to certain limitations.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of a student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to certain limitations.
- Information the school has designated as "directory information."

B. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that the RCCSS, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent from parents, guardians, or from students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students"), prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the student's education records. The main exception is that the RCCSS may disclose designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent, guardian, or eligible student has informed the RCCSS that prior written consent is required before disclosing the directory information. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the RCCSS to include this type of information from the student's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's, guardian's, or eligible student's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require the RCCSS to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the names, addresses and telephone listings of the students unless parents or guardians have advised the RCCSS that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If a student's parent, guardian, or an eligible student, does not want the RCCSS to disclose directory information from the student's education records without prior written consent, the student's parent, guardian, or an eligible student must notify the RCCSS in writing within thirty (30) days of the beginning of the school year or, if enrolling after the beginning of the school year, within thirty (30) days of enrollment.

The RCCSS has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student's name
2. Address
3. Telephone listing
4. Name(s) of Parent(s)
5. Photograph
6. Date and place of birth
7. Dates of attendance
8. Grade level
9. Participation (including video) in officially recognized activities and sports
10. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
11. Degrees, honors, and awards received
12. The most recent educational agency or institution attended



As required by state law, the RCCSS shall provide, by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, a list of students by name in grades seven to twelve, inclusive, together with their mailing addresses, to the executive director of the Board of Regents unless the parent has directed that the RCCSS not release directory information about the student.

As required by federal law, the RCCSS shall provide to military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to postsecondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students; and shall, upon a request made by military recruiters for military recruiting purposes, provide access to secondary school student names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless the parent of the student has submitted a request to the RCCSS that the student's information not be released without prior written parental consent

The RCCSS shall annually notify parents of the types of student directory information released.

The notice will include:

- An explanation of the parent's or eligible student's right to request that information not be disclosed without prior written consent
- Notice that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to the South Dakota Board of Regents and, upon request, to military recruiters, subject to a parent's or eligible student's request not to disclose such information without written consent
- Notification on how the parent or eligible student may opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so.

Reference(s): See also Policy BOC 1000-18

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

The Rapid City Catholic School System abides by the provisions of the applicable federal and state law with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. Under SDCL § 25-5-7.3, [A]ccess to records and information pertaining to a minor child, including, but not limited to, medical, dental, orthodontia, optometric and similar health care, and school records shall be made equally available to both parents. Counseling, psychiatric, psychotherapy, and other records subject to confidentiality or privilege shall only be released in accordance with state and federal law; but, if available to one parent, shall be available to both. The parents shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the name and address of the other parent is listed on all such records.

### **PROCEDURES**

Administration will operate under the following procedures:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

## **Remote Learning**

If school has to close for all students:

- Student Expectations
  - The students will follow the school daily schedule and the school calendar.
  - Students must have their video on and their correct name when on Google Meets and/or Zoom
  - Students and parents will be responsible for letting the teachers know if they are going to be absent, via email or message through Google Classroom.
  - Students are to check Google classroom daily for each class they take each day.
  - Students will be responsible for all work assigned to them throughout the time frame that the school is on remote learning.
  
- Teacher Expectations
  - Video Instruction
    - In school - each class period teaching lesson live, then have it recorded
    - Online Learning – Teacher uses Google Meets or Zoom to “teach” class at least three times a week.
  - Schedule for all classes
    - Regular Schedule
  - Assignments are to be posted on Google Classroom by 9am.

## **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. Weekly Wednesday
- b. Email
- c. Rediker
- d. Portal Plus
- e. Fliers
- f. School APP
- g. Twitter
- h. Facebook

A parent/guardian may contact a teacher by emailing the teacher, calling the school during that teacher’s plan period, and/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 any time. 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 (DISTRICT 2000-037)**

RCCSS will cancel school and/or school activities if weather conditions have the potential to cause harm to the students. Generally referred to as "storm days," weather conditions also relate to the ability of the parents' or designees' ability to safely transport students to and from school or school-related activities. Any closure decision involves many factors and is made independently of what other schools may decide.

### **PROCEDURES**

Timely and accurate communication regarding the status of classes and other school-related activities is essential to our school community when adverse weather conditions are present. The following procedures are provided to facilitate communication during those times of inclement weather.

1. The decision to cancel school and/or school-related activities is made by:
  - a. Superintendent - if unavailable, then
  - b. Principals - (Consensus) - if unavailable, then
  - c. Chairperson of the RCCSS Board
2. Administration will attempt to make the decision to cancel school or school-related activities by 6:00 a.m.
3. Administration will notify parents of the decision on storm days using the RCCSS website, Instagram, Facebook and major media outlets. Please turn to one of the stations for the announcement and other pertinent information. **Please do not call the Media Outlets.**
4. **DO NOT** rely on the decision of the public school system or other area schools to be the same as our decision.
5. If there is no announcement about closing, SCHOOL IS OPEN. If stations' announcements do not include us in their closings, then assume we are open.
6. The final decision concerning non-attendance on storm days resides with PARENTS. If we decide to stay open, parents should exercise their own judgment regarding conditions pertaining to their road, car, driving skill, and other factors.
7. WORKING PARENTS must make certain a responsible person is available to pick up their children in the event school closes during the school day. It is very important that the emergency information on file in the office be current; contact the office immediately when any names or numbers change.

**NO STUDENTS MAY BE LEFT AT SCHOOL IF SCHOOL CLOSSES ON A STORM DAY. ANY DECISION TO CLOSE IS FINAL. IF SCHOOL CLOSSES, CHILD CARE IS CLOSED AS WELL.**

## **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 GUIDELINES**

### **Student Responsibilities and Expectations (BP STM HS 6000-010)**

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 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 required part of STM. 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 and Gestures** Students will use appropriate language and gestures at school and at co-curricular activities. At all times, the student's behavior should be courteous and respectful to fellow students and adults.
- **Prohibited Substances** Prohibited chemical substances which include, but are not limited to: alcohol, marijuana (including CBD and derivatives), inhalants (paint, glue, solvents, lighter fluid, etc.) and all controlled substances as defined by South Dakota Law) Use of these products is illegal under age 18 and it is a serious health risk at any age. The campus is smoke free and drug free campus at all times. Student use of prohibited substances 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 areas..
- **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 report cards and/or diplomas being withheld. Excessive fines may lead to further administrative intervention and disciplinary action.
- **Cell Phones** Cell phones may be used during school hours **only** with approval.

### **Standard of Conduct and Character (BP STM HS 6000-011)**

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. Words or actions that do not uphold these standards will have consequences.

### **PROCEDURES**

The student of character:

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

### **Uniform and Personal Appearance Code**

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
- Khaki pants/shorts are available from multiple sources

## *Additional Uniform Information*

### Girls:

- A-line Plaid Skirt, Plaid Kilt, Pleated Plaid Skirt or Khaki Chino Skirt worn 2” above the knee or longer
- Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts
- Solid Navy, Black, Grey, or White Tights/Leggings-No holes
- 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 (Available to purchase in the STM High School Office) or current year activity crew sweatshirt (no hood/no pockets)

### Boys:

- Khaki Chino Pants or Shorts (shorts cannot be rolled)
- 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 (Available to purchase in the STM High School Office) or current year activity crew sweatshirt (no hood/no pockets)

### 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
- Spirit Days: Jeans with NO holes. No leggings or tights under jeans. STM shirt or STM sweatshirt

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

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**

In attempting to create a comprehensive and consistent school uniform policy, we have consulted several other Catholic schools in South Dakota. Based on that consultation and the spirit of the uniform policy, 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 cannot attend school out of uniform and those 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. Students will serve detention(s) for the first two uniform violations. 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, please adhere to the following:

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

## **School Dance Guidelines (BP STM HS 6000-012)**

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. 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.

### **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures and requirements are provided to assist students and parents/guardians to meet these standards:

1. GENERAL:
  - a. 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.
  - b. Students leaving the dance may not return.
  - c. 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 Mores’ rules and standards, including arrival/departure times, dress, appearance, and behavior.
  - d. Provocative, erotic and moshing-type dancing are prohibited.
  - e. Each dance will be chaperoned and the chaperones will be expected to intervene and take appropriate action to maintain St. Thomas More rules, standards, guidelines, and procedures.
2. SEMI-FORMAL DANCES: Students are recommended to dress as follows:
  - a. Females - dress, skirt and top, or dress slacks and top Males - shirt, coat and tie; shirt and tie; shirt and sweater; dress pants.
  - b. Shirts tucked in.
3. ITEMS NOT ALLOWED:
  - a. Any clothing that would make a student conspicuous, provocative, or immodest.
  - b. Any top that is too tight, low-cut, reveals mid-riff, or reveals **underwear**.

- c. Baggy pants or pants worn to reveal underwear.
  - d. Cargo type clothing.
  - e. Chains, hats, or caps.
  - f. Inappropriate jewelry, inappropriate items used as jewelry, or any jewelry used in body piercing such as nose, navel, tongue, lip, or eyebrow.
  - g. Females - any dress, skirt or top that when standing, bending, or sitting would make a student conspicuous or immodest.
4. HAIR AND GROOMING FOR ALL STUDENTS:
- a. Extremes in haircuts or colors are not allowed.
  - b. All clothing must be neat, clean and in good condition.
  - c. All students must be well-groomed.

### **Closed Campus (BP STM HS 6000-014)**

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, email 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, Cellular Phones, and Student Messages**

- 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.
- Cellular phones and other communication devices are **not** allowed to be used during school hours except during their lunch period in the Commons Area.
  1. Phones must be kept off and in their lockers from 8:15AM-3:30PM except during their lunch period, where it can be used in the Commons only.
  2. No cell phones may be used for picture taking during school hours, unless approved and directly supervised by a teacher.
  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 email access, gambling, or making purchases of any kind.
  5. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones: 1st time phone is taken away for one full school day (returned the following school day at 3:30PM\*). 2nd time the phone is taken away for two weeks. 3rd Time phone is taken away for the remainder of the semester and/or school year (depending on the time of the offense).
    - a. On a first offense, A detention *may* be served in lieu of having the phone kept in the Office until the next school day.
- Student messages will be given to students during lunch periods or the student's study hall period.

### **Automobile Policy (BP STM-6000-015)**

Students of the RCCSS are allowed to drive to school if they hold a current South Dakota driver's license and have insurance coverage. All vehicles on campus are REQUIRED to be registered.



Any vehicle not registered in the Office is considered trespassing and subject to being removed (towed) from the property at the owner's expense.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. 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.
2. The permit includes all vehicles driven by the student on campus.
3. Students are not allowed to go to the parking lot during the school day without permission from the school office.
4. 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 written permission from the parent/guardian.
5. Driving on the school campus is a privilege and a responsibility.
6. Students agree to drive in a safe, respectful manner at all times and agree to park properly in the designated area for their grade level.
7. If at any time a student demonstrates careless or reckless driving behavior or parks improperly, he/she may have driving privileges suspended or revoked.
8. Because of the need for safety and the number of young children on campus, there is a zero-tolerance for speeding or reckless driving. The first offense, a student will not be allowed to park on campus for the remainder of the school year.
9. 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 and Internet Use (BP-DISTRICT-2000-023)**

The Rapid City Catholic School System 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. Engagement in online blogs or social networking sites may result in disciplinary action if the content of a student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the RCCSS, the faculty or other students, or a Parish or Diocese of Rapid City. Violations and misbehavior in the use of computer technology will be processed through the administration. All RCCSS must comply with the relevant provisions of the federal Child Protection Act of 1996 and the Child Care Protection Improvement Act of 2020, as per the Diocese of Rapid City Code of Conduct.

Due to the sensitivity and value of RCCSS technology, the following Guidelines have been established to ensure the proper use of software and hardware so that all will be able to benefit from the availability of our system. In addition, the following procedures shall guide RCCSS employee behavior in connection with RCCSS-owned devices whether used on the RCCSS network or elsewhere.

## **GUIDELINES**

This is not a complete list of all the possible conditions and problems, which may arise on the RCCSS 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 RCCSS 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. 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 MySpace.com, 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 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.
10. RCCSS 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 RCCSS.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Network Content**

Network traffic and search terms are logged and parsed for inappropriate content. VPN or proxy use is detectable and may constitute a violation of RCCSS Policy DISTRICT 2000-024 and DISTRICT 2000-025

Staff and Faculty will report any material that does not appear to be appropriate for RCCSS educational setting (at the respective age group for your building) to the IT Department and building administration.

Use of devices owned by RCCSS (such as laptops, etc.) is subject to appropriate content even when the device is on a home or other outside network.

### **Passwords – Domain and Email**

All password complexity and length requirements are subject to change. Passwords will periodically expire.

Staff and Faculty will never share password information for domain log in or email with any other person for any reason. This includes department supervisors or coworkers within your department. If you determine that anyone else knows your password for email or domain log in, please report this immediately to IT (to have your password reset) and to the building administrator. This is to protect not only the security of your data and school data, but to enhance accountability.

### **Email Practices**

The rccss.org email should be used exclusively for communications where conducting business for the school system.

Treat all communications as though they are available to your administration. Contents of rccss.org accounts may be subject to delegated access by the administration.

Do not use rccss.org email to transmit credit card numbers, personal information, or any other sensitive data, whether personal or RCCSS. Business in any department that requires the transfer of sensitive data (whether financial, registration, or confidential information about Staff, Faculty or Students) should be sent via encrypted .zip folder, or FTP. Do not share password or vital security information regarding the operations of RCCSS via email. Please remember that information accessed via email could lead to access in other areas.

### **Computer Use**

When operating RCCSS computers or other devices, it is recommended that students do not use personal accounts of any kind. This includes email, banking, healthcare, social media, shopping, payment sites, etc. Students doing so proceeds at their own risk and should be aware that the integrity of data could be at risk.

RCCSS requires students to use RCCSS-owned devices exclusively for purposes related to any RCCSS business thereby minimizing the risk that personal data may become compromised, as well as creating another layer of separation and security for the schools.

### **USB and External Storage**

Outside USB thumb drives, external hard drives, SD, Micro SD, DVDR/RW and any other storage devices are not to be used on RCCSS computers unless approved by the RCCSS IT department. It is a violation of this policy to insert a USB storage device or place a custom storage disc into any RCCSS-owned computer if that disc or other storage device has ever been used on an outside computer or other device. Personal storage devices must never be used on RCCSS computers. If any RCCSS storage devices are ever used on an outside computer, those storage devices must be cleared by the IT department before being inserted back into an RCCSS computer (including all faculty laptops). No exceptions to this policy are to be made in any other department or Staff/Faculty/Administration.

To have a device checked and approved after being used on an outside device before using it on an RCCSS network computer, Students, Staff, and Faculty must fill out the appropriate IT request form. RCCSS will have dedicated computers at all RCCSS buildings for this purpose.

Lab and library computers at St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Thomas More Middle and St. Thomas More High Schools will be rendered incapable of reading or writing to USB or other devices as of Spring 2020. Any documents that need to be used on these computers must be accessed via Google Drive.

## **WiFi**

There are two separate WiFi SSIDs at the Middle School and High School buildings. The Staff/Faculty WiFi will have a list of approved devices capable of connecting to this SSID. This will occur at some point during the 2019- 2020 school year. Until then, please do not connect non RCCSS-owned computers, or cell phones to this SSID. Any device that is not RCCSS-issued should be connected to the Student WiFi SSID. This is to maintain the proper security of RCCSS devices.

In a “byod” environment, RCCSS cannot guarantee that Students will not install software or use techniques designed to acquire information from RCCSS workstations and servers. Having these networks separated is a vital security precaution. For this reason, do not share the Staff/Faculty WiFi password with Students. When non-RCCSS devices are found on the Staff/ Faculty WiFi, these devices will be placed on a monitoring list and may be subject to being banned from connecting to the WiFi.

## **Onboard/Outboard Processing**

Student email will be locked 30 days after graduation (including Google Drive access).

All shared document access for Google Drive will be removed upon graduation and/or student disenrolling.

All School resources, including laptops and tablets, must be returned to the IT department on or before the last day of employment.

## **STUDENT ABUSE OF ALCOHOL AND/OR OTHER SUBSTANCES** **(BP DISTRICT 2000-15)**

- A. Providing a safe, orderly, and Christian school community is integral to our Catholic school vision. Alcohol and other substances interfere with a student's ability to learn and function responsibly in the school setting in the community. Substance abuse presents a serious health and social problem in our society. In partnership with parents, our schools have a central role in establishing patterns of behavior related to a healthy lifestyle. This necessitates the identification, prevention, intervention, treatment and aftercare of alcohol and other substance use as related to the school community.
- B. The Rapid City Catholic School System facilities (St. Elizabeth Seton Elementary, St. Thomas More Middle School, and St. Thomas More High School) and associated grounds are drug free zones. No student shall possess, use, transfer, conceal, sell, attempt to sell, deliver or be under the influence of narcotics, drugs, alcohol, materials, substances represented to be a drug or controlled substance or chemical substances that affect psychological functions or impact, in any way, the school community. A chemical substance may include alcohol, marijuana, inhalants (paint, glue, solvents, lighter fluid, etc.) and all controlled substances as defined by South Dakota law.
- C. This policy is in effect for all school-sponsored activities on property owned, leased, rented, utilized or maintained by the RCCSS, at all school activities on and off campus as well as travel to and from those activities, and all school vehicles and in any vehicle parked on school property.
- D. Compliance with this policy and all procedures therein is mandatory for all students enrolled at any RCCSS school. A student who uses prescription drugs authorized by a licensed physician or over the counter medications in the prescribed manner does not violate this policy if the student conforms to the stated prescription and appropriate school policies.

- E. If the conduct of any student who appears to violate this policy is brought to the attention of an administrator, teacher, or staff member, action will be taken in accordance with this policy and accompanying procedures.
- F. The RCCSS Board maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding the use of alcohol and other substances intended for the use of intoxication. In keeping with the principles that guide our school community of peace, justice and love, it is the intent of the RCCSS Board that an important goal in processing a violation of this policy is to provide support and facilitate assessment and any necessary treatment for a student while still ensuring a safe, orderly and healthy school community for others.

## **DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

- A. The following procedures will be used in dealing with possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol and other substances intended for intoxication. State and federal regulations regarding special education students will be followed.

### First Offense:

1. The administration will notify the parent(s)/guardians(s) and schedule a conference.
2. The administration shall suspend the student for up to ten (10) days in compliance with student due process procedures.
3. The administration shall notify available law enforcement authorities.
4. The administration shall refer the student to a counselor.
5. The suspension of a student who completes a substance use assessment from a certified or licensed addiction counselor or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency and recommended program, if any, will be commuted to three (3) days, provided the assessment and program are completed, unless good cause is shown to and approved by the administration, within twenty (20) school days. Fees for this assessment and treatment are the responsibility of the student and family.

Upon receipt of appropriate authorization, the agency or professional will notify the school administration in writing that the student has been evaluated and to comply successfully, completed any recommended treatment program.

### Second Offense:

1. The administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and schedule a conference.
2. The administration shall notify available law enforcement authorities.
3. The administration shall suspend for ten (10) days in compliance with student due process procedures.
4. A long-term suspension hearing shall be scheduled before the school board pursuant to due process rules for long-term suspension. The administration will recommend to the school board that the student be suspended for ninety (90) school days. The ninety (90) day suspension for a second offense may be reduced to ten (10) school days if the student completes an accredited intensive prevention or treatment program. Fees for this assessment and/or treatment are the responsibility of the student and family.

### Subsequent Offenses

1. The administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and schedule a conference.
2. The administration shall notify available law enforcement authorities.
3. The administration shall suspend for ten (10) days in compliance with student due process procedures.
4. An expulsion hearing shall be scheduled before the school board pursuant to due process rules for expulsion. The administration will recommend to the school board that the student be expelled.

B. Distributing (supplying free or selling) Alcohol and Other Substances intended for intoxication (all occurrences):

1. The administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and schedule a conference.
2. The administration shall notify available law enforcement authorities.
3. The administration shall suspend for ten (10) days in compliance with student due process procedures.
4. A long-term suspension hearing shall be scheduled before the school board pursuant to due process rules for long-term suspension. The administration will recommend to the school board that the student be suspended for up to ninety (90) school days.
5. A second offense for distributing alcohol or drugs shall result in an expulsion hearing being scheduled before the school board and the administration will recommend the student be expelled for one year.

Reference(s): Legal authorities guiding this policy and procedures include: SDCL §§ 13-32-4; 13-32-4.2; 13-32-4.3; 22-42-19; 26-11-5.1; and Public Law 101-226 (Drug-Free School and Communities Act of 1989).

See also DISTRICT 2000-030

### **TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL SYSTEM** **(BP-2000-046)**

Rapid City Catholic School System recognizes its duty to promote the health and safety of students on school property and during school-sponsored activities.

The use, possession, or promotion of tobacco on school system property by students is prohibited. RCCSS students are prohibited from using or promoting tobacco at school-sponsored activities off school property. Students participating in school activities are also subject to such rules as may exist pursuant to an applicable activity code of conduct.

### **DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS OF DETENTION AND** **SUSPENSIONS (BP-2000-008)**

The Rapid City Catholic School System is committed to maintaining a positive educational atmosphere. Courtesy, respect, and honesty are expected. As a partner in the child's education, the parent will be a part of the disciplinary process.

Discipline in the RCCSS schools is critical to the provision and implementation of educational programs and services. The RCCSS Board and school administrators have the authority to deal with disruptive students and student misconduct. The RCCSS Board recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's due process rights.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. Teachers will provide specific behavior expectations to students and parents. Expectations will comply with the intent of the mission and vision of the RCCSS. Principals will review all expectations prior to distribution.
2. The teacher will counsel students failing to meet the behavioral expectations.
3. Teachers will contact the parents/custodial guardian of students who fail to respond to teacher guidance to improve behavior.
4. Teachers may refer the student to the guidance counselor for intervention as needed.

5. A student whose behavior is not improving or deteriorating will meet with the principal.
6. In the case of a severe or chronic problem, the student will be referred to the principal, who will notify the parents.
7. The principal may suspend the student for up to 5 days. The student will receive a grade of "O" in all subjects for all days involving in and/or out-of-school suspension.
8. Longer periods of suspension or a recommendation of expulsion are referred to the RCCSS Board for action.

Short-term suspension procedure. If a short-term suspension from a class, classes, or school is anticipated because of a student's violation of a policy, the principal or superintendent shall give oral or written notice to the student as soon as possible after discovery of the alleged violation, stating the facts that form the basis for the suspension. The student must be given the opportunity to answer the charges. If a student is suspended, the principal or superintendent shall give the parent oral notice, if possible, and shall send the parent or a student who is 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor a written notice which provides information regarding the student's due process rights. A student who is an unemancipated minor may not be removed from the school premises before the end of the school day without contacting a parent unless the student's presence poses a continuing threat or danger, in which case the student may be immediately removed from the school and transferred into the custody of a parent or law enforcement.

Long-term suspension procedure. The superintendent must file a sealed, written report with the RCCSS Board by the end of the fifth school day following the first day of the long-term suspension and may request that a hearing be held before the Board. The superintendent must send a copy of the report to the student's parent or to the student if the student is 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor at the same time the report is filed with the Board's secretary or business manager.

The RCCSS attendance policy may not exclude a student from a class or from school for more than 10 days without providing due process procedures outlined above.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Requirements for Participation (BP STM HS 6000-021)**

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 procedures 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.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. A faculty member or approved community leader moderates each student organization as a coach, advisor, or sponsor.
2. 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.

3. According to the SDHSAA, the three major benefits of activities are:
  - a. Activities support the academic mission of schools. They are not a diversion, but rather an extension of a good educational program.
  - b. Activities are inherently educational, providing valuable lessons for many practical situations such as teamwork, sportsmanship, winning and losing, and hard work.
  - c. 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.
4. Academic, leadership, social and athletic areas are included in the St. Thomas More co-curricular offerings. St. Thomas More activities.

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

5. 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.
6. 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 the 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 HS 6000-022)**

### **POLICY/STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

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.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. Membership in the Doyle Chapter of the National Honor Society is based on these four criteria:
  - a. Academics
  - b. Leadership
  - c. Character
  - d. Service
2. An invitation for membership is issued to students who:
  - a. have sophomore standing or above
  - b. have earned a cumulative 3.0 GPA (no grade below a "C")
  - c. have attended St. Thomas More at least one semester
  - d. have earned a 3.0 GPA at St. Thomas More
3. Membership is granted to students who:
  - a. have met the 3.0 minimum standard in scholarship
  - b. leadership
  - c. character
  - d. service
  - e. have a 3.5 overall assessment as determined by a faculty council
  - f. have completed the application process as determined by the National Honor Society
4. Members of the National Honor Society are monitored to ensure that they continue to demonstrate these high qualities through graduation.
5. Any member not maintaining the high standards may be placed on NHS probation or removed from NHS membership.
6. A formal ceremony and Mass are celebrated to induct new members in the spring of each year.

## **Field Trip Rationale (BP DISTRICT-2000-040)**

Instructional field trips at St. Thomas More are privileges afforded to students. Field trips provide the student with additional learning opportunities.

The following guidelines apply to Field Trips:

1. No student has an absolute right to a field trip.
2. Students can be denied participation in a field trip if they have failed to meet academic or behavioral requirements.
3. Instructional field trips 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.
4. All school policies are in effect.

5. The same school policies are in effect for activity field trips as for instructional field trips and regular school.
6. Violations of school policies will be dealt with as though the violation occurred in school.
7. 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.
8. The decision will be at the discretion of the administration and advisor.

### **Student-Provided Transportation (BP STM HS 6000-13)**

St. Thomas More permits students to provide transportation to school sanctioned events.

#### **PROCEDURES**

The following guidelines must be met for students seeking approval to drive or transport other students to school sanctioned events:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Signed parent permission forms are kept on file in the office and are available for review.

### **Activities Rules and Regulations (BP STM HS 6000-016)**

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 the Rapid City Catholic School System must be observed. The St. Thomas More activities governed by these rules and regulations include, but are not limited to: see activities on page 39. 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 HS-6000-017)**

#### **POLICY/STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The RCCSS follows all rules established by the South Dakota High School Activities Association.

#### **PROCEDURES**

The following are mandatory SDHSAA 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, nor 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 STM/SES Offices.
5. The student must have insurance coverage through a family policy. Verification of coverage must be on file in the STM/SES Offices.

### **St. Thomas More High School Activities Rules** **(BP STM HS 6000-018)**

For student participation in co-curricular activities that involve the Rapid City Catholic School System, rules and regulations approved by the RCCSS must be observed. The RCCSS Activities governed by these rules and regulations include, but are not limited to: football, volleyball, cross country, girls tennis, boys golf, boys soccer, girls soccer, competitive cheer, competitive dance, boys basketball, girls basketball, wrestling, school cheer, school dance, track & field, boys tennis, girls golf, baseball, debate, oral interpretation, knowledge bowl, band, choir, orchestra, jazz band, drama and student council.

The RCCSS student reflects Christian ideals, attitudes, and values in his/her life; he/she is a person of integrity; he/she stands for that which is right. The RCCSS student treats faculty, staff, community members, officials and opponents with respect and courtesy; he/she demonstrates fairness in victory or defeat.

The following are additional RCCSS requirements:

1. The student is a Catholic School Student 24/7/365.
2. The student must be presently enrolled at STM or SES and meet the RCCSS Eligibility guidelines, which are more stringent than the minimum State requirements.
3. The student must take care of school equipment and uniforms as well as be financially responsible for equipment and uniforms lost or damaged.
4. Before any activity absence, the student must contact each teacher for assignments to be completed by their return to school.
5. The student must be in attendance the day of an activity unless a serious illness or emergency situation can be documented. A meeting with the principal, activities director, and coach, advisor, or sponsor will result from a violation and a consequence will be determined.
6. The student must **attend** every activity practice and **actively participate** unless previous arrangements have been made with the coach, advisor, or sponsor.
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 or guardian, the coach, advisor, or sponsor must have written permission from the parent or guardian prior to the trip. If the need develops at the activity site, the coach, advisor, or sponsor must have verbal consent with the parent or 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.

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 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 would have a negative impact on the school environment to include, but not limited to, cyber-bullying, 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.

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, Drug, and Vaping Policy.

Each RCCSS student and parent/guardian shall read the RCCSS Rules and Regulations and the RCCSS Alcohol and Drug Policy and then sign the RCCSS Activity Physical Form before the activity commences

### **St. Thomas More High School Activities Eligibility Policy**

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 by 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.

### **Booster Club**

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.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY AND USAGE**

### **School Property/Vandalism (BP DISTRICT-2000-021)**

School property is used to serve the students; it must be respected and maintained. Students are responsible for any intentional and/or careless damage to structure, furniture, equipment, books, etc. Students and/or parents are expected to make restitution (at full replacement cost) for damaged/lost/stolen textbooks, library books, or workbooks. Lost workbooks are the student's responsibility. A new workbook will be purchased at the parent/student's expense. A student whose action(s), intentionally or by failure to exercise reasonable caution, causes damage to RCCSS property will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement cost of the damaged property and will be referred to administration for disciplinary action.

### **Lockers**

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.**

### **Lunch Program (BP DISTRICT-2000-043)**

RCCSS understands students' academic excellence is supported by a well-balanced nutritional program. The RCCSS lunch program provides a well-balanced nutritional hot lunch program. Students are expected to eat lunch. If a pattern of not eating lunch develops, parents will be notified, and if the situation continues, a parent conference will be required.

Free or reduced lunches are available for those federal guidelines. These application forms are available in the school office. Families are encouraged to check if they qualify.

Students with disabilities requiring special needs in the Child Nutrition Program must submit an annual medical statement signed by a licensed physician. This statement may be obtained in the Seton Office.

The STM Middle School and STM High School lunch program maintains a computer system that handles the lunch accounts. This system will not allow students to charge to anyone else's account.

## **ACCIDENTS OR ILLNESS**

### **Accidents (BP DISTRICT-2000-044)**

If a student is injured during the school day, the student should immediately 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 procedures for the injury will be followed.

### **Illness (BP DISTRICT-2000-41)**

A school nurse is available to RCCSS on a part time 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.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. If a student is running a temperature, suffering from nausea, coughing and sneezing, the student should remain at home until symptom-free.
2. 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.
3. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student will wait in the office.
4. Prescription drugs and over the counter medicine should, whenever possible, be dispensed by a parent or guardian.
5. No student will be allowed to go home from school because of illness without first notifying parents and the principal or his/her designee.

6. 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.
  - 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.

### **Immunizations (BP DISTRICT-2000-013)**

South Dakota Codified Law 13-28-7.1. states, in pertinent part, that:

Any child entering school or an early childhood program in this state, shall, prior to admission, be required to present to the appropriate school authorities certification from a licensed physician that the child has received or is in the process of receiving adequate immunization against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, rubeola, rubella, mumps, tetanus, meningitis, and varicella, according to recommendations provided by the Department of Health. The Department of Health may modify or delete any of the required immunizations. As an alternative to the requirement for a physician's certification, the child may present:

- Certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the child would be such that immunization would endanger the child's life or health.
- The Department of Health may promulgate reasonable rules, pursuant to chapter 1-26, to require compliance and documentation of adequate immunization, to define appropriate certification, and to specify standard procedure.

Failure to complete necessary immunizations may result in exclusion from school until the requirement is met. Exclusion from school for failure to complete health requirements does not exempt a child from mandatory school attendance under RCCSS policies. Truancy procedures will be followed.

### **PROCEDURES**

The Registered Nurse of the RCCSS shall verify all students meet the state requirements. The requirements for immunization protection are strict. No student will be admitted who has not submitted acceptable evidence of having received or in the process of receiving the minimum immunization requirements.

# **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

## ***Sexual Harassment Policy (BP DISTRICT-2000-006)***

RCCSS does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that it operates, including admission and employment. RCCSS is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the regulations promulgated through the U.S. Department of Education not to discriminate in such a manner. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to RCCSS may be referred to RCCSS's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

The Board designates the following individual to serve as RCCSS's Title IX Coordinator:

Bullying and Harassment Specialist/Title IX Coordinator  
Molly Rausch  
424 Fairmont Blvd.  
Rapid City, SD 57701  
(605) 348-1477  
mrausch@rccss.org

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, at any time, including during non-business hours. Such a report may be made in person, by mail, by telephone or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.

For purposes of this policy and the grievance process, "sexual harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one (1) or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of RCCSS on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to RCCSS's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(8) or "stalking" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(30).

When the harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex does not meet the definition of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator directs the individual to the applicable sex discrimination process for investigation.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

RCCSS prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation proceeding or hearing, if applicable. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this part, constitutes retaliation.



### Confidentiality

RCCSS must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any individual who has been alleged to be the victim or perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, and any witness, except as may be permitted by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

### Notice Requirements

RCCSS provides notice to applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees and the union(s) with the name or title, office address, email address and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator and notice of RCCSS grievance procedures and process, including how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment and how RCCSS will respond. RCCSS also posts the Title IX Coordinator's contact information and Title IX policies and procedures in a prominent location on RCCSS website and in all handbooks made available by RCCSS.

### Training Requirements

RCCSS ensures that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, receives training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of RCCSS's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals and informal resolution processes, when applicable, and how to serve impartially including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest and bias. RCCSS also ensures that decision-makers and investigators receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant as set forth in the formal procedures that follow, and training on any technology to be used at a live hearing, if applicable. Investigators also receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. All materials used to train individuals who receive training under this section must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment and are made publicly available on RCCSS's website.

### Conflict of Interest and Bias

RCCSS ensures that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

### Determination of Responsibility

The individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment is presumed not responsible for alleged conduct. A determination regarding responsibility will be made by the decision-maker at the conclusion of the investigation in accordance with the process outlined in the accompanying regulation. No disciplinary sanctions will be imposed unless and until a final determination of responsibility is reached.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

The Board requires the following grievance process to be followed for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited as sexual harassment by Title IX. The Board directs the process to be published in accordance with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

## Definitions

The following definitions apply for Title IX policies and procedures:

**“Actual knowledge.”** Notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to RCCSS’s Title IX Coordinator or any official of RCCSS who has authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of RCCSS, or to any employee of an elementary or secondary school.

**“Education program or activity.”** Includes locations, events or circumstances over which RCCSS exercised substantial control over both the individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

**“Complainant.”** An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

**“Respondent.”** An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

**“Formal complaint.”** A document filed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that RCCSS investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

**“Supportive measures.”** Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available and without fee or charge to the Complainant or Respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed.

## RCCSS Requirements

When RCCSS has actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an education program or activity of RCCSS, RCCSS will respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. When the harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex does not meet the definition of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will direct the individual to the applicable sex discrimination process for investigation.

RCCSS treats individuals who are alleged to be the victim (Complainant) and perpetrator (Respondent) of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment equitably by offering supportive measures. Supportive measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to RCCSS’s education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or RCCSS’s educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of RCCSS’s property, campus escort services, changes in work locations and other similar measures.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures. Upon the receipt of a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the Complainant’s wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the Complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. If RCCSS does not provide the

Complainant with supportive measures, then RCCSS must document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

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

Copies of the "Code of Conduct of the Diocese of Rapid City" and "Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Diocese of Rapid City" are available in the Business Office of the Rapid City Catholic School System.

#### Timelines

RCCSS has established reasonably prompt time frames for the conclusion of the grievance process, including time frames for filing and resolving appeals and informal resolution processes. The grievance process may be temporarily delayed or extended for good cause. Good cause may include considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities. In the event the grievance process is temporarily delayed for good cause, RCCSS will provide written notice to the Complainant and the Respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action.

#### Response to a Formal Complaint

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of RCCSS with which the formal complaint is filed. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, by electronic mail, or other means designated by RCCSS.

RCCSS must follow the formal complaint process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures. However, nothing in this policy precludes RCCSS from removing a Respondent from RCCSS's education program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that RCCSS undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. Nor does it preclude RCCSS from placing a non-student employee Respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process. This provision may not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, RCCSS must provide written notice to the known parties including:

1. Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment, including information about the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, the date and location of the alleged incident, and any sufficient details known at the time. Such notice must be provided with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview;
2. An explanation of RCCSS's investigation procedures, including any informal resolution process;
3. A statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made by the decision-maker at the conclusion of the investigation;
4. Notice to the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review any evidence; and
5. Notice to the parties of any provision in RCCSS's Code of Conduct or policy that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information.

If, in the course of an investigation, RCCSS decides to investigate allegations about the Complainant or Respondent that are not included in the notice initially provided, notice of the additional allegations must be provided to known parties.

RCCSS may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one (1) Respondent, or by more than one (1) Complainant against one (1) or more Respondents, or by one (1) party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

#### Investigation of a Formal Complaint

When investigating a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process, RCCSS must:

1. Ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on RCCSS and not the parties;
2. Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and evidence;
3. Not restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence;
4. Allow the parties to be accompanied with an advisor of the party's choice who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney. RCCSS may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties;
5. Provide written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of any interview or meeting at which a party is expected to participate, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate;
6. Provide the parties equal access to review all the evidence collected which is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint and comply with the review periods outlined in this process;
7. Objectively evaluate all relevant evidence without relying on sex stereotypes;
8. Ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers and individuals who facilitate an informal resolution process, do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent;
9. Not make credibility determinations based on the individual's status as Complainant, Respondent, or witness; and
10. Not use questions or evidence that constitute or seek disclosure of privileged information unless waived.

#### Dismissal of Formal Complaints

If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment even if proved, did not occur in RCCSS's education program or activity, or did not occur against a person in the United States, then RCCSS must dismiss the formal complaint with regard to that conduct for purposes of sexual harassment under this policy.

The Title IX Coordinator also may dismiss the formal complaint or any allegations therein at any time during the investigation or hearing, if applicable, when any of the following apply:

1. A Complainant provides written notification to the Title IX Coordinator that the Complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
2. The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by RCCSS; or
3. Specific circumstances prevent RCCSS from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon dismissal, the Title IX Coordinator promptly sends written notice of the dismissal and the reasons for dismissal simultaneously to both parties.

### Evidence Review

RCCSS provides both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation. The evidence provided by RCCSS must include evidence that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint, evidence upon which RCCSS does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility, and any inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source. Prior to completion of the investigative report, the Title IX Coordinator must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy. The parties have ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response to the Title IX Coordinator, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report.

### Investigative Report

The investigator must prepare an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for their review and written response. The parties have ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response to the Title IX Coordinator.

### Decision-Maker's Determination

The investigative report is submitted to the decision-maker. The decision-maker cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator. The decision-maker cannot hold a hearing or make a determination regarding responsibility until ten (10) calendar days from the date the Complainant and Respondent receive the investigator's report.

Prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent. Questions must be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator within three (3) calendar days from the date the Complainant and Respondent receive the investigator's report.

The decision-maker must issue a written determination regarding responsibility based on a preponderance of the evidence standard. The decision-maker's written determination must:

1. Identify the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
2. Describe the procedural steps taken, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather evidence, and hearings held;
3. Include the findings of fact supporting the determination;
4. Draw conclusions regarding the application of any District policies and/or Code of Conduct rules to the facts;
5. Address each allegation and a resolution of the complaint including a determination regarding responsibility, the rationale therefor, any recommended disciplinary sanction(s) imposed on the Respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the educational program or activity will be provided by RCCSS to the Complainant; and
6. The procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant and/or Respondent to appeal the determination.

A copy of the written determination must be provided to both parties simultaneously, and generally will be provided within sixty (60) calendar days from RCCSS's receipt of a formal complaint.

The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that RCCSS provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

Where a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment has been made against the Respondent, RCCSS will provide remedies to the Complainant that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to RCCSS's education program or activity. Such remedies may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the Respondent. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies. Following any determination of responsibility, RCCSS may implement disciplinary sanctions in accordance with state or federal law. For students, the sanctions may include disciplinary action, up to and including permanent exclusion. For employees, the sanctions may include any form of responsive discipline, up to and including termination.

### Appeals

Either the Complainant or Respondent may appeal the decision-maker's determination regarding responsibility or a dismissal of a formal complaint, on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time that could affect the outcome; and
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome.

The request to appeal must be made in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within seven (7) calendar days after the date of the written determination. The appeal decision-maker must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent and cannot be the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or the decision-maker from the original determination.

The appeal decision-maker must notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and give both parties a reasonable equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome. After reviewing the evidence, the appeal decision-maker must issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The decision must be provided to both parties simultaneously, and generally will be provided within ten (10) calendar days from the date the appeal is filed.

### Informal Resolution Process

Except when concerning allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student, at any time during the formal complaint process and prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, RCCSS may facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and determination of responsibility, provided that RCCSS:

1. Provides to the parties a written notice disclosing:
  - a. The allegations;
  - b. The requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations, provided, however, that at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the Title IX formal complaint process with respect to the formal complaint; and

- c. Any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.
2. Obtains the parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

The informal resolution process generally will be completed within thirty (30) calendar days, unless the parties and the Title IX Coordinator mutually agree to temporarily delay or extend the process. The formal grievance process timelines are stayed during the parties' participation in the informal resolution process. If the parties do not reach resolution through the informal resolution process, the parties will resume the formal complaint grievance process, including timelines for resolution, at the point they left off.

### Recordkeeping

RCCSS must maintain for a period of seven (7) years records of:

1. Each sexual harassment investigation, including any determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the Respondent, and any remedies provided to the Complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to RCCSS's education program or activity;
2. Any appeal and the result therefrom;
3. Any informal resolution and the result therefrom; and
4. All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. RCCSS must make these training materials publicly available on its website.

RCCSS must create and maintain for a period of seven (7) years, records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment. In each instance, RCCSS must document the basis for its conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent, and document that it has taken measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to RCCSS's education program or activity.

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

Rapid City Catholic School System 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 and/or neglect. The Protection of Children from Abuse or Neglect statutes under South Dakota Law (SDCL CH 26-8A) will be strictly followed whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

### **PROCEDURES**

All faculty and staff of RCCSS will adhere to the following procedures:

1. Among the statutes that pertain to this issue are SDCL §§ 26-8A-3, 26-8A-5, 26-8A-7, 26-8A-8, 26-8A-9, and 26-8A-10.
2. Any school official who intentionally fails to make the required report is guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.
3. Teachers are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the School Counselor and/or Principal. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, the Department of Social Services will be notified.
4. School employees, including administrators shall not contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect.
5. It is not the responsibility of the school employee(s) to prove that the child has been abused or neglected or to determine whether the child is in need of protection, only to report his or her suspicions of abuse or neglect.

6. Anyone who participates in making a report in accordance with the law and good faith is immune from any civil or criminal liability that may otherwise arise from reporting or from any resulting judicial proceeding even if the suspicion proved to be unfounded (SDCL 26-8A-14).
7. Legal Counsel of RCCSS will review and update the SDCL as changes to the law are published.

## **PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

**26-8A-3. Persons required to report child abuse or neglected child -- Intentional failure as misdemeanor.** Any physician, dentist, doctor of osteopathy, chiropractor, optometrist, emergency medical technician, paramedic, mental health professional or counselor, podiatrist, psychologist, religious healing practitioner, social worker, hospital intern or resident, parole or court services officer, law enforcement officer, teacher, school counselor, school official, nurse, licensed or registered child welfare provider, employee or volunteer of a domestic abuse shelter, employee or volunteer of a child advocacy organization or child welfare service provider, chemical dependency counselor, coroner, or any safety-sensitive position as defined in § 3-6C-1, who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the age of eighteen has been abused or neglected as defined in § 26-8A-2 shall report that information in accordance with §§ 26-8A-6, 26-8A-7, and 26-8A-8. Any person who intentionally fails to make the required report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person who knows or has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected as defined in § 26-8A-2 may report that information as provided in § 26-8A-8.

**26-8A-5. Application of terms.** As used in §§ 26-8A-3 and 26-8A-7, the terms "teacher," "school counselor," "school official," "school administrator," "school principal," and "school superintendent" apply to any person substantially performing the respective duties of any such position in a public or private school, whether accredited or unaccredited, and to any person providing instruction pursuant to § 13-27-3.

**26-8A-7. Child abuse or neglect reports by school personnel - Failure as misdemeanor**  
**Written policy required.** Any person who has contact with a child through the performance of services in any public or private school, whether accredited or unaccredited, as a teacher, school nurse, school counselor, school official or administrator, or any person providing services pursuant to § 13-27-3 shall notify the school principal or school superintendent or designee of suspected abuse or neglect. The school principal or superintendent shall report the information in accordance with the provisions of § 26-8A-8. Any person who knowingly and intentionally fails to make a required report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Each school district shall have a written policy on reporting of child abuse and neglect.

**26-8A-8. Oral report of abuse or neglect - To whom made - Response report.** The reports required by §§ 26-8A-3, 26-8A-6, and 26-8A-7 and by other sections of this chapter shall be made orally and immediately by telephone or otherwise to the state's attorney of the county in which the child resides or is present, to the Department of Social Services or to law enforcement officers. The mandatory reporter who witnessed the disclosure or evidence of the abuse or neglect must be available to answer questions when the initial report is made pursuant to this section. The state's attorney or law enforcement officers, upon receiving a report, shall immediately notify the Department of Social Services. Any person receiving a report of suspected child abuse or child neglect shall keep the report confidential as provided in § 26-8A-13, except as otherwise provided in chapter 26-7A or this chapter.

The person receiving a report alleging child abuse or neglect shall ask whether or not the reporting party desires a response report. If requested by the reporting person, the Department of Social Services or the concerned law enforcement officer shall issue within thirty days, a written



acknowledgment of receipt of the report and a response stating whether or not the report will be investigated.

**26-8A-9. Investigation of oral report - Other action permitted - Appointment of attorney - Compensation.** Upon receipt of a report pursuant to § 26-8A-8, the Department of Social Services or law enforcement officers shall investigate. Investigating personnel may personally interview a child out of the presence of the child's parents, guardian, or custodian without advance notice or consent. The investigation does not prohibit any other lawful action. If the investigation and report indicate that child abuse or neglect has occurred, the state's attorney shall take appropriate action immediately. The court may appoint an attorney, guardian ad litem, or special advocate to assist in representing the best interests of the child. Any such appointment shall occur in the manner the county in which the action is being conducted has chosen to provide indigent counsel under § 23A-40-7. Compensation and expense allowances for the child's attorney, guardian ad litem, or special advocate shall be determined and paid according to § 26-7A-31.

**26-8A-10. Report to social services - Content.** A report made pursuant to § 26-8A-8 to the Department of Social Services shall include the name, address, date and place of birth of the child, the name and address of the child's parents, guardian, custodian, or responsible persons, the date of the report, and the suspected or proven instances of child abuse or neglect as defined in § 26-8A-2. The Department of Social Services shall be the central registry for such information.

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

Schools should be an example of what is required regarding the observance and respect for law in society at large. Schools also must be highly conscious of the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and the public.

State and federal laws as well as Board policy forbids the bringing of dangerous or illegal weapons to school or school sponsored activities. Any weapon taken from a pupil shall be reported to the pupil's parents. Confiscation of weapons will be reported to law enforcement. Appropriate disciplinary or legal action or both shall be pursued by the principal.

A dangerous weapon is defined as any firearm, air gun, knife or device, instrument, material, or substance, whether animate or inanimate, which is calculated or designed to inflict death or serious bodily harm. Look-alike weapons, which are items that resemble or appear to be weapons, also are prohibited.

No firearms are permitted on any school premises, school vehicle or any vehicle used for school purposes, in any school building or other building or premises used for school functions. Exceptions would be weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel, starting guns while in use at athletic events, firearms or air guns at fire ranges, gun shows, authorized supervised school training sessions for the use of firearms, and the ceremonial presence of unloaded weapons at color guard ceremonies as identified by state law. Any violations shall be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Any student bringing a firearm to school, except as provided by law, shall be expelled for not less than twelve months and will be referred to law enforcement authorities. The superintendent shall have the authority to recommend to the school board that this expulsion requirement be modified on a case-by-case basis. For the purpose of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes any weapon that is designed to expel a projectile by action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for a weapon, or any explosive, including any poison gas.

### **Visitors Procedure (BP DISTRICT- 2000-045)**

All visitors, including parent(s) / guardian(s), must report to the office. All visitors staying in the building must wear a visitor pass.

### **Emergency and/or Disaster Guidelines(BP DISTRICT-2000-036)**

Rapid City Catholic School System provides a safe environment for the purpose of educating students. In the event of an Emergency or Disaster, School Administration will take all necessary actions needed to protect RCCSS students and personnel.

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of RCCSS students, faculty, and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that preparedness plans exist and that students and personnel have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain an Emergency Planning Guide containing emergency plans that meet the requirements for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters, along with a record showing the dates and times of drills conducted.

The Emergency Planning Guide for the RCCSS schools will be the official guide for the school system in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters. All students and personnel will follow policies and procedures set forth in the guide.

Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire and emergency drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation, and will file with the Superintendent a record showing the dates and times of drills conducted.

## **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, they 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 Superintendent and/or 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.”