



St. Thomas Episcopal School

Parent & Student Handbook 2019-2020



Tiger Pride

**Positive Attitude
Respectful Behavior
Integrity
Driven to Excellence
Empowered by Christ**



Revised 8/9/18

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ABOUT US

Contact Information

1416 North Loop 1604 East
San Antonio, TX 78258
(210) 494-3509 Main school office
(210) 494-3678 (fax)

- School office is open from 7:40—4:00 p.m. (Afterschool staff until 6:00)
- Messages may be left on the office voicemail
- School website is www.stthomaskids.com.
- If you email teachers, please allow 24 hours for a response (business days only).
- You are welcome to schedule an appointment with the head of school by contacting the school office at the above number.



Our Mission



St. Thomas is an inclusive faith-based community that empowers children to develop critical minds, caring hearts, and ethical foundations for academic excellence and spiritual growth.

School Values

St. Thomas Episcopal Church and School promotes an inclusive community that respects, understands and celebrates the value of diversity in its student body, faculty and staff. The church and school believe that while we are all different, we are one body, one family, and we share in the gift of being made in God's image. We welcome students and families from a variety of backgrounds, faith-traditions, and seek to foster cultural proficiency through modeling the Church's mission to honor God and bless others.

Philosophy Statement

The community of St. Thomas Episcopal School believes in teaching its children how to live lives of excellence. Parents and faculty work closely to provide the experiences and the guidance students need in order to understand their world. We believe all of our students possess individual strengths that make the collective group complete. Above all, we seek to share with them God's love and to develop life-long habits of praise to Him.

St. Thomas teachers understand the need to develop the whole child. We offer a challenging academic curriculum that prepares our students for success in later grades. The faculty stresses developmental readiness at every level. The school strives to incorporate modern technology as a tool to promote student engagement. St. Thomas offers enrichment classes in Spanish, computer, art, music, Bible, and physical education that broaden the students' experiences. Our students also enjoy the benefits of learning outside the confines of the classroom by going on several field trips a year as well as using the school's outdoor resources. Students and parents alike have the opportunity to enroll in a variety of classes as part of the after school enrichment program and the church-offered Christian education program. In addition to excellence in academics, students also learn how to keep a daily planner, manage time, and study in ways that are effective for them.

Besides academic training, St. Thomas fosters character development and a faith foundation through daily chapel, Bible lessons, and service opportunities as part of our Matthew 25 program. We adhere to the Episcopal Church's tradition of seeking to understand others in order to live in harmony with them and demonstrate God's love for them in a nonjudgmental manner.

Part of the development program at St. Thomas includes helping our students understand their roles in the world around them. Children learn about empathy through planned giving opportunities such as the Matthew 25 program as well as through other teachable moments that occur daily in the classroom. We teach the importance of showing simple acts of kindness, such as holding doors open or sharing the sidewalk, as a way of respecting others. Learning habits such as shaking hands when greeting an adult, making eye contact when conversing, and responding to adult requests with "Yes, ma'am" or "Yes, sir". Adults in the school model positive relationships, and we work with students to learn to interact with each other in a positive manner. Service learning at school and in the community is encouraged for our elementary students, especially those in the upper grades.

Living lives of excellence means we address the developmental needs of our students. It also means we pay attention to the small details that set our students apart. Above all, it means we make every effort to help the children in our care know the love that their Savior has for them.

Accreditations

The Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools, an accrediting organization approved by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission and recognized by the Texas Education Agency, the Commissioner of Education and the National Association of Independent Schools, accredits St.

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Thomas Episcopal School. SAES offers support and monitors the standards and practices of the school.

What is the relationship of the School to St. Thomas Episcopal Church?

St. Thomas Episcopal School provides a Christian education program as an important outreach of the church. Everything about the school, from worship and religious teaching to curriculum, co-curricular activities, and administration must accord with the mission of the Church and be subject to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese. While the school welcomes students who are not Episcopalian, such desired diversity within the school cannot alter its mission or its ownership.

School Board Policies

The school board meets monthly during the school year. Any member of the St. Thomas community is welcome to attend open sessions, but should first call to schedule time to speak to the board and give background information prior to the meeting. Many discussions of the school board are closed sessions due to the sensitive nature of discussion.

The school board for St. Thomas welcomes guests and encourages input from all members of the school community. To ensure that guests who wish to offer their thoughts can be heard, the board will adhere to the following policy:

- Individuals who wish to speak at a regularly scheduled board meeting must notify the board chair or the head of school by noon of the Wednesday prior to the meeting. Such a notification will make sure these individuals will be placed on the agenda.
- The board chair will set the amount of speaking time for each individual. Guests will be heard when the board chair calls on them.
- In the event that a large group of individuals who share the same concerns appears at the meeting, the board president may ask for a representative to speak for the group.
- Further discussion from guests who are not on the agenda or who have used their allotted time will be discouraged unless the board chair decides to allow their input.
- Input received from guests will be considered informational only. The school board will certainly note concerns and ideas of its guests, but it reserves the right to make decisions based on the information as it deems best.
- The board chairman reserves the right to cancel remaining speaking time of any individual whose comments become personal or otherwise unproductive.
- The board may go into executive session at any time to discuss sensitive matters including personnel issues, security devices, matters pertaining to students and/or families, issues that require legal counsel, donations or gifts to the school, and property needs.

ACADEMIC LIFE

Admission

Student Application Procedures and Guidelines

All students must reapply for admission annually. Priority will be given to returning students only during specified re-registration dates. After the close of the re-registration period, returning students will lose their priority status, unless during the re-registration dates, the school is advised in writing of extenuating circumstances and agrees to extend priority status. Students will be processed in the following order:

- Currently enrolled students
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Parishioners of St. Thomas Episcopal Church who have been active for 6 months or longer.
- New applicants

Information about Open Houses and Admissions can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Specific Admissions Requirements

According to state law, the school **must** have these forms in hand before any child will be allowed to attend class:

- A completed medical emergency form
- A health record form signed by a physician that includes a current vaccination and immunization record.
- A copy of a birth certificate must be submitted for each new student.
- Additionally, students with allergy, medical, or educational needs must complete an action plan for services. The director will determine if the school is able to meet the needs of the student. A physician must approve the allergy/medical plan. Educational plans must include outside testing and recommendations from a qualified specialist.

In addition to state law requirements, St. Thomas Episcopal School requires:

- Report cards from all previously attended schools.
- Results from previously taken standardized tests.
- Permission to contact previous teachers and administrators.
- An evaluation to determine appropriate placement (preschoolers will schedule a visit in the classroom).
- Personal interview and/or classroom visit.

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St. Thomas Episcopal School follows the Texas state school age requirements for admission to preschool and kindergarten. September 1st is the cutoff date assigned by Texas law to determine eligibility for enrollment.

Preschool children must be toilet trained as a requirement for admission in the three-year and older classrooms. Parents of a student who demonstrates consistent problems will be asked to keep their child home until toilet training is completed.

Admission Decisions

The head of school will make the final decision for acceptance. The St. Thomas educational program is designed for a diverse student population with respect to pace and style of learning. Modifications in the presentation of curriculum are made in response to individual student's readiness, overall maturation, and personal learning needs.

While St. Thomas serves a diverse student population, we recognize that some students have learning and/or behavioral-guidance needs that may exceed the resources of the school. For this reason, St. Thomas reserves the right to evaluate all new students prior to admission to determine their chances for success in the school.

All students at St. Thomas are expected to exhibit age-appropriate respect toward adults, students, and the physical learning environment. It is developmentally appropriate for students to err on occasion, and faculty and staff will handle such isolated incidents promptly and respectfully. *Students who exhibit persistent patterns of disruptive or disrespectful behavior that are judged to be harmful to others or degrading to the learning atmosphere will not be allowed to remain at St. Thomas.*

The issuance of a student enrollment contract will signify admission. Enrollment contracts must be signed and returned to the school office within 15 days of the issuance date. The tuition deposit must accompany the signed contract. The tuition insurance (if tuition is paid monthly) is due with the first month's tuition.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

St. Thomas Episcopal School is open to all qualified students of any race, color, religion, nationality, or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, or financial aid programs.

Tuition

Tuition is due and payable at the beginning of each month. All tuition payments are processed as ACH or credit card withdrawals through the Facts website on the 5th of each month. Incidental charges, i.e. hot lunch, drop-in extended care, spirit wear, are also charged through Facts and are due within 10 days of the charge.

In the event there is a failure to pay the required tuition according to the previously agreed upon payment schedule, the following actions will be taken to collect funds:

1. When an account is 30 calendar days past due, the school's business manager will send a letter to parents requesting payment.
2. After 45 calendar days, the school's business manager will send a second letter requesting payment. The parents will also be required to meet with the head of school to discuss available options.
3. After 60 calendar days, the school board and head of school will discuss options for retrieving late tuition, student will not be allowed to return to school until past due balance has been paid or payment plan has been decided upon.
4. Upon receiving vestry approval, the school will pursue all available legal options to claim unpaid tuition.

Financial Aid

Typically, financial aid is reserved for elementary students. Financial aid applications will not be considered as a factor in admission decisions. New student applicants for financial aid must have already completed the application process and have paid the \$75.00 nonrefundable application fee. All families must pay enrollment fees, plus FACTS financial financial aid fee in order to be considered by the committee. Applications for financial aid must be completed and submitted at the time of re-registration or admission. *All applications must be completed by the end of April and will then be reviewed by a committee; once approved notice of disbursements of financial aid occur in early May.* After that time, financial aid will only be available if candidates have not accepted their financial aid package. *Families must apply for financial aid yearly and those who fail to keep current on tuition risk losing financial aid.* Each disbursement is for the current year only. Application for financial aid is available through the FACTS website (a link on the website is provided)

Attendance

Absences and Tardies

Regular and punctual attendance is important for your child's successful progress and growth. **Texas law requires** elementary age children to attend school. Parents are asked to notify the school office before 8:30 a.m. when their child must be absent.

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Upon returning from an absence, elementary students (kindergarten – 3rd grade) must bring a written statement, signed by a parent or guardian, explaining the reason for the absence or a medical note from the doctor in case of illness.

Arrival and Departure

School begins at 8:00 a.m. Students may enter the building at 7:45 a.m. Students dropped off in carpool will be brought into the building at that time. Any student not in the building at 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. Parents must bring tardy students to the office to acquire a late pass. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:00 a.m. and before 10:00 a.m. but still meet the criteria for being present at least ½ day. *Students who are tardy may miss important class work that may affect their grades. Teachers will not be expected to reteach or give extra time to complete assignments due to tardies.*

School ends for elementary school students at 3:00 p.m. Preschool dismissal is at 11:45 a.m. for ½ day students and 2:45 p.m. for full day students. Parents of carpool students left after 3:15 p.m. will be charged an Extended Care drop in fee.

Parents are expected to use the carpool to drop off and pick up children. Families with both preschool and elementary students may use the 3:00 carpool line. Please use the sign provided by your child's teacher in your car so we can identify proper placement with minimum delay. Please obey the one-way expectation on campus.

Preschool parents must arrive prior to 8:30 to use the preschool gate. The gate will be locked automatically at 8:30. To enter after that time, please use the buzzer on the elementary building gates. Then parents will use the doorbell for the preschool wing. The garden door is open at the beginning of chapel from 8:00 to 8:20. After that time, the Garden Door will no longer be left unlocked. Please do not knock on the door or window of the classroom; that will interrupt the class.

Elementary parents must use the buzzer at the gate in order to gain access to the campus. Students who arrive during the first five minutes of chapel time must be escorted by the parent to sit in the back of the chapel. Students who arrive between 8:20 and 8:35 will need to wait with their parents until chapel is over and the class returns.

Tardy and absence

- **Tardy:** late arrival within 2 hours (before 10am) of the beginning of the school day (more than 4 unexcused tardies in a semester equals 1 absence)
- **Full day Absence:** missing more than 2 hours of the school day (unless a note of a doctor's visit is provided)
- At STES we value instructional time. Students are expected to be in class on time ready to learn.
- Students arriving at school after classes have begun must first report to the office to sign in and obtain an admission slip for class.
- Absences will be monitored for state compliance and appropriate action will be taken if absences and tardies are excessive.

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State law requires all children to attend school regularly.

- [Texas Education Code \(TEC\) section 25.085 Compulsory School Attendance](#)
- After 8 unexcused absences, a parent phone call will be initiated by STES Administration.
- All absences require a note from the parent and should include the following: child's first and last name, teacher's name, date of absence, and reason for the absence.
- Written excuses by parents or guardians must be submitted to the office or teacher.
- A doctor's note is required when a student leaves school or reports to school late because of an appointment.
- If students need to leave during the school day for an appointment, the parent or guardian must check them out through the office. When returning from an appointment, the student must report to the school office for an admission slip.
- A doctor's written excuse must be presented for any absence exceeding five consecutive days.
- Absences in excess of sixteen per year without a written doctor's excuse will be presented to the School Administration as being in violation of State regulations. The Administration will review the academic status of the child from that point.
- In cases of unexcused excessive absenteeism or tardies the student will be referred to the Head of School for appropriate action (more than 8 per semester).
- If a student is to be excused from P.E. or recess, a parental note must be sent to the teacher. If the student needs to be excused for more than three days, a note from a doctor is required. The student will be expected to remain with the class during P.E. time.

Permit to Leave School

Children are released only to their parents or other persons approved by their parents and listed on the release form in the office. If someone who is not on your list to pick up your child, you must call the office or send a note to your child's teacher. School staff will ask for a photo I. D. for any person not previously on the child's pick up list. If there are additions or deletions, please make changes in the school office. Please notify the school office if your child needs to leave early. Parents may pick up children in the school office.

Drop-off and Pick-Up

Drop-off:

- When using morning care 7:00-7:40, parents are required to walk their child/children into the classroom and sign them in with the teacher.
- For drop-off parents may choose to walk their child/children to their classroom or use the carpool lane. However, parents are encouraged to use carpool after the first week of school to minimize distractions in the classroom and foster independence for students.
- Parents and students are not permitted to enter the school building before 7:45 unless they have a scheduled appointment with an administrator or teacher.

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- Students will not be allowed to enter the school premises outside of carpool without being escorted by an adult. Gates will be locked after 8:30. Visitors will be required to gain admittance to the campus through the main office security system.
- When using carpool, students should remain in the car until a faculty member is present to receive them.
- Parents are required to follow the carpool traffic pattern during the hours of 7:30-8:00 and 2:30-3:15. Please remember to drive slowly on campus
- The use of cell phones while driving on campus is not permitted.

Pick-up:

- For pick-up parents may choose to park in designated areas and walk in to pick up their child/children or use the carpool lane. However, parents are encouraged to use carpool after the first week of school to foster independence.
- Parents who choose to use the carpool lane, must remain in their vehicle. Teachers will escort students to your vehicle.
- When utilizing after school care, parents are required to walk in and sign the roster with the aftercare teacher.

Extended Care

Extended hours of care are available in the mornings from 7:00 a.m. – 7:40 a.m. and in the afternoon from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. with availability Monday through Friday. **If you are registered for Extended Care on a monthly basis your place is secured.**

All students arriving for care before 7:40 a.m. must be signed in by their parent.

Monthly fee schedules are available through the business office. Students may be registered by having it added to their contract. All changes must be processed directly through the business office.

Drop-ins are accepted on a space available basis. Please notify the office ahead of time. Drop in care from 11:45 to 3:00 must be arranged with the office, not the teacher. Only the office can approve drop in care to ensure proper staff supervision.

Drop-in fees: 7:00 a.m. – 7:40 a.m. \$5.00
11:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. \$30.00 for Preschool (based on availability)
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. \$30.00 for 2 or 3 year olds
\$20.00 for 4 year olds through 3rd grade

If payment is not made at the time of drop off, the fee will be added to your monthly bill.

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Late pick up:

If parents arrive after 3:15 p.m., students will be in the Extended Care Program, and the child must be signed out with the Extended Care teacher. Parents will be assessed a drop-in fee for the afternoon.

If parents arrive after 6:00 p.m., a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed.

Dress Code

Preschool

Preschool students must wear clothes appropriate for a busy day and for the current season. Usually students in preschool will have art lessons and will have active play on the playground. Students must wear closed-back and close-toed shoes with rubber soles. For student safety, footwear such as sandals and flip-flops are not allowed. Although we do not have a hair policy for preschool, if the teacher determines that the hairstyle is a distraction STES reserves the right to conference with the parents to reach a resolution.

Cold Weather Recommendations

We will be going outside to the playground as long as the weather is above 40 degrees. Please ensure that your child has the appropriate outerwear for the weather conditions (jackets, mittens, and hat).

Elementary

All elementary students are required to wear uniforms from Parker Uniforms. "Look-a-like" clothing pieces from other vendors will not be acceptable. All students must be dressed in approved school uniform each day. Full dress uniform is required every Wednesday (as well as special days and/or field trips throughout the school year). Uniform pieces will have the St. Thomas crest embroidered and will be clearly marked. No exceptions will be made. Student will be disciplined according the STES discipline policy. Below is an outline of uniforms, both daily and dress uniform.

*Write Your Child's Name
On Every Item With A Permanent Marker*

UNIFORM POLICY

BOYS :	PreK 4 and GOT is encouraged, Kinder - 3rd is mandatory
Daily Uniform:	Navy pants or navy shorts.
M/T/TH	Black belt
	Red Polo
	Black Crew socks (those well above the ankle)
	ALL BLACK tennis shoes – any brand/any store
Dress Uniform:	PreK 4 - 3rd is mandatory
Wednesday	Navy pants (no shorts on dress uniform day)
	Blue oxford shirt with tie

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Black belt
Black shoes, tie or loafer; not athletic shoes (any brand/any store)
Black socks

GIRLS: **PreK 4 and GOT is encouraged, Kinder - 3rd is mandatory**

Daily Uniform: Navy skort with cold weather option of navy tights
M/T/TH Navy pants or shorts with red polo
Navy knit dress with shorts underneath
White ankle socks
Saddle oxford shoes
Hair Adornments within reason and not distracting

Dress Uniform: **PreK 4 - 3rd is mandatory**
Wednesday Uniform jumper (with shorts underneath)
Knee-hi white socks or white tights in winter
Saddle oxford shoes (Ked's brand/style is okay)
Hair adornments – matching uniform pieces only

FRIDAYS: Jeans or jean shorts/khaki pants or khaki shorts (*athletic shorts are not acceptable unless specified*)
Tiger Tee shirt purchased from St. Thomas or any other St. Thomas shirt.
The length of skirts/dresses and shorts shall reflect modesty and in good taste and be monitored by school staff.
If a student's fingertips touch skin when the arms are held straight at the sides, then the clothing item is too short and may not be worn.
Appropriate closed-toed comfortable shoes should be worn.

OUTERWEAR

Boys and Girls - All sweatshirts, jackets and sweaters must either be:

- **Approved** outerwear pieces sold by Flynn O'Hara.
- Solid red or navy without emblem or logo.
- In cold weather, heavy coats may be non-uniform but may only be worn outside.

Free Dress Day

The first Tuesday of each month is a free dress day. Students may wear street clothes that are appropriate and not distracting. T-shirts with words must be appropriate for young children and should not include references to alcohol, racial slurs, or inappropriate language. **Students may not wear tops with spaghetti straps, show midriffs, or wear bottoms that are too short. They must have tennis shoes for P. E. and playground.**

Hair/Hair Accessories:

Boys:

- Hair must be neat and clean
- Hair must be no longer than the top of the shirt collar in back

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- Hair must be no longer than eyebrows in front
- Sideburns must not reach below center of the ear
- Unnatural hair coloring is not allowed
- Hair fads are not allowed (shaved designs, Mohawks, fauxhawks, etc.)

Girls:

- Hair must be neat and clean
- Hair must not cover the eyes
- Unnatural hair coloring is not allowed
- Hair fads are not allowed (shaved designs, Mohawks, fauxhawks, etc.)
- All hair accessories must be red, white, navy, or Parker plaid or a combination of red, white, or navy.

Accessories:

- Backpacks, lunch boxes and other school supplies should reflect positive Christian principles
- All items should be labeled
- Jewelry should not be excessive. It should not draw attention or be distracting.

Boys:

- No earrings, body piercings or tattoos (permanent or temporary)

Girls:

- No body piercings or tattoos (permanent or temporary)
- No more than 2 pair of earrings
- Dangling earrings or large earrings (larger than a nickel) are not allowed
- Undergarments must not show under the uniform

Lost and Found

All lost and found items will be placed in a large container in the School Office. Items of significant value will be held at the office. Please ensure that you label your child's name on everything brought to school. All lost and found items not claimed will be given to charity at the end of the year.

TIGER LIFE

Chapel

St. Thomas Episcopal School is firmly rooted in living out its Christian faith and Episcopal identity and traditions. Religious services and practices are significant to the School's daily program. To many, it is this characteristic which gives the school much of its special strength. St. Thomas is a school community that honors, celebrates, and worships God as the center of life. Parents are invited to join the chapel services and worship with us.

Daily Chapel is held for our Pre-K through 3rd grade students. Our 2s and 3s have chapel twice a week in a special service designed for young children.

Daily Chapel Schedule:

Pre-K4 through 3rd grade	8:15-8:35 am	Monday -Thursday
3s through 3rd grade	8:15-8:35am	Friday
2s and 3s Chapel	10:15-10:30am	Wednesdays and Thursdays

Student Participation

One of the many benefits of the Chapel program is its development of student leadership. All ages of students are included in carrying the cross (crucifers) and when appropriate, reading and leading.

Students are responsible for being prepared prior to their assigned responsibility. All coordination of student participation is through their teacher.

Chapel Etiquette

All members of the community are to enter the Chapel quietly and respectfully so that our preparation for worship may allow for reflection. Chapel is our time of the day to gather as people of faith in prayer, song, and reflection on the biblical writings of the Old and New Testaments.

Chapel is mandatory for all students and teachers. Parents are always welcome to worship with us as well. We ask that all distractions are minimized for the benefit and well-being of our children in worship. If you arrive late for chapel, you will need to check the student in with the school office to receive a tardy slip for the student and obtain a visitor sticker for the adult. After checking in, you must sit with the student at the back of the church until chapel is over. Once chapel is finished you may check them in with the teacher and hand them the tardy slip.

If your child is participating in a leadership role, please do not take flash photography as it distracts from worship. In addition, if you choose to video, please be mindful of our children worshipping and stand in a place where you are not obstructing their view. Chapel behavior will be discussed as the school year begins, but students should know that the Chapel is a time and place for respect and appropriate conduct. Young children will receive support from older students to learn appropriate conduct; such mentoring builds strong relationships in the school

Special Services

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Throughout the year we celebrate different events and have special worship services. Just like daily chapel, parents and grandparents are always welcome.

St. Francis Day - Blessing of the Animals

Veterans Day Chapel

Grandparents Day

All Saints Eucharist

Ash Wednesday

Maundy Thursday Eucharist

Eucharist

Twice a year we hold Eucharist for students in the elementary classes in observance of Christian Holy Days - **All Saints and Maundy Thursday**. These services last approximately 30 minutes. During that service everyone, faculty, staff, students, and parents, come forward as a sign of their thanksgiving in their faith and receives a blessing or the sacraments of bread and/or wine. If you prefer that your child not receive the sacraments, please notify the respective teacher. Your child will be instructed on how to participate by receiving the blessing. The student receiving a blessing will cross hands over chest and the priest will say a blessing. A student who receives the sacrament of bread will place the right hand on top of the left and cup them slightly lifting them up towards the priest.

Please feel free to call the priests at St. Thomas if you have any questions regarding our Eucharistic services.

Positive Behavior Management System: Tiger Pride

St. Thomas Episcopal School is committed to providing educational excellence in a positive setting. All students will receive instruction on expected behaviors in the classroom, chapel, hallways, and lunchroom. Modeling and frequent review of behavior expectations will be stressed the first few weeks of school.

Appropriate behavior and a courteous attitude toward teachers, staff, parents, and other students are expected at all times. If discipline for misbehavior becomes necessary, it will be handled in a fair and positive manner. Students may be required to make amends, reflect, perform service at school, or have time out to calm down. Disciplinary action will involve teaching students to use decision-making skills effectively and to accept ownership of their behavior. Parents are an important part of the discipline process at the school.

Additionally, we promote a peaceful playground approach to social interactions at school. The teachers will model positive interactions with others, and students will be taught explicit social skills for handling conflicts. Because we are a peaceful playground, toy guns and other toy weapons will not be permitted on campus; teachers will discourage students from “shooting” with pretend guns as well. Spoken threats such as “shooting”, even if the child is just playing will be followed by a conference

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with the child and the head of school. In this modern age of school violence, we will encourage students to refrain from making remarks related to threats against the school and others.

Prohibited behaviors:

The following behaviors are subject to Administrative Disciplinary Plan during school hours, on school grounds and at any school related activity, function, or event. Students may be referred to the office for the following:

- Bullying, fighting, intimidation, harassment, physical/verbal assault
- Destruction of school property
- Dishonesty
- Dangerous, reckless or disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate physical or sexual contact
- Inappropriate use of Internet or electronics
- Offensive gestures
- Possession of profane material
- Possession of tobacco products
- Possessing, handling, displaying, or transporting fireworks, guns, knives, needles, or other weapon-like objects
- Possession or use of illegal substances at school or school sponsored activities
- Profanity or vulgarity
- Public displays of affection
- Repeated misconduct or pattern of misbehavior
- Verbal disrespect
- Misuse or abuse of technology equipment
- Other infractions unbecoming a Christian

Any of the following prohibited behaviors listed above may result in: in-house suspension, home suspension, or expulsion from school

Statement on Bullying

Not all unpleasant interactions between students are bullying. Children in elementary school learn to get along with others as they interact over the years in school. Along the way, many learning opportunities occur. The teachers and director of St. Thomas work with students to learn how to get along well with others. All children make mistakes, and students tend to see situations from their perspective.

At St. Thomas bullying is defined as: Behaviors that exhibits consistent patterns of physical violence, taunting, teasing, making fun of others, laughing at others, intimidation, rumor spreading, alliance building, bossiness, exclusion, isolation and secret-telling to harm others. Neither behaviors considered by staff to be bullying nor relational aggression is not tolerated at STES. STES has a zero tolerance policy that is punishable up to and including separation from school.

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Teachers are able to view situations more objectively than students. If you believe your child is having social problems at school, please contact the teacher. The teacher may have a greater understanding of the situation or may not be aware of some situations.

Discipline

Preschool/Elementary Class Management

- The teacher will address most disciplinary concerns with redirection and reminders.
- Teachers are the first contact that students encounter after an incident.
- Teachers will encourage a learning opportunity when students do not follow the rules.

Teachers will make every effort to control and redirect student behavior in the classroom however in the event this is not effective teachers will follow the classroom behavior plan.

Classroom Behavior Plan

Elementary Disciplinary Consequences (per 9 week grading period for dress code/conduct or tardies/absences)

- **Level 1** – The student will receive a pink slip as an initial warning to correct infractions such as inappropriate behavior and language or classroom disruption. The slip must be signed by a parent and returned the following day.
- **Level 2** – If a student accumulates 3 pink slips in either of the categories (behavior, tardies, dress code violations), a parent-teacher conference will be scheduled to determine a behavior plan. Documentation of plan will be placed in the student's file. (This file is not part of the school's transfer documents.) After school detention may be warranted if infraction not corrected. School detention is held from 3:15-5:00 pm on designated days, and a fee of \$20 will be assessed to parent. If issue is not resolved, student will be required to attend up to 2 additional detentions (at \$20 each).
- **Level 3** – Should problem(s) persist after level 2, a parent-teacher and head of school conference will be scheduled at which time the behavior plan will be reevaluated. Saturday school detention (8:00 am – 12:00 pm on designated Saturdays) may be warranted and a fee of \$50 will be assessed.
- **Level 4** – STES reserves the right to exclude from school, either temporarily or permanently, any student whose presence is detrimental to the best interest of either the student or the school.

School Sponsored Trips

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Students will have opportunities to represent St. Thomas on numerous school-sponsored trips. For this reason, they are expected to exhibit superb behavior. Students whose behavior is deemed unacceptable will have a conference with the Head of School upon return. Discipline will follow the Behavior Plan

Preschool Biting Policy

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age, but can continue through preschool. The safety of the children in our preschool is our primary concern. The school's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive with little self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The classroom teacher will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our school:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- The biter may sit in "time out" if this is a recurring problem for no more than one minute per year old
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be given something to do that is satisfying.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and
- water and ice applied.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. We will make an accident report of the incident. The Head of School will be notified.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.

If the biting problem does not cease, a child may be sent home at the discretion of the school. A conference with the parents to solve the biting issue will follow.

Cell Phones

Once a student arrives on campus, cell phones and other personal electronic devices such as tablets must be turned OFF and kept secure in his/her backpack. Use of personal devices is prohibited during school hours unless a teacher deems it necessary for instruction (such as reading a book on the table), 7am-6pm. In some cases, a teacher may give students permission to utilize cell phones for learning purposes.

Students who violate this policy risk having their phones confiscated by teacher or school administrators. Parents will be required to collect the student's phone at the end of the day. Further, violations will be addressed in the Discipline Policy guideline. Teachers on campus use cell phones to communicate with the office. The use of cell phones to communicate with other staff is limited, but important. Often after-school staff use cell phones to let the after-school director know about emergencies, schedule changes, or to clarify instructions. Teachers will not use the cell phone for personal conversations during school hours; all communication to teachers should be through email after school hours or with the school secretary.

Academic Policies

Grading Policy

In order to be consistent in our grading, the following alpha/numeric/narrative codes are used:

KINDERGARTEN- FIRST/SPECIALS GRADING

E= EXCEEDS GRADE EXPECTATIONS
G=GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS
P =PROGRESSING TOWARD GRADE LEVEL
N= NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
NC=NOT COVERED THIS QUARTER

SECOND GRADE – FIFTH GRADE

CODES	NARRATIVE	SCALE POINT	ALPHA
E =	Excellent	90 – 100	A
G =	Good	80 – 89	B
S =	Satisfactory	75 – 79	C
N =	Needs Improvement	70 – 74	D
U =	Unsatisfactory	Below 70	F

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Homework Policy

Homework should be given on a regular basis in most of the subject areas. Some approximate times for homework are:

Kindergarten -	10 – 15 minutes a night
1 st Grade -	15 – 20 minutes a night
2 nd Grade -	20 – 30 minutes a night
3 rd Grade -	30 – 40 minutes a night
4 th Grade -	40 – 50 minutes a night
5 th Grade	50 – 60 minutes a night

Standardized Testing

Students in 1st through 5th grades are given the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) each spring. Students in 2nd and 4th grades are also given the CoGAT (Cognitive Abilities Test).

Conferences/Progress Reports

Throughout the year, communication between home and school will be a part of building your child's continuing success. There will be one mandatory conference period in the fall and an optional one in the spring. Child care is available during conference times for enrolled students. Progress reports for elementary students are sent midterm of each marking period as needed.

Informal progress reports from teachers concerning academic, social, or any other area needing attention may be sent home at any time. For preschoolers, formal reporting will be accomplished with a combination of parent/teacher conferences and a written report.

Parents of preschool children will receive a written report during the scheduled mandatory conference. A second written report will be sent home at the end of the school year. Parents are encouraged to request a conference as the need arises.

Teachers of children in kindergarten and first grade will use a system of conferences and written evaluations. At the time of the scheduled fall conference a written report will be the method of evaluation used. A written report card, and possibly a conference, will be used for the remaining grading periods of the year (with the exception of kindergarten which only consist of 2 grading periods).

Children in 2nd – 3rd grades will receive a combination of narrative and numeric grades for academic reports as well as citizenship reports. At the time of the scheduled conference a written report card will be the method of evaluation used. A written report card, with the possibility of a conference will be used for the remaining grading periods of the year. A conference may be indicated and called for by either the parent or teacher at any time.

Visitors

All visitors must check in at the school office to receive a Visitor's Badge. Please sign out at departure. All school personnel will wear identification badges during school hours. Adults on campus will be sent to the office by school personnel to sign in and receive a badge. Please do not proceed to your child's classroom.

Food at School

Nut Free Campus

St. Thomas considers the safety of its students the number one priority. Because we have many students who are allergic to nuts, we ask that no foods containing nuts be brought on campus during school hours. Soy butter and Sunbutter can be satisfactory substitutes for peanut butter. Because we are not able to differentiate peanut butter from other spreads, please send a note to the office or teacher that your child's spread does not contain nuts. Please note: all nuts can be harmful to students with nut allergies due to cross-contamination, so please check product labels.

In recognition of this serious health and safety hazard, the school board prohibits peanuts or tree nuts in snacks, lunches, classroom parties, and other school activities. To ensure the safety of the students across the spectrum of school-related activities, the school board recommends that PTF- sponsored activities be peanut/tree nut free. The board recommends that joint church-school activities also be peanut/tree nut free.

Food brought into the school for classroom distribution should have ingredient information provided with it. Store-bought foods must have the ingredient label attached. Food that is not peanut/tree nut free will not be served in the classroom. Homemade food may be served in the classroom if it does not contain peanuts/tree nut products.

Food package labeling:

"Contains peanuts or tree nuts": FDA legally requires this statement if food item contains peanuts or tree nuts. Such items should **not** be brought to school.

Foods that have labels that say "CONTAIN" or "MAY CONTAIN" nuts are PROHIBITED.

Foods that have labels that say "MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY OR ON EQUIPMENT THAT ALSO PROCESSES NUTS" are allowed.

Lunches

Menus will be sent home prior to the beginning of a new month. You may make your selections at that time. Milk coupons may be ordered using the menu form or through the office. Because the school shares space with the church, we occasionally have to serve lunch in the classrooms.

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The campus at St. Thomas School is a nut-free zone. Please check the ingredients of your child's lunch as many granola bars and candies include nuts. Soy or sun-butter may be substituted for peanut butter, but please let the office or teacher know that the sandwich does not contain nuts. A parent may include a note to inform the teacher that the sandwich does not contain nuts. Products such as Nutella contain nuts. Students may bring lunches from home or purchase them from the school lunch program. Students do not have access to a microwave during their lunch period so please keep this in mind when packing your child's lunch. Parents are asked to keep track of the days that lunches are purchased. **Classroom teachers and the school office personnel will not be responsible for contacting parents if a child has forgotten a lunch. Students who do not have a lunch will be given a hot lunch (if the kitchen has extras), and the parents will be billed.**

If you are delivering a lunch to your child, please bring it directly to the school office (following gate access procedure). We ask that you do not interrupt the classrooms. Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch, as an occasional treat. Please check in at the school office to get a visitor's pass before proceeding to the cafeteria. Our schedule does not allow enough time for the student to leave campus during lunch.

Students are expected to keep their areas clean in the lunchroom. Every student will be expected to throw away his/her own trash. Students may not shout, push, leave the lunchroom without permission, or throw food or trash. Students may not share lunches.

Snacks

St. Thomas supports proper nutrition for our students. Snacks should provide energy for children to complete their morning with success. Elementary teachers prefer snacks that are individually wrapped, and each child is responsible for her or his own snack. All children in preschool will take turns providing a daily snack and will receive a snack schedule. Teachers will provide a monthly calendar in the newsletter indicating the child's turn to bring snack. PLEASE SEND NUTRITIOUS SNACKS and be aware that many classes have children with food allergies.

The school will provide water for snack time. During the extended care portion of our program (3:00-6:00) a nutritious snack is served around 3:25 p.m.

Birthdays

St. Thomas celebrates the life and birth of all students and staff during the school year with a special blessing in Chapel. Summer birthdays will be celebrated as half birthdays.

We have a special St. Thomas tradition where a child donates a book to the school library on his/her birthday during Chapel. Our school librarian keeps a wish list on Amazon of suggested titles as well as some carefully selected books to help avoid duplication and to save time.

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Birthday Celebrations:

- Students may celebrate their birthdays with a special snack in the classroom or outside on the playground deck (weather permitting). Please allow 48 hour notice in classrooms that have severe student allergies so an alternative can be provided.
- No “parties” are permitted in the classroom for birthdays. Celebrations are for the child’s class only. Please do not send treats for other classes.
- Treats should be simple in nature so that children can pass out the treats by themselves without requiring adult assistance (if necessary). Please do not ask the teacher to cut items like cakes or cookie cakes. Instead, individual treats that do not require refrigeration or preparation are permitted or preferred. It is good to send napkins or plates for the snack.
- Please speak to the classroom teacher ahead of time to make any necessary arrangements.
- Invitations to home birthday parties are to be mailed unless all boys and/or girls in the class are invited. This helps maintain positive emotional support among the children.
- Birthday gifts and thank you cards may not be brought to school unless all of the students in class were invited to the party. It is at teacher discretion when invitations are to be passed out.

We do not allow birthday grams...balloons, flowers, clowns, etc. The school will not deliver nor direct such items or people to the classroom. We also do not permit “parties” in the classroom for birthday celebrations.

Health

STES Student Illness Policy

Maintaining a safe and healthy environment is of utmost importance at St. Thomas. Some illnesses require a child to be absent from school to prevent the spread of infection to other children on campus and to allow the child time to rest, recover, and be treated for the illness. Adherence to the guidelines of this policy are mandatory. If a student arrives at school with symptoms, or begins to show symptoms during the school day, a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. If your child is diagnosed with any communicable disease, please notify the school office so that it can take the appropriate steps to protect its students and staff.

Children will not be allowed to attend school if they have anything contagious, such as but not limited to the following:

- **FEVER:** May return when fever free (under 100 degrees) for 24 hours, without medication
- **DIARRHEA / VOMITING:** May return when symptom free for 24 hours
- **STREP THROAT:** May return after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and no fever for 24 hours
- **CONJUNCTIVITIS (pink eye):** May return 24 hours after treatment begins and eyes are free of discharge

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- **HEAD LICE:** May return after treatment and removal of all live lice and nits from hair
- **RING WORM:** May return after treatment begins; area should be covered while in school for first 48 hours of treatment
- **IMPETIGO / STAPH / MRSA:** May return 24 hours after treatment starts; wound must be covered with dressing taped on all 4 sides
- **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES** (such as, but not limited to - influenza, chickenpox, measles, mumps, pertussis, meningitis, mononucleosis): May return when cleared by their medical provider

Children at school are expected to follow the full program and outdoor play. Parents may not send notes that students are to miss recess or P.E. without making prior arrangements with the head of school. Specials and recess are times for teachers to work on lesson plans and conference with parents; often it is not possible to ensure supervision for sick or injured child unless the head of school has made arrangements.

Students with chronic health concerns: allergies and other serious conditions must be outlined and treatment detailed by the physician. In some cases, the child's doctor will be asked to meet with a staff member in order to guarantee the safety and health of the child (if there is a charge for this meeting, the parent will be responsible).

Medications: Please note, the school will no longer keep over-the-counter medicines in stock. Parents may send medications with a signed note that indicates frequency and dosage. Medicines are kept in a locked storage cabinet in the classroom.

Medications will be administered to a child only under the following conditions:

1. Any medications (prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC)) must be in the original prescription bottle with the label listing the child's name and dosage intact. Pharmacies will provide extra bottles on request.
2. Instructions must be written on school forms including the date and time to be administered and signed by the parent/guardian.
3. Outdated medication will be disposed of if not claimed by parents.
4. Parents must walk the medication in to the school office or classroom teacher. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL BAGS.**
5. We strongly encourage parents of children with allergies or asthma to leave Epi-pens, asthma treatment materials, and inhalers with the school personnel.
6. Medications must be approved by the FDA and prescriptions must be written by a physician licensed to practice in the state of Texas.

The classroom teacher will dispense most medication in the classroom unless special circumstances are present. Student records for medications dispensed will be kept in classroom student files.

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Pesticides

STES has a policy to provide guidelines for the application of pesticides in those areas where school children, parents, and faculty have access. Adherence to these guidelines will preclude human exposure to the effects of pesticides. Companies applying pesticides will only use pesticides approved by the Texas Department of Education and only trained personnel will apply pesticides. Pesticides will be applied as indicated by the state to ensure the safety of our students.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Chapter 36 of the Texas Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial or denominational school, or Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services licensed childcare facility in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria (specified below), must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. In the latter case, proof of professional examination must be in our files.

Vision and hearing screening is provided in the fall for all 4 year olds, kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd students and any other first time students.

School Closing: Inclement Weather/Emergencies

Weather conditions or emergencies may occur which make it necessary for us to close the school. Television stations in San Antonio will carry school closings or changes in starting and ending times. St. Thomas typically follows North East (NEISD) school district for school closings.
KMOL (Channel 4) NBC
KENS (Channel 5) CBS
KSAT (Channel 12) ABC

As required by Texas law, St. Thomas adheres to all fire, safety and health school and building requirements and participates in fire and safety drills monthly.

Backpack Mail

School papers, calendars, announcements, newsletters and notices may be sent home in your child's backpack or bag. Your child's teacher will inform you of procedures at the beginning of the year. Please check your child's bag or backpack daily.

All important documents will be mailed or emailed directly to the address we have on file. The school website will also offer important information about upcoming events and ways to participate in school events.

We are constantly striving to keep parents informed of the daily events in the life of our school as well as the exciting extras that make St. Thomas so special. *Preschool* students will be issued a St. Thomas

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school bag when they enter St. Thomas and GOT - Elementary students may bring their own backpacks.

Electronic Mail

Weekly Tiger Tales newsletters and other announcements will be sent home via e-mail each week.

Change of Address, Phone, or Employment

Notify the school office immediately of any changes to student address and/or phone number, parent employment address, and/or phone number, and cell phone number. Current school records ensure that we are able to reach parents promptly should an emergency arise.

Sexual Harassment

St. Thomas adheres to the sexual harassment policy of the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas. All school and church personnel are trained in appropriate adult/child relationships using “Safeguarding God’s Children.”

Requirement of Reporting

The law **requires** any person who believes that a child, or person 65 years or older, or an adult with disabilities is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report the circumstances to The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability provided they make the report in good faith, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person suspecting abuse and not reporting it can be held liable for a Class B misdemeanor. Time frames for investigating reports are based on severity of allegations. Reporting suspected child abuse makes it possible for a family to get help. Please talk to the head of school or the parish priest if you have any questions about reporting abuse of a child.

Definition of Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

The definition of “child abuse” and “neglect” are very broad. Chapter 261.001 of the Family Code provides the legal definitions of those terms.

Contact information for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is
3635 SE Military, San Antonio, TX 78223.

The website is www.txabusehotline.org.

210-337-3399 Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400

Parents do have the right to review Minimum Standards and the school’s most recent licensing report.

Custody, Separation, and/or Divorce Issues

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St. Thomas recognizes there are some cases in which parental custody may be disputed as a result of separation and/or divorce. In such cases, the school will strive to respond with the appropriate compassion and discretion, and will work to maintain a safe and loving learning environment for the students. In addition, the following guidelines and policies will apply:

- Current and official court-ordered custody documents must be provided to the school. All official paperwork pertaining to custody should be submitted to the Admissions office.
- The school cannot be asked to withhold a child from either parent, in the absence of a valid, current and court-ordered custody arrangement on file with the school.
- The school will refer the enforcement of court-ordered custody arrangements to law enforcement authorities.
- Participants in the dispute should avoid involving school personnel in the dispute, recognizing that doing so may adversely affect the quality of education available to the other students at school.
- Every effort should be made to settle custody disputes outside the school and without involving or interfering with the daily operations and educational mission of the school.
- Faculty and staff will not engage in the dispute unless specifically required and ordered by a court of law.
- In all cases of separation, divorce, and/or custody dispute, Faculty and Staff shall remain neutral, without taking sides or actively participating in the dispute.
- When a child spends time in two homes, it is requested that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers.
- Regarding the collection of children from school, it is requested that the school be informed of any changes in collection arrangements in writing.
- It is assumed that when we wish to communicate with parents regarding their child, the parent who is contacted (which will typically be the parent with whom the child principally resides) will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements, etc.
- Report cards and standardized test results are provided to the parent or guardian, unless otherwise stated, and also may be provided to additional persons with custodial rights if the primary custodian gives written permission.
- In the absence of a court-ordered custody arrangement on file in the school office dictating otherwise, all parents will be treated as equal partners in terms of parenting rights and responsibilities.

PARENT COMMITMENT

Parents Are a Vital Part of the St. Thomas Ministry

At St. Thomas, we are committed to working closely with parents to create an excellent educational experience. For this reason, we encourage all parents to get involved in the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF). Because we are a small school, we encourage parents to share their time and talent to improve and maintain our school. We require parents to volunteer at least five hours each school year, and there are many opportunities from which to choose. We appreciate the hard work of our school parents.

Parent/Teacher Fellowship

One of the St. Thomas Episcopal School's major strengths is the great interest the parents have in the success of their children's learning experiences and ultimately, the success of the school. As a parent of a St. Thomas Tiger, you are already a member of the Parent Teacher Fellowship. As a church and school, a feeling of family on campus is what we strive for. The best way to be involved, help our students and teachers, and participate in our community is through our PTF.

Meetings are held several times throughout the school year, including an Introductory Meet and Greet after the start of school. An executive member of the PTF will provide information regarding the PTF goals and the varying options of ways families can volunteer.

All parents are encouraged to choose several activities throughout the year that would interest them and help the school accomplish important goals. As events are planned, volunteer opportunities will be communicated to our families and may include providing hospitality in the form of food or other items, or signing up for a time slot to help at an event. Activities that require supervising children in the school require that the volunteer submit to a background check and take the 3 hour Safeguarding God's Children program (every 5 years). Volunteer positions are available on a one time only, daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonal basis. There is truly something for everyone. Virtually all St. Thomas events are staffed by and organized by parent volunteers and school staff.

Fundraising

Tuition at St. Thomas funds approximately 86% of the total educational costs during the year. Our Tiger Fund allows us to provide even more enriching, exciting programs for our children. Participation in these events provides necessary funds for various budgeted items. We have several ways to contribute to our annual fund.

- **Gala**—Normally in the spring and features dinner, live and silent auctions, children's classroom crafts, raffle, and so much more! Don't miss this evening of fun and fellowship!

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Corporate sponsorships (tables) are encouraged, as well as donations of items or services for the auctions.

- Contributions are tax deductible. Parents and friends of St. Thomas are invited to partner with us through financial contributions. All Tiger Fund supporters and volunteers are invited to special events throughout the year.

Matthew 25 — At St. Thomas Episcopal School we are focused on preparing our students to live for God and for others. Each month, St. Thomas schedules a charity to support through its community outreach program, Matthew 25. The monthly community outreach program at St. Thomas is based on a simple yet powerful verse from the book of Matthew: *“Whatever you have done for the lesser of these you have done for me”* Every month, St. Thomas educates its students on a different local charity. On the last Thursday of the month, the children are encouraged to bring the specified donations to Chapel.

Pictures

Individual and class pictures are taken in the fall. The photographer will have packages available for purchase. Retakes can be done during the picture retake scheduled date.

Library

If a library book is not returned, the librarian will send a note home that will include the book’s title, replacement cost and an additional fee of \$5 will be included to process and cover the book. All books must be returned and fees paid before the end of the school or the release of transcript. Students from the four-year old class through elementary will be able to check out a book each week. Parents who have a background check and proof of Safeguarding God’s Children on file may volunteer to help with library.

Field Trips

We make full use of the excellent educational, cultural, and scientific resources available in San Antonio as a way to enhance learning. STES may bring in special guests such as Magik Theatre, Fire Department, etc. In addition, appropriate field trips may be planned for GOT and the elementary school. Parents will be informed in advance of all field trips. Parental permission is on file in RenWeb. There are some extra costs associated with field trips, but they generally do not exceed \$10. Teachers will send information regarding lunch plans and proper uniform for each field trip. Children may ride with their own parent on field trips; however, if a parent intends to drive other children, a background check, updated auto insurance and attendance of the “Safeguarding God’s Children” (If you plan on volunteering more than 5 times or it has been more than 5 years that you have attended.) must be documented or obtained prior to the field trip. Teachers will send field trip details as each field trip approaches.

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Children and siblings who are not enrolled at St. Thomas are not permitted to attend field trips.

Rest Time/Naps

Preschool students who stay for the afternoon will have a rest time. The students may bring a small beach towel or blanket for rest time. Preschool children may bring a crib-sized sheet to cover the plastic-covered mat provided for nap time. Students in the preschool may bring one special toy to enable them to settle in for nap. It is important for preschool children to rest each day to ensure that they are able to function well in the afternoon. Kindergarten students will have a quiet rest time each afternoon. Please label everything.

After School Enrichment

St. Thomas provides enrichment programs for our students and the surrounding community. St. Thomas students are given preference, but the program is available to the public.

Information is provided throughout the year via backpack mail, Tiger Tales, and on-line regarding our various after school classes and activities.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTS

“**Social Media**” includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. These websites not only provide information, but also allows for interaction during this informational exchange through user-generated content.

Before faculty posts any photographs of students, content owners shall review the list of students whose parents have not consented to having their child’s photograph taken or published. No student photographs should be published for personal, promotional use or any other non-school related purpose. Posted photos may not be tagged by anyone except the parent; please do not tag photos of children who are not yours.

Parents should be sensitive about posting any reference to other students in the social media.

School Policies Regarding Social Networks

Individual Accountability

St. Thomas Episcopal School parents are personally responsible for the content that they post, share and respond to online. When posting online, all information is considered representative of your views and opinions and not those of St. Thomas Episcopal School.

Confidential Information

Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal School discussions, or specific information about students, staff or other parents. Do not use any School logo or image without permission. If you wish to promote a specific St. Thomas School activity or event, please contact IT administrator for permission or provide a link to the official St. Thomas Episcopal School Facebook page.

Staff-Parent Relations

We recognize that many members of our community are both staff members as well as parents or alumni parents. With this in mind, we ask that parents join the social networking site of faculty and staff with discretion. Parents should keep in mind that faculty and staff members are not required to accept invitations from parents, and should respect each individual staff member's personal preferences concerning their social networks.

You should never discuss sensitive School matters with staff or other parents using Facebook, blogs and other social media outlets. Guidelines for Acceptable Behavior on Social Networks are based on the common sense notion of asking if the posting represents the School in a positive light. If not, please delete any postings related to our School.

Privacy

When posting, even on the strictest settings, parents should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain. In microblogging (Twitter etc.), comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Parents are required to be supportive of the school, and social media should not be a forum to seek opinion related to the workings of the school.

Inappropriate Content

Even though you are of legal age, consider carefully what you post through comments and photos regarding alcohol and other age-restricted activities. This is especially important when commenting on the school's Facebook site. Do not use ethnic slurs, innuendos or any other inappropriate content. Do not use profane or threatening language when on the school Facebook or when you are discussing the school in your personal social media.

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Students learn in their computer classes about digital citizenship which includes courtesy and safety on-line. Parents can model using social media as a fun and supportive opportunity to build up the family of St. Thomas.

Technology- Responsible Use Policy (RUP) and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Technology is an important part of the curriculum at STES. Technology affords our students a new perspective on creating, exploring and solving problems. STES is committed to the responsibilities involved with technology, both legal and ethical. This commitment extends to all members of the St. Thomas community- faculty, staff, students and parents/guardians. Each parent and student is required to agree to the terms and conditions of a Responsible Use Policy before being permitted access to school technology resources.

The following agreement will be sent home with your child to be signed by the student and his/her parent(s). Students will not be permitted to use the school's technology resources until this agreement is returned.

<p><u>Educational Use:</u> Technology is used to enhance learning. STES network and technology resources are provided to enable the student to work and learn in a safe environment.</p> <p><u>Internet:</u> The internet provides a great resource for many school assignments and projects and will be used to enhance curriculum.</p> <p><u>Email:</u> Students will be expected to adhere strictly to the school's RUP/AUP as outlined above when utilizing their school issued email.</p> <p><u>BYOD:</u> Personal electronic devices are not permitted to be brought to school without permission from a teacher. All devices and users will be held to the same RUP while on our campus.</p>	<p>I WILL use technology at school for school work only.</p> <p>I WILL follow all teacher rules.</p> <p>I WILL only visit websites my teacher says are okay.</p> <p>I WILL only produce/post/ publish original work that has been approved by my teacher.</p> <p>I WILL proof my work.</p> <p>I WILL cite all my sources.</p> <p>I WILL only use my school email for school purposes.</p>
<p><u>Respect Property:</u> I will respect the property of others- including the school and my own equipment. I understand that property includes hardware, software, music, photos, videos, and other files. I will take responsibility for any technology equipment that I use while in my possession (e.g., computer, camera, tablet and other communication devices).</p>	<p>I WILL take responsibility for any technology equipment that I am using.</p> <p>I WILL NOT change or delete programs and files that I do not own.</p> <p>I WILL NOT copy music, videos, or other people's work.</p> <p>I WILL NOT change any settings or security functions on school devices.</p>
<p><u>Be Polite and Kind:</u> I will take pride in my communications. I will be considerate of others</p>	<p>I WILL be kind to others.</p> <p>I WILL be aware of others' cultures.</p>

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<p><i>and their cultures. I will not make or distribute jokes or stories which are based upon slurs or stereotypes (e.g., cyber-bullying, race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion). I will not swear or use other inappropriate language, symbols, or pictures.</i></p> <p><u>Respect Privacy:</u> <i>I will respect the rights of others.</i></p> <p>I will not record any photos or videos without teacher permission. Online posting of any photos or videos involving school personnel, students or school events from any device at home or school is prohibited.</p>	<p>I WILL NOT bully.</p> <p>I WILL NOT swear.</p>
<p><u>Respect the Law:</u> <i>I will never engage in activities that are against the law. I will not try to gain access to other computers, devices or systems. I know that vandalism will result in the loss of my equipment and network rights. I will not send messages that contain false or misleading information. If I find another person misusing the network, I will report it to my teacher or staff at school. I will not distribute private information about others.</i></p>	<p>I WILL respect the law.</p> <p>I WILL be truthful.</p>
<p><u>Keep Personal Information Private:</u> <i>I will not reveal my full name, home address, school address, e-mail address or telephone number in any online post or attachments. I will never arrange face-to-face meetings with someone I met online.</i></p>	<p>I WILL tell parents if someone wants to meet in person.</p> <p>I WILL keep my personal information private.</p> <p>I WILL NOT meet someone I met online.</p>
<p><u>Protect Your Password:</u> <i>I know that passwords are not to be shared with others. I will only use my assigned account. I will not view, use, or copy another person's password.</i></p>	<p>I WILL keep my passwords private.</p> <p>I WILL NOT use someone else's password.</p>
<p><u>Respect Your Network:</u> <i>I will not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by others. I know the school system can access and review my e-mail, files, or work.</i></p>	<p>I WILL NOT send large files or stream content without teacher permission.</p> <p>I WILL NOT load anything onto the computer without my teacher's permission.</p>
<p><u>Communicate and Collaborate Online:</u> <i>I will only post my work to STES approved and secure Web 2.0 sites (e.g., blogs, wikis, voice threads, podcasts, virtual drives).</i></p>	<p>I WILL use all the above rules to share my work appropriately.</p>

Rules regarding the use of School communications and electronic storage devices

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STES provides students access to a number of technology resources and devices which are designed to enhance the educational experience. These resources may include, but are not limited to, computers, iPads, Chromebooks, hardware peripheral to computers, computer interfaces, online storage, school issued email and others types of local and online software.

Students in grades third through fifth are issued a Google account on the STES domain for school use only. Students are expected to adhere strictly to the school's RUP/AUP as outlined above when utilizing their school issued email and other Google Apps. Students should consider their school email as an extension of the classroom, subject to the same rules of respect and courtesy that we expect in school.

Students should expect no right to privacy in their use of school technology resources, communications and electronic storage devices, whether the use is personal or business in nature. Students who use these resources consent, as a condition of their use, to having their electronic communications and other school issued accounts monitored or reviewed by School officials at any and all times, with or without notice. Data contained in online storage issued by the school may also be inspected at any time.

Students are prohibited from changing passwords or taking any measure that defeats School access to school issued technology resources and accounts. If a student's password becomes compromised they are required to request a new password from the STES network administrator. Whenever a student takes a measure that defeats the School's access in such a way, the School reserves the right to bypass gain access, utilizing any means available to the School, with or without notice to the student. Students in violation of this policy forfeit all privileges to technology opportunities on campus and are subject to discipline according to the STES Discipline plan.

Misuse of School Computers and Technology Resources

Students using computers and other technology resources must at all times abide by the general rules governing the conduct of students and must respect the rights of others authorized to use these resources. Users should conduct themselves according to the generally accepted rules of network etiquette and behave in a responsible, ethical and polite manner while online. While it is impossible to anticipate in advance all circumstances that may give rise to misuse of computer resources, the following instances of misuse will not be tolerated. Students may not:

- *Use someone else's password to gain entry to the network.*
- *Access the accounts and/or files of others. A computer left in a "logged in" situation does not give and individual legitimate admittance to someone else's files.*
- *Attempt to undermine network security, to damage network performance, or to circumvent limitations set by the administrators or to aid other in this conduct by sharing information of passwords.*
- *Physically or electronically tamper with or damage computer hardware, software, or other resources.*
- *Move school-owned hardware to a different location without express permission.*

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- *Access their personal subscriber online services using School computers.*
- *Download and play unauthorized games using School computers or technology resources.*
- *Introduce into the computer harmful software, such as viruses.*
- *Create, store, or display crude, derogatory or sexually suggestive messages or graphics using school computers or technology resources.*
- *Transmit, receive, submit or publish any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented threatening, offensive, or illegal material.*
- *Use the computing or technology resources for commercial purposes, product advertising, political lobbying, or political campaigning.*
- *Share with a person other than a School official knowledge concerning security deficiencies in the school's network or school computers or technology resources.*
- *Students who become aware of a security problem in the School's computer network or Internet connection must report the problem to a STES staff member.*
- *Violate copyright laws that protect software owners, artists, and writers. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.*
- *Violate any instruction or directive from STES staff regarding the use of computer resources.*
- *Engage in any activity that does not uphold and advance the mission of STES which violates the school's rules of conduct.*

Violation of these rules or any failure to use School computers in a responsible, professional manner is cause for discipline and can result in disciplinary action up to and including separation from School.

Internet Access

STES technology resources give students the ability to access the Internet. Access to the Internet provides students the opportunity to explore a wealth of educational information. Access to the Internet also provides access to people all over the world and availability to material that may not be considered of educational value in a School setting.

Some material obtained via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive. STES has taken precautions to restrict access to such materials by teaching students about responsible use and by using computer settings to limit student access to inappropriate sites. However, due to the vast nature of the Internet, it is impossible to control all materials, therefore a user might discover controversial information.

This agreement/policy specifically prohibits students from accessing, using or distributing any material considered inappropriate for use in an educational setting as outlined above. Violation of this agreement by students could result in serious discipline.