



# **Parent/Student Handbook**

Grades PreK3-5

2023-2024 School Year

This handbook is a work in progress and can be changed during the school year if necessary.  
Ample notification of any changes will be given.

Revised 08/23

# ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ACADEMY

STAA/ST. MARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy is to provide an affordable education in the Catholic teaching tradition that inspires in students a life long thirst for knowledge, wisdom and truth; a desire to reach the full potential which God intended from them; and recognition of the discipline of mind and heart required for effective service to others in the love of God.

## 2022-2023 HANDBOOK

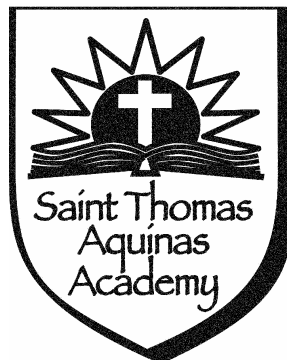
Student (s) Name

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Grade (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Saint Thomas Aquinas Elementary*  
*141 South Wood Avenue*  
*Peshigo, WI 54157*  
*715-582-4041*



# **PRE - SCHOOL INFORMATION**

## **PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that each child is a special gift from God. We celebrate their diversity and uniqueness. We further believe that each child should be provided with an environment of exploration and instruction that encourages individual spiritual, social, emotional, and cognitive growth. Our purpose is to provide a quality preschool program which focuses on the total child.

## **GOALS**

Each child will develop a positive self-concept through structured and free choice group activities.

- To welcome each child into the Christian community and share the Catholic tradition of faith to impart a sense of awe and wonder of God's love for us.
- To provide a safe environment that encourages learning through inquiry-based methods, provide a positive first experience at school; develop independence, and self confidence.
- To present a developmentally appropriate program that allows children to learn about their world through hands on activities that develop the whole child in an atmosphere of encouragement, foster each child's natural love of learning, and provide a foundation for kindergarten.
- To promote creativity in children allowing them to become involved in the learning process.
- To help each child to learn appropriate means for expressing feelings, and to develop consideration for the rights of others.

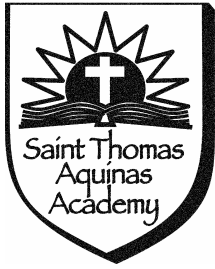
## **HOURS**

8:05 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.            Monday - Friday 3 year olds

Field Trip – Field trips are a fun way for children to learn and explore. For their safety PreK3 year olds are invited to join in on field trips accompanied by a parent or guardian.

## **AGE REQUIREMENT**

Children entering the 3 year old program must turn 3 by September 1 and be potty trained. Children entering the 4 year old program must turn 4 by September 1 and be potty trained. Children will be evaluated on their individual readiness enabling the teacher to place the students according to their developmental needs. Some students may not be ready to attend a 5 day a week program. The Preschool/PreK calendar will follow the St. Thomas Aquinas Calendar.



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy is to provide an affordable education in the Catholic teaching tradition that inspires in students a life long thirst for knowledge, wisdom and truth; a desire to reach the full potential which God intended for them; and a recognition of the discipline of mind and heart required for effective service to others in the love of God.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The members of Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy will build the Kingdom of God through the formation and education of religious development of the young and youth who are enrolled in academic programs of education. We will work to proclaim the message, create community, provide services, and develop a prayerful life through worship.

## **ROOT BELIEFS:**

- Know, love and serve God
- Prayerful life
- Supportive community
- Live the Gospel
- Personalized education

## **CORE VALUES:**

- Respect
- Truth
- Serve
- Love
- Unity

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, or national origin in the enrollment of and participation of students or the employment of personnel.

### **Right to Amend this Handbook**

The school retains the right to amend this handbook with just cause. Parents will be promptly notified of any changes.

### **Handbook Policy**

The student handbook does not propose to cover all situations, nor is it intended to be a work of perfection. It is the hope of the administration that it will be of help to all the students of Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy in its use as a reference in relation to school policy and expectations. Students are issued a student handbook at the beginning of each academic school year free of charge. The handbook contains rules and regulations important to every student in the school.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

These statements of student rights are intended to make STAA a healthy, safe, Christian community aimed at providing students with the best possible education

1. It is the right of the student to receive a quality education
2. It is the right of the student to be treated with dignity and respect.
3. It is the right of the student to receive consistent and fair treatment in relation to school policies and expectations.
4. It is the right of the student to attend a school that provides a Christian environment; one that will help his/her faith in God to grow and become strong.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Along with Student Rights are student responsibilities. Most of this student handbook spells out the responsibilities and expectations of students and their parents. It is important that STAA families make themselves aware of the content of this handbook.

This Student Code of Conduct applies to any STAA student who is:

1. On School property;
2. In attendance at school;
3. At any school-sponsored activity; or
4. Whose conduct at any other time or place has an effect on maintaining school order or discipline, protecting the safety and welfare of others, or damaging the reputation of discipline, protecting the safety and welfare of others, or damaging the reputation of our school.

## **SCHEDULE**

The first bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Classes begin at 8:05 a.m. Teachers are scheduled each day to monitor students outside (inside on cold or rainy days) 5 minutes before the first bell. It is important that we all work together to begin on time. If you are driving in your child/children please be prompt. The students coming early are asked to wait outside unless the weather does not permit. The doors are locked before and during school hours. You must ring the doorbell to be let in the building.

First Recess is at 9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Lunch is at 11:10 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m.

Teachers are scheduled during recess to monitor students and in the lunchroom to help out students. They are also scheduled to help at dismissal to make sure all students get on the correct bus and ride home with the correct drivers.

# ATTENDANCE

## 2.1 Philosophy

We at STAA believe there is a direct relationship between class attendance and class success. The STAA faculty and administration believe daily activities that take place in the classroom are a vital part of the learning process. The learning that takes place in the classroom cannot be made up by simply doing written assignments missed during absence.

In case of absence, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to call the school office. If you do not call the secretary, the secretary will be calling you. A note should be sent prior to being absent if you know ahead of time. It is important to let both the office and the teacher know. Students leaving early should have a note signed by parents/guardians or you will need to call the office. All students leaving early or coming in late are to sign in the school office. Please call the school office or send a note if there is a change in riding the bus. It is important that we all work together to insure the safety of our students.

## PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE

If a student has a foreseen absence of one or more days, a pre-arranged absence form is available in the school office. All make-up work is the responsibility of the student.

**TARDIES:** Every student is responsible for being in class on time. Students who are tardy to class delay and/or disrupt the learning process, show disrespect for fellow students and teachers, and generally demonstrate a disregard for their commitments. Students must be in their assigned class when the bell rings unless detained by a staff member, in which case, the student will be given a pass.

Tardy is anytime a student enters the classroom after the bell rings. If later than 10 minutes, it is an unexcused absence.

## 2.3 TRUANCY

**Truant** means a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse under Wisconsin Statutes ss.118.15 and 118.16(4) for part or all of any day on which school is held during a school semester. Acceptable excuse means permission of the parent/guardian/legal custodian of a pupil, within the limits of policies on truancy established by the school in which the pupil is enrolled. Except in emergencies or unforeseeable circumstances, such permission is expected to be communicated in writing from the parent/guardian/legal custodian to the school, prior to the absence. In emergencies or unforeseeable circumstances, such communication is expected to be as soon as practicable following the absence. Parents will be notified of the truancy. Truancy can result in detention, demerits, suspension, expulsion, or legal action.

# BUS TRANSPORTATION

## GUIDELINES

Following are the bus rules established by the bus companies:

- Use only the bus and bus stop assigned
- Behave appropriately at the bus stop.
- Remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion.
- Talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise.
- Do not talk to the driver when the bus is in motion unless it is necessary.
- Keep hands and arms inside the bus.
- Do not litter the inside of the bus or throw anything out the window.
- Be quiet when the bus is crossing railroad tracks.
- Guests riding the bus must present a note to the Principal for their signature.

Infraction of the above rules may be brought to the attention of the parents. Continual abuse of bus privileges may result in the denial of transportation. Bus routes and stops are planned and established by the Marinette Public School System in conjunction with the bus company. Questions regarding routes may be directed to Mr. Tom Westlund at 715-732-0238.

Parents who wish to make requests for change in routes or stops should contact the school district or bus company. Students and parents are encouraged to immediately notify the Principal and/or the school district, or bus company, of any safety hazards that they have observed during bus operations.

**If your child will not be riding the bus on a particular day, a note must be sent to the school notifying the school of the change in plans.**



# ACADEMIC POLICIES

The following grading scale is used in Grades 3-5. An evaluation system is used for grades PreK4-2 based on growth. Students are given S for Satisfactory NS for Non Satisfactory and so on based on the individual growth of each child.

## GRADING SCALE

<b>A+</b>	<b>99% - 100%</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>95% - 98%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>93% - 94%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>91% - 92%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>87% - 90%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>85% - 86%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>83% - 84%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>79% - 82%</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>77% - 78%</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>75% - 76%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>70% - 74%</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>66% -68%</b>
<b>U</b>	<b>0-65%</b>

### **This scale is used in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher gives out honors and high honors to students meeting the qualifications. Those with perfect attendance are also recognized.

## DISCIPLINE CODE

### PHILOSOPHY

The goals of STAA Disciplinary Code are many:

- To create and maintain a positive Christian environment.
- To promote respect for every individual at STAA whether they are a member of the administration, staff, faculty, or student body.
- To develop that character of our students.
- To foster the development of self-discipline.
- To provide an atmosphere which encourages excellence in learning and all school related activities.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are expected at all times to maintain an orderly atmosphere that is indispensable in a school building: i.e. shouting, running, horseplay, whistling, banging lockers, disturbing class in session is not appropriate.

PDAs, lasers, cell phones, game boys, iPods, and any other electrical devices are not permitted.

Defacement or abuse of school property will be paid for by the student responsible.

Students may not be in the instructional hallways except during class exchange or with a student pass.

State law requires that each school have periodic fire and severe weather drills. When the alarm sounds, students should move quickly to the assigned exit and remain out of the building and assemble with their teacher until the return signal is sounded. Silence must be maintained when leaving the building.

Gum chewing is not allowed during any part of school. Food and soft drinks of any kind are not allowed in the academic wing of the school. Water is permitted but at the discretion of each classroom teacher who has the final word on this.

Once a student arrives on campus before or during school hours he/she may not leave without parental permission.

### **5.3 HARASSMENT**

#### **3.3.1 Policy**

It is a policy of STAA to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment. Harassment is any discriminatory act or omission taken against a student, faculty or staff person because of sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, political affiliation, arrest or conviction record, sexual orientation, handicaps/disability or pregnancy. Conduct may be considered harassment when it is unwanted, deliberate, or repeated.

### **5.4 BULLYING**

#### **5.4.1 Policy**

STAA stresses the safety of faculty, staff, students, and administration. It is especially important that we stress the safety of our students. At no time should a student feel that they are a target of unfair/unjust or degrading treatment. Such actions are often labeled as bullying. These can be verbal, physical, or mental harassment. The classroom teacher is the first to deal with each situation. Instances of bullying will be handled on an individual basis.

#### **5.4.2 Possible Consequences**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: The teacher/person who sees or hears about the offenses will take to the student doing the bullying or harassing. The classroom teacher will handle the initial situation and give the first consequence. The incident will be reported to the Principal along with the consequences with which the teacher issued at the time.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: The teacher who witnessed the incident will report and refer the student to the Principal, and they will discuss the incident. The Principal will meet with the student in a timely fashion. At this point, the parents will be notified by letter/phone that their child has been bullying a student(s).

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: The teacher who observes the bullying incident will report and refer the student to the Principal. The Principal will meet with the student to discuss the issue. The Principal will notify the parents and request a conference with the teacher, student and parent. At this point the Principal could be called into meet with all parties involved.

## **DRUG & ALCOHOL USE**

### **Philosophy**

STAA recognizes its responsibility to uphold the laws prohibiting the illegal use of drugs and alcohol to maintain an atmosphere of learning and social interaction that are drug-free. Beyond the legal question, however, there remains the school's concern for the well being of not only the individual student, but the student body, their families, and the entire school community as well. Some parents and students feel that drug and alcohol use is a private matter; one about which society in general and STAA in particular have no right to be concerned. However, we are convinced that in this matter we must be concerned when the effects of individual actions have clear implications for the entire STAA family. More important than any other consideration is our informed and careful considered certainty that the better interest of our students can be deeply and harmfully affected by involvement with drugs and alcohol. These substances can seriously interfere with a student's ability to carry on his/her academic, social, and spiritual life-in some cases interfere with the normal processes of growth and development.

### **5.5.2. School Policy on Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use**

The possession, use, or transfer of alcohol, a controlled substance, or look alike on school property or at a Saint Thomas Academy function is prohibited. This also includes the use of prior to school or any other Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy sponsored activities. The Principal in addition to the consequences below may also notify the local authorities.

**1st Offense:** Parents will be contacted and informed of the violations. The student will complete five (5) hours of service/detention.

**2nd Offense:** The student will be suspended for three (3) days.

**3rd Offense:** The student will be expelled.

## **6. WEAPONS AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS DEVICES**

STAA is committed to upholding all local, state, and federal laws concerning the use, concealment and possession of weapons and potentially dangerous devices as such weapons and devices are defined by Wisconsin Statutes, as mandated, including but not limited to Chapter 941. The use, concealment or possession of weapons and/or dangerous devices or look alike weapons on STAA grounds and/or buildings, or at STAA sponsored functions held on public or private property, is strictly prohibited to students, employees, and the general public. Exceptions would be made for law enforcement personnel who possess a weapon in the line of duty and when approval is given by the administration beforehand for a weapon to be used for a legitimate educational purpose. If anyone is found in possession of a weapon, the following steps will be taken:

1. Law enforcement shall be notified as appropriate, for possible prosecution under local, state, and/or federal law.
2. Parents of students will be notified in all cases.

3. Violation will be subject to disciplinary actions independent of any prosecution. Discipline may include supervision and sanctions up to and including expulsion or termination

*Exceptions:* Law enforcement personnel may possess weapons in the line of duty. Pre-approved permission may be granted by administration for legitimate school use.

**MODIFIED on April 16, 2014**

#### **7. CELL PHONES**

Students will be allowed to have cell phones or tablets or other electronics in school, but they are only allowed to be used for school activities with teacher permission or emergencies. Any devices used for reasons other than this will be taken by the teacher until the end of the day.

#### **8. ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Any devices that are brought to school and want to be used during the day must be placed in a special place in their teacher's classroom right away in the morning. Any device in this place will be able to be used. Any device being used that was not in this place will be taken away until the end of the day. There could also be a sign in sheet each morning.

**SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS ACADEMY**  
**DRESS CODE**  
**2023-2024**

- Shirts:** All students will wear a polo shirt with a collar. Shirts must be buttoned with the exception of the top button at the neck. The shirt collar must be visible at all times. Shirts may have STAA logo or other logo/label as long as it is not distracting or offensive and no larger than a 3” square.  
*Middle/High School and Elementary: Any solid color (no stripes)*
- Sweater:** Cardigan, zip or button, crew neck or V-neck pullover. Sweaters may have St. Thomas Aquinas logo or other logo/label provided it is not distracting or offensive and is no larger than a 3” square.
- Sweatshirts:** Any St. Thomas Aquinas sweatshirt (hooded or crew) will be allowed. Other Sweatshirts may have a logo/label that is located on the hem, sleeve, lapel or pocket area, and no larger than 3” square provided a shirt collar is visible at all times.  
*Middle/High School Color: Any solid color (no striping)*  
*Elementary Color: Any Solid Color*
- Pants:** Twill pants with an appropriate waist with no skin showing. Leggings, denim, and yoga pants are not allowed. Cargo pants are allowed with close fitting pockets. Capri pants are allowed for girls. Pants should not be tight. Undergarments may not be visible, and pants must be worn at the waistline.  
*Colors: Navy or khaki*
- Jumpers:** Elementary School Only (Grades PK-5)  
Style: To the knee; tights or shorts should be worn underneath.  
*Color: Navy blue or khaki, not plaid*
- Shorts:** To the knee; can be worn only from April through October.  
*Color: Navy blue or khaki*  
Shorts are not to be worn on Mass day.
- Shoes:** Shoes with toes and heels covered.  
Flip flops, slippers, slides, moccasins, crocs and heely shoes are not permitted.  
Heels should be no more than two inches in height.

**Athletic Game Day:**

On game days, team members may wear official uniform tops as their coaches allow. If the uniform top is sleeveless, a shirt with sleeves must be worn underneath.

**Mass Day:** All students will wear white polos with uniform pants. No hooded sweatshirts, capris, or shorts.

**School Pride Day:**

Thursday will be School Pride Day. Students can wear Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy apparel tops.

**Non-Uniform Days:**

Administration will continue to designate certain days throughout the year. Jean style must follow appropriate pant dress code (no, spandex, leggings, yoga pants). Only jeans with no holes or rips allowed. T-shirts and sweatshirts allowed. Any printing on clothing should be in good taste. Shorts may be worn if they are uniform shorts or denim shorts; no athletic shorts.

**Masks:** When masks are appropriate for students, the mask must be worn properly. Masks must be appropriate for Catholic School, not distracting or offensive. Administration will make final decisions on mask appropriateness.

**Special Considerations:**

- \*Visible body piercings, except ears, is not allowed.
- \*Extremes in jewelry and makeup are not allowed.
- \*Visible tattoos are never allowed.
- \*Hair color must be natural tone.
- \*No hats allowed in school.

*These guidelines do not cover every possible situation. Questionable attire or appearance will be referred to an administrative team member. Since styles of clothing and hair changes rapidly, the administration reserve the right to restrict certain fashions that are inappropriate as well as interpret what is considered to be distracting to the learning environment.*

As uniforms are an integral part of our Catholic School culture, the following corrective procedures will be implemented:

1. Students deemed not in compliance will be asked to correct the situation.
2. If the student refuses or is unable to comply, he/she will be referred to the office.
3. Parent/guardian will be contacted to bring a change of clothing to school or to give permission for the student to go home to change.
4. Students who continue to be in noncompliance will receive a discipline referral and further disciplinary action and could be placed on disciplinary probation, if necessary.

PK3 does not follow the dress code.

## **MEDICATION GUIDELINES**

### **9.1 MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

If your child needs to take medication during the school day, whether it is a prescription medication or over-the-counter medication, please follow these steps. No medication will be administered by school personnel unless the policy is followed.

### **9.2 PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

1. Obtain a written statement from the prescribing physician giving the name of the medication, dosage, how to be given (by mouth, eye drops, etc), and how often to be given. If any clarification is needed, school personnel may contact physician.
2. The parent/guardian must complete a Request for giving Medication at School form.
3. The prescription medication must be supplied in the original pharmacy-labeled bottle indicating correct dosage and administration instructions. This information must be the same as in the physician statement and parent consent.

### **9.3 NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER THE COUNTER) MEDICATION**

1. The parent/guardian must complete a Request for giving Medication at school form
2. Medication must be supplied in the original container with the student's name written on the container.

### **9.4 SELF-MEDICATION**

1. Students may neither carry nor administer medication of any kind.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING-SNOW DAYS**

If it becomes necessary to close school, the information will be made available on the local radio and television stations. Closing information will be broadcast between 5:30-7:30 a.m. The radio and television stations will refer to the Marinette and/or Peshtigo School Districts. If the Peshtigo School District is closed, STAA will be closed and students do not have to report. If the Marinette School District is closed STAA is closed and students do not have to report. If Marinette has a 2 hour delay, STAA will have a 2 hour delay. If Peshtigo has a 2 hour delay, STAA will have school and Peshtigo students will not be marked tardy.

The following radio stations will carry the announcements. WAGN, WHYB, WMAM, & WLST. The following television channels will carry school closings: Channel 2, 5, 11.