

St. Thomas Aquinas
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
POLICY

St. Thomas Aquinas is committed to providing students with a school environment that is both safe and conducive to learning. We believe that parents are the most important educators of their children, and that we need to work in partnership with them to teach students to be responsible for their own actions. We believe that we are unique and worthy persons and God calls each of us to work together in love, hope and courage in our school community. Spirituality is the cornerstone of Catholic Education. We encourage personal integrity, which results in sincerity, honesty and compassion. We demonstrate responsibility in the choices we make. We believe that by striving for understanding, we provide for an environment that stimulates growth and accepts differences. We maintain forgiveness as a basic belief of our Catholic faith that must be lived in our school, community and home. We believe that showing respect for ourselves, each other and for our environment, provides for harmony and personal growth. In accordance with the Alberta Human rights Act, we believe that all students have a right to resources; services and facilities that are required for their learning and comfort. We celebrate our accomplishments and cherish that each person brings gifts, talents and interests to our community to develop and share. We are dedicated to teaching students' appropriate behavior towards themselves and others. We expect students to behave in an appropriate manner, which does not interfere with the learning or behavior of others. We believe that people perform better when they know what is expected of them. We affirm that the rights set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are afforded to all students and staff members within St. Thomas Aquinas School.

Expectations for Appropriate Behaviour

Students and parents are to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful and contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. School-wide expectations are communicated to our students by teachers in classroom discussions, by school administration in assemblies, during morning announcements and through the Agenda Book. We have set behavioral guidelines for the school as a whole and have asked each teacher to apply programs and procedures designed to maximize student learning and responsibility. Since each teacher has a different style, specific expectations and procedures will vary from class to class. Expectations of students and school rules are outlined at the beginning of the year and are regularly reviewed with students. Students are expected to conduct themselves according to the requirements set out in the Education Act and are outlined as follows:

School Act Part 1, Section 12—Student Responsibilities

A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- (a) be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- (b) attend school regularly and punctually;
- (c) co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- (d) comply with the rules of the school;
- (e) account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- (f) respect the rights of others;
- (g) ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging
- (h) refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means;
- (i) positively contribute to the student's school and community.

School Act Act Part 1, Section 16.2—Parent Responsibilities

A parent of a student has the responsibility

- (a) to take an active role in the student's educational success, including assisting the student in complying with section 12,
- (b) to ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- (c) to co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the student,
- (d) to encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and
- (e) to engage in the student's school community.

Expectations of Student Behavior:

Students are expected to follow the expectations set out in the School Act; our school discipline policy; and the expectations set out by their teachers. These details are described below; and are given to students by their teachers at the beginning of each year, student expectations are not exclusive to these detailed.

Electronic Device Policy

Students are allowed to bring their own electronic devices to class, for the purpose of having access to technology that will assist them with their studies. Students will be allowed to carry devices that will give them easy access to the technology they might need to help them with research or note taking. Students who are carrying phones with these capabilities; will be expected not to use these devices for texting; picture taking or making phone calls during the school day. Both parents and students must understand that communicating via texts or phone calls during the school day is prohibited. We expect that if parents need to get in touch with their child during the day, they will do so by contacting the main office. In reverse if students need to get in touch with their parents we would expect that, this would be done via the office. Students are not allowed to take or make calls during the day. If a student needs to leave school

for any reason this needs to be communicated through the office. Students and parents are expected to read and sign our ECSD joint use agreement; as well as read and understand the digital citizenship information. As we move forward to meet the learning needs of our digital generation we need to teach them to use technology responsibly so that they continue to ensure their privacy and the privacy of others is maintained.

Appropriate Dress

Rapidly changing styles and fashions make it impossible to suggest a definite standard of dress; however, students should dress in a manner consistent with Christian values, educational goals, school activities, and the weather. During warm weather, shorts may be worn if they are a proper length and fit, necklines must be appropriate. Logos on clothing should have appropriate language and design. Students dressed inappropriately will be asked to go home to change or have clothes brought to school for them.

Outdoor footwear cannot be worn in the school. Students require indoor footwear that is to be left at school. Hats are not to be worn indoors and once in the classroom, no outdoor clothes should be worn.

Closed Campus

St. Thomas Aquinas School has a closed campus policy, all students must stay on the property of the school during school hours including lunch; unless they have permission from their parents to go home and these arrangements must be made with the administrative staff.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Bullying

Bullying is defined in law as “the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or emotional abuse.” Students who experience bullying are encouraged to report such incidents to their teachers, parents, and the administration depending on the severity and frequency of the action. Students will be taught how to recognize and deal with bullying. Bullying of students could result in an immediate suspension from school. As well, the police may be involved in the investigation of bullying incidents. Any person who repeatedly bullies a minor (under the age of 18) in a public place could be subject to a \$250 fine.

Discrimination

We affirm that pursuant to the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, students and staff members are protected from discrimination. More specifically, discrimination refers to any conduct that serves to deny or discriminate against any person or class of persons regarding any goods, services, accommodation or facilities that are customarily available to the public, and the denial or discrimination is based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. Students who experience discrimination are encouraged to report such incidents to their teachers, parents and the administration depending on the severity and frequency of the actions. Students will be taught how to recognize and deal with discrimination.

Defiance and Repeated Violation of General Expectations

Repeated violation of general expectations or a continual disregard of classroom rules may result in an out-of-school suspension any act of defiance, that is, refusing to comply with a reasonable request from a staff member, may result in an immediate suspension.

Physical / Verbal Abuse or Harassment

Physical abuse of any type to anyone will result in an immediate suspension. Verbal intimidation or harassment will also result in an immediate suspension. At St. Thomas Aquinas, there is no such thing as “play fighting” – and therefore this will not be considered an acceptable excuse for physical contact with another student. Police may be involved if this is deemed to be appropriate by school administration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who choose to watch or encourage other students in a physical fight might also be suspended from school. The fact that they have an audience encourages those students who are fighting to continue the conflict, as they do not want to "lose face" in front of their peers. Thus, the spectators are viewed by school administration as being a major contributing factor to the continuation of the fighting, and they will be treated accordingly.

Improper or Profane Language

The use or display of improper or profane language could result in a suspension from school. Students who use profane language in addressing a teacher will be suspended from school.

Vandalism

Vandalism to school property will result in an immediate suspension and/or community service* depending on the circumstances. Students will be expected to pay fully for any damages caused deliberately or through carelessness.

*Community service occurs when a student is assigned to do work to assist any of the adults in the school (i.e.: teachers, custodians, support staff). This is for a specific number of hours in a specified period of time.

Theft

Theft of property, either from the school or from another person is strictly prohibited. Restoration of the stolen property is mandatory. In some instances, cases of theft would be referred to the police.

Illegal Drugs or Substances

Possession or use of illegal drugs or substances on school property or in sight of school property will result in an immediate suspension and may lead to expulsion from the school. In cases of drug use, the police will be involved in the investigation and charges could be laid.

Behavior Dangerous to Self or Others

Students who engage in reckless or dangerous behavior will be suspended from school. If appropriate, the police will also be involved in the investigation.

Weapons

Possession of a weapon or presentation of any object meant to threaten or intimidate will result in an immediate suspension. Any item that could be used as a weapon and is brought to school will be confiscated and turned over to the police. Police may be involved if this is deemed to be appropriate by school administration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This rule also applies to toy knives and guns. Simulated weapons will be treated in the same fashion as real weapons. They have no place in a school environment.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

We concentrate on positive behavior and attitudes, however, there are times when a student has difficulty recognizing their responsibility as a student. In such cases, we have outlined a number of possible consequences for behavior. When a student behaves inappropriately, they can expect that the staff member present (teacher, administrator, teacher assistant, support & caretaking staff) will apply the most appropriate action. Based on individual needs, the policy contains a continuum of support to correct the unacceptable behaviors as well as support student who are impacted by inappropriate behavior. These are some of the consequences and supports that may be put in place:

- Verbal reprimand
- Restriction of privileges and activities
- Detention of student
- Parental involvement
- Parent-student conference with school staff
- Verbal or written apology by student
- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behavior expectations
- Replacement or repair of damaged property
- Temporary exclusion of student from class
- Bus suspension for students riding the bus
- In-school suspension
- Out-of school suspension – severe breach of conduct will be suspended in accordance with section 24 of the School Act.
- Behavior contract
- Involvement of outside agencies
- Supports for both the instigator and the victim will be made available as needed, they may include:
 - Access to an Emotional Behavioral Specialist; Family School Liaison Worker; STAY team advisor; for a referral to the appropriate Mental Health Supports.
 - Involvement of Police
 - Recommendation for expulsion

As might be expected, the more serious the behavior, the more severe the consequence. The nature and circumstances of the incident, as well as frequency of inappropriate behavior and the age; maturity and individual circumstances of student, are also considered.

Preventative and supportive procedures for minor breaches of conduct will be provided as well as fair, corrective interventions to address major breaches of conduct.

This Student Code of Conduct Policy was developed by the school community and was:

- Based on input from student, parents and school staff;
- Is reflective of the expectations of students as addressed in legislation and district policies;
- Will be communicated in writing to all member so the school community on an annual basis;
- Will be reviewed and adapted as necessary on an annual basis by members of the school community.

My child and I have read and discussed this conduct policy, we understand that my child must be in good standing to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Student signature

Parent signature