

**AQUINAS MIDDLE SCHOOL  
STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK  
2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR**

*Aquinas Middle School is a member of Aquinas Catholic Schools. The middle school is located in La Crosse on the city block of Cameron Street, West Avenue, Cass Street, and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The middle school is home to seventh and eighth grade students enrolled in the Aquinas Catholic Schools.*

*It is the belief of Aquinas Catholic Schools that each student develops best in an atmosphere that stresses Gospel values, worship, community, service, self-discipline, and academic excellence. To this end, Aquinas Catholic Schools will provide programs that are rooted in the Gospel, intellectually stimulating, emotionally fulfilling, physically challenging, and morally and spiritually guided for each student. We strongly encourage you to read this handbook in order to familiarize yourself with the expectations that our school places on students each year. Your support is critical. Thank you.*

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**AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

*Aquinas Catholic Schools is a Christ-centered learning community carrying out a fundamental mission of the Church to educate, challenge, and inspire students in the Catholic tradition of faith, service, and academic excellence.*

**AQUINAS MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

*Aquinas Middle School will inspire students to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and lifelong learners within a safe, nurturing, Catholic environment.*

*Students will grow spiritually, academically, creatively, socially, and physically, striving to be Christ-like influences in their communities.*

**AQUINAS MIDDLE SCHOOL MOTTO**

*Learn - Share - Serve*

**AQUINAS MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITMENT STATEMENTS**

*Aquinas Middle School will*

- help students grow spiritually*
- offer opportunities for academic success and personal growth for all students*
- provide opportunities for students to serve their communities*
- incorporate current materials and technology for students and teachers*
- support professional development of teachers*

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES**

Various Academic Support Services are available to Aquinas Middle School students. Our formalized academic support program offers, to all students, significant opportunities to maximize their Aquinas Middle School learning experiences. Some supports that may be available for Aquinas Middle School students are:

- Teacher before school assistance from 7:30-7:50 a.m. daily**
- Teacher after school assistance from 3:05-3:30 p.m. daily**
- Para-Professional support in classes and resources**
- After School Study from 3:15-4:15 p.m. daily**
- Literature books on tape or CD**
- Recorded Library books**
- Aquinas High School National Honor Society Tutors**

For a student with currently identified extraordinary learning needs, regular consultations are available to support the student, parents, and teachers. Students who qualify under state criteria as requiring special education services have individualized educational case management available to them. Response to Intervention is part of our school and system efforts to serve each student.

Through Aquinas Middle School's membership in the **Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth (WCATY)**, students interested in challenging academic offerings will have opportunities available to them. This information will be posted/and or forwarded to parents from the Administration and/or Guidance Academic Support Offices.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOURSE**

Any grievance by a parent/guardian against the school or its employees shall be resolved through Diocesan Administrative Recourse. Diocesan Administrative Recourse shall constitute the exclusive method for resolving such disputes and parents are bound by its determination as final and binding upon them. No dispute shall be submitted to Diocesan Administrative Recourse unless, within 30 days of the occurrence giving rise to the dispute, the first step of the Diocesan Administrative Recourse is commenced by the parent/guardian. DSP 1901

Outline of the chain of authority (*specific to Aquinas Catholic Schools*) to be followed in resolving disputes:

1. Teacher/Employee
2. *Principal*
3. *President*
4. *Dean of La Crosse Area Pastors*
5. Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools
6. Bishop

Procedure in the Diocese of La Crosse:

When one of Christ's faithful judges himself or herself injured by the decision or action of a person exercising pastoral or administrative authority in the Diocese of La Crosse, he or she, first, is to confront the person in question with the grievance and seek reconciliation with the person.

If the party who judges himself or herself injured is not able to achieve reconciliation by conversation with the authority involved, he or she may present the grievance to the pastor of the Church within 30 calendar days of the time of the alleged injury. The recourse is to be made in writing and is to state the facts of the conflict and the reason or reasons why the party judges himself or herself injured. The response to the recourse also is to be made in writing and is to state the reasons for the response given.

If the grievance is against an authority in the parish, the appeal first is to be made to the pastor who is to seek to reconcile the two parties. At this level and at the successive levels, the pastor may seek the assistance of others, especially those respected for their ability to reconcile; but in the end the pastoral authority remains responsible for seeking the resolution of the conflict. No consultative body as such or members of consultative bodies, in virtue of their membership, should be given the pastoral responsibility of resolving such conflicts. The consultative body, e.g., the parish pastoral council, has responsibility for assisting the pastor in drawing up good policies for the pastoral activity of the parish and for assisting the pastor in clarifying policies in cases of conflict or interpretation. It does not, however, engage in the administration of the policies. The pastor is obliged to respond to the recourse within fifteen calendar days from the time he receives it.

Once the pastor has given his response to the recourse, the conflict is considered reconciled, unless the pastor's response is appealed to the dean within fifteen calendar days from the date the parties in conflict receive the response.

If reconciliation is not achieved with the pastor's help, or the grievance is against the pastor himself, the appeal is to be made to the local dean who by office has special responsibility for promoting harmony of pastoral action and unity of Church life in his deanery. (*cf. Can. 555, 1, 10:2, 20*) If the grievance is against the pastor, and the pastor is the local dean, then the appeal is to be made to the dean of the closest neighboring deanery, with the consent of the Diocesan Bishop. The dean is obliged to respond to the recourse within fifteen calendar days from the date he receives it.

If reconciliation is not achieved on the deanery level, or if the grievance is against the dean in the exercise of his office of dean, then the appeal is to be made to the Diocesan Bishop directly. The Diocesan Bishop may carry out the work of reconciliation himself or he may name another to act for him in the matter. In the latter case, the Diocesan Bishop makes his own response to the person named. The Diocesan Bishop is obliged to respond to the recourse within 15 calendar days from the date he receives it.

If the grievance is against the Diocesan Bishop, the legislation in the Code of Canon Law is to be followed. (*cf. Canon 1732-1739*)

It should be kept in mind that the Code of Canon Law requires a special procedure to be followed by the Diocesan Bishop in the case of the removal of a pastor (*cf. Canon 1740-1747*) or the transfer of a pastor unwilling to be transferred. (*cf. Canon 1749-1752*) DSR 1901

The penalty for a violation of a school or diocesan policy or regulation is to be enforced during the recourse procedure. However, a request can be made to the diocesan director of schools to speed up the recourse procedure. This request can be made by the school, employee, student or parent affected. The request can be granted or denied. DSP 1902

## **AIDS POLICY**

The Aquinas Middle School complies with the Diocesan Policy on personnel and students with AIDS. That policy is located in the Principal's office and is available to parents and students upon request.

## **ASBESTOS**

### **NOTICE OF ASBESTOS INSPECTION, MANAGEMENT PLAN LOCATION AND AVAILABILITY**

The school's asbestos management plan is located in the principal's office. This plan contains the original EPA AHERA inspection reports, periodic surveillance, 3-year re-inspections, and response action activities. This document is available for review by all parents upon their request. (*DSP/R 3320*).

If you wish to review this school's EPS AHERA related documents, appointments must be made with the Aquinas Middle School Principal at least one working day in advance. Copies of the documents are available from the same location upon request.

**Aquinas Middle School**  
**315 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street, La Crosse, WI 54601**  
**Dan Kammel**  
**608-784-0156**

### **ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB**

The Aquinas Booster Club is a grade 5-12 athletic organization that provides invaluable assistance to advance all Aquinas athletic programs. Parents of athletes are encouraged to become involved in the Booster Club. Meetings are held monthly and are noted on the school calendar.

The primary function of the Athletic Booster Club is to raise funds to support the athletic programs of Aquinas Catholic Schools. Parents of middle school athletes are asked to assist in the raising of funds via the annual calendar sale, helping at concessions, and other specific money-raising events.

### **ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

The purpose of the Aquinas Middle School Athletic Program is to provide an opportunity for students to explore their potential, learn team play, and enjoy the spirit of competition. The aim of this program is to build character, sportsmanship, and physical fitness through a cooperative team effort. The program will attempt to enhance each student's self esteem, teach the Christian values of respect and fairness, and develop athletic skills. Emphasis will be placed upon team spirit and mutual consideration for one another. We uphold the concept that an athletic program is a cooperative effort involving students, parents, coaches, and other staff. Any student who wishes to participate in a particular sport, and is eligible (*both academically and via the Honor Level program*) to participate in that sport, will be allowed to compete.

Participation in athletics is a privilege which carries with it responsibilities. Academics and behavior take priority over athletics. Participation in athletics is dependent on the player maintaining good grades in all disciplines and good behavior in school (*see eligibility guidelines*). **Scheduled detentions are an obligation of the student athlete to fulfill and thus take priority over athletic practices and competitions.** Furthermore, any behavior subject to student probation, suspension, or expulsion will result in athletic ineligibility for a period of time determined by school administration.

### **PARENT/PLAYER CONCERNS – ADMINISTRATIVE RECOURSE**

There is a specific order for discussing athletic concerns. That order is:

- A. Coach – The coach is the first person to discuss concerns about practices, games, playing times, etc. Discussions should be held privately and not before or after competitions as the coach must be responsible for all athletes at those times. Scheduling appointments for a discussion are most effective.
- B. Aquinas Middle School Athletic Director – The Athletic Director is in charge of all middle school athletic programs. This person should be contacted concerning issues not able to be resolved by a coach.
- C. Aquinas Middle School Principal – The principal should be contacted in situations when a parent/student is not satisfied with decisions of the Coach and Athletic Director.
- D. Aquinas Catholic Schools President – The President should be contacted in situations when parent/student is not satisfied with athletic related decisions of the Coach, Athletic Director, and Principal.
- E. Administrative Recourse – In situations when a parent/student is not satisfied with decisions made by the above list, the process of administrative recourse as outlined in this handbook should be initiated

## **ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS**

Daily attendance is essential to success in school. However, if it is necessary for a student to be absent or tardy, the parent or guardian must contact the office. For absence reporting and excusing your child for an appointment, please enter your child's absence into the skyward app or call the Aquinas Middle School office at **784-0156** or email **jennifer.small@aquinasschools.org** before **8:30 AM on the day of the absence**. *The parent must request homework at that time in order for it to be prepared by the close of the school day.* Typically, the student will have one extra day per day absent to complete school work missed.

Statute 118.15 requires that school attendance is **MANDATORY** for a child who is between the ages of 6 and 18. Students and parents can be fined and referred to juvenile authorities for non-compliance with attendance laws. A student's attendance can be directly correlated to his/her success in school. Given that students need 26 credits to graduate from Aquinas High School, being in school and earning credits is critical in meeting the requirements for graduation.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Students may be excused from school for illness, health appointment or family emergencies, provided the parent/guardian enters the absence in Skyward or emails jennifer.small@aquinasschools.org before 8:30 AM on the day of the absence. Students must check out in the office if they leave the building and check in when they return to school. Students leaving for an appointment should bring a doctors upon their return.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE-ILLNESS:** If a student misses 5 or more consecutive days and/or accumulates 10 days of absences per year, a doctor's note will be required for each absence due to illness thereafter, to be excused. If the absences are due to a chronic medical condition, special religious holidays, or other extenuating circumstances, please contact the principal or associate principal.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE-PARENTAL DAYS IN ADVANCE:** Students are allowed 10 parental absence days per year as long as the request is **IN WRITING, IN ADVANCE**. Students must have a pre-approved absence form filled out in advance as well and this form must be signed by all of their teachers. A parent cannot excuse a child because the child decides she/he does not want to be in school.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE-SCHOOL RELATED SPORTS/ACTIVITIES RELEASE:** Students will be excused for school related activities. They must notify their teachers prior to the event that will cause them to miss a class. All work missed must be made up. Teachers, coaches and/or advisors must give a list of the students in the group, to the office, 1 day prior to the event. All events must be administratively approved.

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Perfect attendance is defined as not missing any school for any reason. This includes no tardies, appointments of any kind and any other type of absence.

**TARDIES:** Tardies are defined as being late to class. This causes interruption within the educational teaching process and should be avoided. Those students checking in after the school day has started must check in at the office for a pass. Students, without an acceptable excuse, who are late to a class during the school day, may receive a detention. Every tardy will result in an Honor Level Reminder. Excessive tardiness will be handled by administration on a case by case basis.

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE/TRUANCY:** Absences of any kind are continually monitored, due to the fact that attendance and academic performance are so closely related. If a student's absence has not been reported to the school before 8:30 AM on the day of the absence, the absence is assumed to be unexcused. All unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action. Excessive unexcused absences may result in a Simple Truancy Citation, a Habitual Truancy Citation and/or referral to La Crosse County Human Services.

A student who exceeds five absences in any given quarter may be required to meet with the counselor and/or the administration to assist in avoiding further absences. Continued absences after this point will most probably result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, attendance contracts, school contact to Social Services, and/or dismissal from Aquinas Middle School.

Students must be in attendance **all day at school** in order to participate in athletic and extra-curricular activities, unless there is a school approved excused absence during that day.

Parents are urged to make doctor and dental appointments after school hours and during vacation periods. ***Students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds for dental or medical appointments or for any reason without a request by a parent, preferably entered in Skyward one day in advance.***

Families are encouraged to plan vacations around the school schedule to avoid extended absences. In the case of an extended absence (more than two consecutive days), the principal must receive a written note regarding this absence. This note should be submitted at least one week prior to the extended absence. The student will then complete and submit to the principal the extended absence form. Student work may be accumulated during the absence, and students may have, at most, the number of days to make up this work equal to the number of days absent. **Please note that prior assigned and long-term assignments with preset/prearranged due dates are due on the due date regardless of absence (ex. Journals, projects, speeches, etc.)** Also, teachers may require and can expect students to take tests and/or complete projects/assignments prior to the planned absence.

The student is responsible for keeping up with homework due to absences during the school year. **The school does not guarantee the ability to provide work for the student prior to the absence.**

## **AWARDS**

Recognizing student success is a goal of Aquinas Middle School. Recognition comes in many ways:

Monthly during the school year, selected by faculty:

- Student of the Month: St. Thomas Aquinas Award (*for respecting others, their time, their property; and for working up to their ability*)
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Award (*for creative effort, courtesy and sportsmanship*)

Young Catholic Scholars (recipients determined after 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter)

The complete selection criterion for this award is as follows:

**Scholarship** as reflected in a cumulative 3.5 or above grade point average for the first three quarters of the school year.

**Leadership** as reflected in involvement in extra-curricular activities.

**Service** as reflected in service to school and community.

**Character** as reflected in being on Honor Level 1 and 2 for the entire school year to date.

Students must complete an application form that assists the selection committee in determining if the student has met the Leadership, Service and Character criteria in a satisfactory way. Teacher nomination forms also assist the selection committee in determining if the student has met the Leadership, Service and Character criteria in a satisfactory way. Students are notified of selection as a Young Catholic Scholar by the administrator.

End of the year awards, selected by faculty, may include:

- Kiwanis Club Student of the Year (*grade 8*)
- Presidential Academic Excellence Award (*grade 8*)
- Presidential Academic Effort Award (*grade 8*)
- Faithful Attendance Award (*grades 7/8*)
- Honor Level All-Star Award (*grades 7/8*)
- Aquinas High School Scholarships (*grade 8*)

End of the year awards, selected by students, may include:

- H.O.T. Award (*Heroes of Today – student who demonstrates qualities of a modern day hero*) – grades 7/8

## **BICYCLES**

Bicycle racks are provided for the students. Bikes should be parked in the racks on Cameron Street. **ALL BIKES SHOULD BE LOCKED.** The school is not responsible for any damage or theft of bicycles.

## **BOMB THREATS**

The health, safety, and well-being of students should always be a primary concern for school staff. If a bomb threat is received by a school, procedures shall be followed that keep the safety of the students foremost in mind. Student conveyance of bomb threats constitutes grounds for suspension and/or expulsion. DSP 6122

In the event of a bomb threat, fire drill evacuation procedure will be used immediately and the police notified of the threat. Re-entry to the building will take place only after the authorities have checked the building and found everything in order.

## **BULLYING**

Aquinas Catholic Schools strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. Aquinas Catholic Schools will consistently and vigorously address bullying to maintain the standards of a Christian community and ensure that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

**Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.**

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)

Bullying behavior is prohibited in all school buildings and grounds, vehicles and property owned, leased, or used by the school system, and at school-sponsored activities. The school system reserves the right to address bullying that occurs outside of these venues if it affects or is likely to affect the learning environment.

Any school staff member or individual who observes or become aware of acts of bullying shall report these acts to the principal. Students who are either a victim of bullying or are aware of bullying involving another student are encouraged to report the conduct to the principal. Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports will be taken seriously and will be investigated.

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the principal may take disciplinary action, including, but not limited to: detention, suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Aquinas Middle School supports the bus regulations issued by the bussing company and/or the respective public school district. The rules are made for the safety and welfare of the children. Riding a school bus is a privilege, and it can be taken away if the privilege is abused and bus misconduct reports are issued. Misconduct reports are issued by the bus company and enforced by the school via the principal.

Bus schedule details and *questions may be directed to the individual transportation office: Holmen 526-4752, La Crosse 789-7647, and Onalaska 783-4763.*

## **CATHOLIC FAITH AND MORAL STANDARD**

As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in the Diocesan Schools, a student's conduct must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of other students and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate expulsion. DSP 5112

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS, PHONE, AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Parents or guardians are asked to notify the school in writing IMMEDIATELY when there is a change of address, phone number, any change in parent(s) or guardianship, or any other change that the school should be aware of.

## **CHANGE OF SCHOOL**

*If a student should choose to withdraw from Aquinas Middle School, the parent or guardian must submit a signed records release form to the Main Office. Forms are available in the office. All textbooks and other items that are the property of the school must be returned upon the signing of the release form. All financial settlements are to be made with the Aquinas Catholic Schools Business Office.*

## **CLOSING OF SCHOOL (EMERGENCY)**

The closing of school, due to weather or other emergencies, is determined by Aquinas Catholic Schools. Announcements will be carried on the local radio and TV stations. Should the La Crosse public schools close due to bad weather, Aquinas Middle School will also close. *(A signed Emergency School Closing Form must be on file in the school office. This form will be sent home in the family folder during the first weeks of school.)*

In the event of emergency school closings or early dismissals, all evening activities including concerts, meetings, athletic games and practices, conferences, etc. will be cancelled.

## **CONCERTS**

As part of the Aquinas Middle School music curriculum, Aquinas Middle School will host two concerts during the year – a Christmas concert and a spring concert. Dress code, specific to these performances, is listed under the dress code portion of the handbook. **All middle school students are required to adhere to the dress code and to participate in the concerts.**

## **CONFERENCES**

Per Diocesan policy, as a personal means of informing parents as to the development of their children, schools are to schedule conferences on a regular basis. At Aquinas Middle School, **students are to attend conferences with their parent(s) or guardian(s).**

Conferences are to be scheduled at least twice a year, once during or shortly after the first quarter and once during or shortly after the second or third quarter. DSP 5205



## CONFIDENTIALITY

Rather than strict confidentiality in regard to student-school employee communication (*verbal and written*), the Diocese of La Crosse Catholic schools operate under a “spirit of confidentiality.” This means that outside of the sacramental confidentiality between priest and penitent, strict confidentiality can not be promised to the student if the information disclosed by the student includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Information that concerns violation of the law.
2. Matters involving the health and safety of the student or any person.
3. Serious moral issues.
4. Any other matter that raises serious enough concern in the mind of the employee that he or she believes it is important to share the information with the school administrator.

The school administration, after consultation with the Office for Catholic Schools, may choose to disclose the information to parents, legal authorities, medical personnel or other deemed necessary personnel. DSP 5310

## CORRESPONDENCE

Communication between school and home is essential. Thus, all important school correspondence will be sent home weekly in “Family Folders”. Please take the time to read through these and to contact the school office with any questions or suggestions you may have. **Parents and students are responsible for reviewing and being familiar with all information sent home.** The family folder log enclosed in this weekly correspondence requires a weekly parent signature and is to be returned to school in the folder by the student by the following Tuesday.

## COURTESY

Courtesy will be stressed by all Aquinas Middle School staff. Such behavior as friendly greetings, holding doors, conduct appropriate to the classroom setting and other thoughtful behavior will be encouraged and expected.

## CURRICULUM

A basic middle school curriculum, as is listed below, is taught. Accelerated Math is offered to qualifying seventh graders and High School Algebra is offered to qualifying eighth graders. Qualifying students in both grades 7 and 8 may choose one of two foreign language courses – Spanish or French. Students in all grades must choose one, or a maximum of two, music options.

### Core Courses

Religion  
Language Arts/Literature  
Mathematics  
Science  
Social Studies

### Encore Courses

Art  
Band, Choir, General Music, and/or Strings  
Computers  
Foreign Language (*Spanish or French*)  
Physical Education

## DIPLOMAS

Diplomas will be awarded to students who successfully meet the eighth grade requirements. If a student does not meet these necessary grade level requirements, he/she may qualify to receive a certificate of attendance rather than a diploma. Parents/guardians will be notified prior to graduation if their child is receiving a certificate of attendance.

## DISCIPLINE

Aquinas Middle School places a high value on respect, self-discipline, and good behavior. Students are expected to display proper respect for others and their property as well as follow the necessary rules and regulations. It is essential that students understand and accept their responsibilities as students and citizens.

The Aquinas Middle School staff recognizes that education is most effective and enjoyable when students take responsibility for their own behavior. In order to facilitate this effective and positive learning environment, Aquinas Middle School uses the HONOR LEVEL PROGRAM. Through the use of the Honor Level Program, all Aquinas Middle School staff members can consistently set the tone for appropriate and respectful actions. Furthermore, the Honor Level Discipline Program provides a set of rules and consequences that help to insure consistency, fair treatment, and clear expectations for all students. Most importantly, the Honor Level Program provides opportunities for staff members to recognize appropriate behavior through incentives and rewards individual students earn. The ability to focus on the positive is an excellent way to assist middle school students in their self- discipline and personal growth.

In essence, the Honor Level Program tracks student behavior, both positive and negative, via a system of points. Students struggling with poor behavior choices are issued points with the number varying relative to the behavior. Points fall into different categories:

Failure to:

- 1 Pt Reminder
  - Bring signed material from home.
  - Arrive to class on time.
  - Come to class with homework.
  - Come to class with necessary materials.
  - Move through the building in an orderly manner.
  - Use hall pass appropriately.
  - Follow dress code policy.
  - Attend music lesson.
  - Follow classroom and school rules.
  - Use proper manners.
  - Come to class with assignment notebook.

### 3 Pt School Detention

- Multiple reminders for the same behavior.
- Follow classroom and school rules.
- Follow lunch rules.
- Respect school property and the property of others.
- Use appropriate language.
- Come to class with homework consistently.

### 5 Pt School Detention

- Settle conflicts appropriately.
- Treat peers with respect.
- Treat staff with respect.
- Extreme behavioral disruption.

Along with reminder slips there are times when a student may receive a detention slip. All detentions are forty minutes in length, after school, from 3:10-3:50 p.m. Students and parents will always be informed the day before a student is to serve a detention. Parents are notified of a detention via a blue slip issued to the student by the teacher. Parent signature on this blue slip, acknowledging awareness of the detention, is a critical part of the communication process in helping correct inappropriate or problematic behaviors. It is the student's responsibility to return the blue slip, signed by a parent/guardian, immediately to the main office, before school, the following morning. An assigned detention takes precedence over all other

after school activities, including athletic competitions. Failure to return a blue slip and/or any time a student misses an assigned detention, with the exception of absence during the school day or prior arrangements with the Honor Level coordinator, means that the detention time will immediately be doubled and further points/consequences may result.

The Honor Level Program keeps a running log of all reminder slips and detentions issued to a student. This is extremely helpful in helping identify areas of difficulty for a student. Discovering the nature of a problem will help us work together as a team, with the school, the parents and with the student – toward a solution. This running log also allows for the humanness of young people to be noted. Specifically, reminder slips do not compile for an extended period of time with this program. On any given day, a student’s total honor points define what Honor Level status the student is currently at:

Honor Level One	0 – 2 points
Honor Level Two	3 - 11 points
Honor Level Three	12 – 21 points
Honor Level Four	22+ points

However, Honor Points last no more than 14 calendar days on the student’s active record and then drop off. Thus, the Honor Level Program is a fair and forgiving system that allows for differences among students while enforcing consistent standards.

Incentives are important to an effective middle school discipline program and this system offers various incentives to students based on their Honor Level at the time of an activity or event. The incentive guidelines are:

Honor Level One	A student can participate in all incentives ( <i>Silent Auction and Live Auction, Homework Pass rewards, Auction Buck rewards, Principal’s Raffle, Socials, etc.</i> )
Honor Level Two	A student can participate in select incentives ( <i>some of the above as stated on the calendar guide – assigned by Student Council members prior to the school year.</i> )
Honor Level Three	A student <u>may not</u> be allowed to participate in any incentives. Attendance at school sponsored social events during or outside of school will be limited. There exists a possibility for non-attendance and non-participation in school clubs, athletics – games and practices, etc.
Honor Level Four	A student will not be allowed to participate in any incentives. Attendance at school sponsored social events during or outside of school will not be allowed. <u>No</u> attendance or participation in school clubs, athletics, etc.

Also, any student earning more than 25 points per quarter may be subject to further disciplinary action as stated below under the probation, suspension, dismissal and expulsion guidelines.

Please note that the purpose and goal of utilizing the Honor Level Program allows your child to be the chief benefactor in this system. Education can take place more easily and more effectively in classrooms where students take responsibility for their behavior. The Honor Level Program creates a positive and concrete environment that is conducive to learning. Students no longer fall through the cracks, and each student can be dealt with individually. With the Honor Level Program, more time is spent on students who consistently make positive choices rather than on the few students who do not.

For behavioral concerns of a more serious nature, the following options are available to the principal or associate principal who will make the final decision:

- a) Probation
- b) Suspension
- c) Dismissal and Expulsion

### **Probation:**

Probation is intended as a warning that unless conduct is improved, suspension or expulsion is a definite possibility. Probation may be given for any of the causes listed under suspension or expulsion. Written notice of probation is to be given to the parents of the student placed on probation.

### **Suspension:**

Suspension is a disciplinary action to be used in more serious or continued infractions of the behavior code. Suspension may be either in-school or out-of-school as determined by the principal. In either case, the student is responsible to complete all work and/or tests immediately upon return to the classroom setting. Any of the following reasons may be, but are not limited to, cause for suspension:

1. Truancy.
2. Smoking or chewing tobacco on school property.
3. Violations of the Aquinas Middle School Drug and Alcohol Policy.
4. Disrespect or defiance of an adult in a position of authority.
5. Obscenities- oral, written, or gestured.
6. Destruction of school property.
7. Actions seriously disruptive to class conduct.
8. Inappropriate writing, drawings, etc.
9. Behavior that endangers other students or staff.
10. Any threat, verbal or written, that would endanger the safety of students, staff, or the Aquinas facility. The above threat to person(s) or building will result in the immediate suspension of the student. Upon investigation of the incident the student will either be allowed to return to school upon completion of the out of school suspension or if necessary to be considered for dismissal or expulsion from Aquinas Middle School.
11. Theft.
12. Possession or computer access of pornographic, violent, sacrilegious, or otherwise offensive items on school grounds, at school activities, or on school buses.
13. Unauthorized and/or improper use of school computers and equipment.
14. Unauthorized entry into the elevator or possession of an access key.
15. Loitering in the neighborhood before/after school or otherwise causing a disturbance for the neighbors.
16. Giving a false report to an administrator.
17. Possession or use of a weapon, explosive, or look-alike weapons.
18. Disruptive behavior on school buses.
19. Fraudulent use of lunch ID numbers.
20. Any of the grounds for expulsion.
21. Sexual harassment.
22. Bullying and/or harassment.
23. Hazing.
24. Excessive amount of points (*more than 25 per quarter*).

Suspension may lead to permanent expulsion. A conference with parent/guardians, teacher, principal, and student is a prerequisite for re-admission of a student.

### **Dismissal and Expulsion:**

The dismissal or expulsion of a student from a Catholic school is a very serious matter and should be invoked only in extreme cases. Care should be taken that fundamental fairness is offered the students in the process of expulsion. All dismissals and expulsions are to be approved by the diocesan director of the Office for Catholic Schools.

The term “expulsion” is: Termination of a pupil as a student from the school permanently (*no opportunity for reinstatement*).

The term “dismissal” is: Termination of a pupil as a student from the school less than permanently (*indefinite or for a given term*). DSP 5115

Any of the following may be, but are not limited to, cause for dismissal/expulsion:

1. Use, possession, buying, or selling drugs or alcohol in the school or on school grounds, during an off school grounds extra-curricular activity, or on school buses.
2. Possession or use of a weapon, explosive, or look-alike weapons.
3. Bringing a weapon, explosive or look-alike weapon to school.
4. Serious destruction of school property.
5. Insubordination or failure to comply with instructions or directions given by the school staff.
6. The use of indecent or abusive language or gestures to any of the staff or students.
7. Behavior that adversely affects the status of the school.
8. Behavior that deteriorates the morale of other students or the staff.
9. Behavior that endangers the safety of other students or staff.

As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in the diocesan schools, a student’s conduct must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of others students and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate expulsion. (DSP 5112)

## **DRESS CODE**

All students are governed by administrative interpretation of the dress code. Final decisions regarding the appropriateness of student dress is reserved for the Aquinas Middle School administration. Anything that draws attention to itself is not acceptable. The Aquinas Middle School dress code is as follows:

### **General Guidelines:**

1. All items worn to school must be clean.
  2. Worn, faded, frayed, baggy, or clothing with holes may not be worn.
  3. Hairstyles must be cleanly cut and of reasonable style and a reasonable natural color.
  4. Hair may not be covering face and eyes.
  5. Hair must be above the collar line for boys.
  6. Hats and sweatbands are not allowed.
  7. Clothing, jewelry, and/or grooming must not be distracting, potentially dangerous, and/or disruptive to the learning environment.
  8. Students are allowed no more than two earrings per ear (*no clips*).
  9. No unreasonable body jewelry, including but not limited to tongue, nose, lips, eyebrows, etc.
  10. No chains of any kind will be permitted on student clothing.
  11. No outside coats or jackets may be worn during the school day. No outside clothing, such as tech vests, hooded sweatshirts, and outdoor fleece tops may be worn in the classroom or hallways. An Aquinas fleece is acceptable.
  12. All males must be clean-shaven.
  13. No leather clothing of any kind may be worn.
  14. No visible tattoos, real or artificial.
  15. Backpacks are not allowed in the classroom.
  16. No shorts or capri pants may be worn on Mass days.
- A. **Shirts** (*any \*solid colored polo shirt is acceptable*):
1. A polo shirt is defined as cotton, poly-cotton, or knit with 2-5 buttons and a collar.

2. Polo shirts must be buttoned up to the second button from the collar.
3. Polo shirts are not to be form fitting.
4. Polo shirts must be long enough and are required to be tucked in.
5. Shirts may only be long or short sleeved (*no cap sleeves or ¾ length sleeves*).
6. Only \*solid colored T-shirts may be worn under polo shirts. A plain long sleeve T-shirt may be worn under a short sleeve polo shirt.
7. Any \*solid colored turtleneck shirt may be worn under a blazer, sweater, shirt, or sweatshirt. Turtleneck shirts may not be worn alone.
8. Shirts may have a logo no larger than the size of a quarter if it does not draw attention to the shirt.

**B. *Pants*** (*\*solid colored navy blue, khaki, gray or black*):

1. Pants must be cotton, poly-cotton, or corduroy.
2. Pant hems may not touch the floor.
3. No baggy, holes, or obvious bell-bottom styles.
4. No denim (*of any color*), sweats, wind pants, capri pants (*except as outlined in D. below*), bib overalls, or cargo pants (flat pocket cargo pants are acceptable).
5. Pants must be worn at the natural waist.

**C. *Skirts*** (*\*solid colored navy blue, khaki or black*):

1. The length and/or slits of the skirts must be no more than 3” from the top of the kneecap.
2. No denim skirts or skorts.

**D. *Shorts or Capri Pants*** (*\*solid colored navy blue, khaki, gray or black*):

1. May be worn in first and fourth quarter only.
2. Capri pants and tailored walking shorts at the knee or no more than 3” from the top of the kneecap are permitted.
3. No athletic shorts or bib overalls. Flat pocket cargo shorts or capri pants are acceptable.

**E. *Sweatshirts*** (*ACS or Aquinas logo sweatshirts, or solid colored sweatshirts that have logo no larger than the size of a quarter*):

1. \*Solid colored and collared polo shirts or turtlenecks must be worn under all sweatshirts, or short or long-sleeved shirts.

**F. *Sweater or Blazer*** (*any \*solid colored sweater or blazer is acceptable*):

1. \*Solid colored and collared polo shirts or turtlenecks must be worn under all sweaters or blazers.
2. Sweaters must be cardigan, v-neck, crewneck, or vest. Sweaters are to be at the natural waist or longer. A shirt worn over a polo shirt is not considered a sweater.
3. Sweaters may not have open shoulders or back.

**G. *Dresses/Jumpers*** (*\*solid colored navy blue, khaki, gray or black*):

1. Dresses/jumpers must be no more than 3” from the top of the kneecap.
2. No scoop collars.
3. No sleeveless dresses.
4. They must have a complete back.
5. No denim.

**H. *Footwear*** (*dress, casual, and tennis shoes*):

1. No cowboy boots, flip flops, clogs, or backless sandals.
2. All shoes must have a back or back strap.
3. No heels beyond 2”.
4. Shoes with laces must be tied at all times.

**I. *Socks*** (*must be worn and visible at all times*):

1. Nylons or solid colored tights in white, navy blue, red, khaki tan, or black may be worn.
2. Socks must cover the entire foot (toe & heel).

\* *Solid color is defined as all one color, including collars and trim, with no logos of any type.*

Certain days will allow for exceptions to the dress code. On occasion, there will be spirit days, jeans days, and dress-up days. Students are expected to follow the dress guidelines appropriate for the day. When deemed necessary, the student will be sent immediately to the office and may not be allowed to return to class until he/she has changed into acceptable attire. Guidelines for these days are as follows:

**Aquinas Middle School Spirit Days** – Aquinas Middle School spirit shirt is worn without a polo shirt. The spirit shirt does not have to be tucked in. Dress code or blue jeans pants may be worn. All other elements of the dress code are in effect.

**Aquinas Jeans Days** – Aquinas shirts, sweatshirts, blue jeans, and dress code pants are acceptable. Polo shirts underneath are not required. Shirts may remain untucked on these days. All other elements of the dress code are in effect.

**Dress-Up Days** (*Concert Dress, Golden Mass, Graduation*):

**Gentlemen:** School or dress pants, dress shirt (*long or short sleeved*) and tie. It is preferred that shoes be a solid dark color. Tennis shoes, neat and of a dark color, are acceptable.

**Ladies:** Dresses, skirts, or dress pants may be worn. No sleeveless, open shoulder or open back. Nylons or socks should be worn. Heels should be 2 inches or less from the floor. Shoes should have backs. Dresses or skirts should be knee length or longer.

All other elements of the dress code are in effect. Students will not be allowed to participate in an event if he/she does not adhere to the above stated dress code.

## **DRILLS**

### **Fire Drills:**

In accordance with state statute, Aquinas Middle School will conduct monthly fire drills. In the event of the fire alarm sounding, all students must proceed in an orderly manner to the appropriate exit as posted. All windows and doors should be closed. Silence must be maintained throughout the drill. Each class should stay together and away from the building as directed. Students should wait silently outside until instructed to return to the building by an administrator or teacher. Anyone other than an administrator or custodian who remains in the building during a drill is subject to arrest or fine by the La Crosse Fire Marshall. Anyone who intentionally gives a false fire alarm warning or interferes with the proper functioning of the fire alarm system is subject to legal action.

### **Safety Drills**

Lock down and evacuation drills will be conducted as is appropriate.

### **Tornado Drills/Severe Weather:**

Tornado drills may be held periodically throughout the year. In the event of a tornado alarm sounding, students are to leave their classroom for the assigned area. Students are to leave books on desks and walk directly to the safety areas in an orderly manner. Students will sit on the floor facing hallway walls, and arms cradled over heads, staying away from doors with glass windows. The ALL CLEAR signal will be a verbal announcement by the principal or a designee. Students are to return to classes in an orderly manner when the drill or danger is over.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

“Every individual, precisely by reason of the mystery of the Word of God who was made flesh (*cf. Jn 1:14*) is entrusted to the maternal care of the Church. Therefore, every threat to human dignity and life must necessarily be felt in the Church’s

very heart; it cannot but affect her at the core of her faith in the Redemptive Incarnation of the Son of God, and engage her in her mission of proclaiming the Gospel of Life in all the world and to every creature” (cf. *Mk 16:15*). (*Evangelium Vitae, Introduction, Section 3; paragraph 1*)

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of La Crosse are Christ-centered educational communities, which proclaim the Gospel of Life and recognize the human dignity of each person. Therefore, it is the mission of each Catholic school to provide a Christian environment in which each member is able to develop his/her special talents and gifts to achieve his/her greatest potential.

The presence and use of drugs and alcohol presents a clear and present danger to the health, safety, and welfare of all pupils in our school. Therefore, the Diocese has a paramount obligation of protecting its students from the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Additionally, as Catholic institutions, our schools must provide an environment and opportunities for redemption, rehabilitation, and reform for those students who abuse drugs and alcohol.

RECOGNIZING the difficult and sometimes conflicting choices that our schools face in addressing drug and alcohol abuse;

RECOGNIZING the need to articulate strong, clear, and consistent policies and procedures in this area;

RECOGNIZING its obligation to set the moral and ethical standards we expect from our schools and pupils;

The Diocese of La Crosse adopts the following Drugs and Alcohol Policy for all our Diocesan schools.

The phrase “drugs or alcohol” includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Illegal drugs;
- B. Alcohol;
- C. Illicit drugs (*legal drugs used for illegal or improper purpose*); and
- D. Look-alike drugs (*substances represented as illicit or illegal drugs or alcohol*).

The term “expulsion” is: Termination of a pupil as a student from the school permanently (*no opportunity for reinstatement*).

The term “dismissal” is: Termination of a pupil as a student from the school less than permanently (*indefinite or for a given term*).

The term “suspension” is: Temporary removal of a pupil from the school, either as a punishment or as a precautionary measure during investigation and/or assessment.

### **Prohibitions:**

1. No student may distribute, offer, and/or conduct any transactions leading to the use, possession, distribution or exchange of drugs or alcohol on school property, within 1000 feet of school property, at or in route to school-sponsored or approved activities, functions, or events, and/or on school buses, rental vehicles of school-sanctioned vehicles.
2. No student may possess or use drugs or alcohol on school property, within 1000 feet of school property, at or in route to school-sponsored or approved activities, functions, or events, and/or on school buses, rental vehicles or school-sanctioned vehicles.
3. No student may be under the influence of, or knowingly remain in the continued presence of (except at school sanctioned adult functions), drugs or alcohol on school property, within 1000 feet of school property, at or in route to school-sponsored or approved activities, functions, or events, and/or on school buses, rental vehicles, or school-sanctioned vehicles.



**Required minimum sanctions:**

1. For students who have violated Category 1 Prohibitions – dismissal or immediate expulsion.
2. For students who have violated Category 2 Prohibitions – suspension, dismissal or expulsion.
3. For students who have violated Category 3 Prohibitions – suspension or dismissal.

The local school authorities are charged with the responsibility of justly and equitably applying the required sanctions within each category. However, they may not fail to apply the required minimum sanction of each category.

In determination within each category which sanction to apply, at least the following factors shall be considered:

- the nature of the substance;
- the amount of the substance;
- the age of the student;
- the degree or risk posed to other students;
- the cooperation or lack of cooperation of the student;
- the student's prior record.

Nothing contained herein shall require or imply that a school may not impose more severe sanctions if the totality of the circumstances dictates.

The decision of the local school authority is final. If there is any disagreement with the decision of the local school authority, the student and/or parent has the right of administrative recourse.

**Investigatory and/or Remedial Measure:**

1. The students and parents/guardians shall meet with school authorities.
2. Students suspected of violations of this policy may be required, as a condition of continuing as a student, to submit to Diocesan approved drug and alcohol testing.
3. The student shall be suspended pending completion of the investigations and may be suspended during the assessment.
4. The student will be required to cooperate with and undergo an immediate assessment/evaluation by an approved licensed agency or professional approved by school authorities and without cost to the school.
5. The student and his/her parents or guardians shall sign a release authorizing the school to contact, speak with, and receive the results of the assessment and/or evaluation.
6. Following the receipt of the results of the assessment/evaluation, the minimum required sanctions shall be imposed on the student.
7. For students suspended or dismissed, before any student may be re-admitted and continue as a student, the following minimum conditions must be met and consistently maintained:
  - A. The student must provide the school with a written statement from a licensed professional certifying the student has and is fully cooperating with treatment and that the student presents no danger to other students.
  - B. The students must cooperate with any and all recommended actions and conditions of his/her treatment.
  - C. The student must refrain from any future drugs or alcohol offense.
  - D. The student and his/her parents or guardians must authorize local school authorities to communicate with and receive information from the student's licensed professional and/or agency to monitor compliance with these conditions.
  - E. The student must cooperate with local school authorities.

**Reporting Requirements:**

1. The conduct prohibited by these policies may be illegal. Therefore, contacting law enforcement authorities may be required.
2. The conduct prohibited by these policies may give rise to a reasonable belief that minor students in our schools may be the victims of abuse. Therefore, a Chapter 48 report may be required.

**Consultative Requirement:**

Drug and alcohol offenses are serious matters. They involve complicated and at times contradictory and conflicting interests. They always implicate legal issues. Therefore, local school authorities shall immediately report and seek consultation from the Office for Catholic Schools when implementing and enforcing this policy, including approval for any dismissals or expulsions.

**Relationship to Other Student Conduct Codes:**

This policy governs the minimum standards in the area of drug and alcohol abuse for pupils in the Diocesan schools. Nothing here precludes any school from adopting more stringent standards and/or a broader application of the standards. Likewise, this policy is to be implemented in conjunction with all other student conduct codes governing other issues and is intended to supplement not replace those student conduct standards and procedures.

**Education:**

All schools are required to develop and implement a policy or parent/guardian and student drug/alcohol abuse education. This education program is to be in place no later than January 14, 1998, and is to be reviewed annually.

**Effective Date:**

This Drug and Alcohol Policy was implemented on August 15, 1997, and is to be reviewed annually. DSP 5508

**DRUG/MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

The state legislature has provided for administration of drugs to students who must have medication while attending school. Any private school employee or volunteer authorized in writing by the private school administrator or principal, as well as any licensed school bus operator authorized by the proper school authority, may administer certain drugs to students. No employee, except a health care professional, may be required to administer a drug to a pupil under this law by any means other than ingestion.

Any drug, which may lawfully be sold over the counter without a prescription, may be administered in compliance with the written instructions and consent of the pupil's parent or guardian provided the medication has been supplied to the school by the parent/guardian. Administration of a prescription drug requires written instructions from a physician, dentist, or podiatrist and written consent from the pupil's parent or guardian.

**Other medication rules:**

1. Students may not keep medications in a locker, desk, backpack, pencil case or on their person. (*exceptions for diabetes and asthma are made*)
2. All medications are to be kept in the school office.
3. Students are never permitted to give medications to other students.
4. Students may not take medications on field trips. School personnel will be permitted to carry medications for students providing the proper requirements have been completed by the parent/guardian.

The party authorized to administer the drug and the school principal or administrator are immune from civil liability for their acts or omissions unless there is a high degree of negligence. “High degree of negligence” is defined as “conduct, which demonstrated ordinary negligence to a high degree, consisting of an act, which the person should realize, creates a situation of unreasonable risk and high probability of death or great bodily harm to another.” (*This immunity does not apply to health care professionals*) (DSP 5505)

### **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

The Commission approves policies for all schools in Aquinas Catholic Schools. Each parish has the pastor and one lay representative as members. All ACS administrators are part of the Education Commission. The Commission will strive to meet regularly August – May.

### **ELASTIC CLAUSE**

The school and administration reserve the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for things requiring action that are not covered in the handbook and/or student behavior that may arise. In all cases, rules, regulations and possible consequences shall be as consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations and consequences for similar incidents. Matter omitted from this list should not be interpreted as limitations on the scope of the school’s authority in dealing with any type of infraction that may not be in the best interest of Aquinas High School and its’ students. The policies and regulations within this handbook apply for all school sponsored activities, including those held before or after school and those held away from the Aquinas Campus.

### **ELEVATOR**

No student may enter the elevator unless given specific authorization from faculty, staff, or administration is granted.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

A quality academic curriculum is a key component of Aquinas Middle School. Thus, students are expected to make every effort to do their best in the classroom. To that end, the following academic eligibility codes are to be adhered to:

**Academic** – A student must maintain a minimum 1.5 GPA, with no F’s in any discipline to participate in any co-curricular activity (*clubs, athletics, etc.*)

For an eight school-day period from the day after quarter grades are issued, ineligible students, with signed parent and principal permission, may be allowed to participate in practices, rehearsals, etc. Ineligible students will be suspended from competition, dressing out for competition, traveling with the team, club, etc., sitting on the team bench or attending the competition. The ineligible student may, upon request, have his/her progress reviewed at the end of eight school days to determine the level of progress in any failed courses. If, at the time of the review, the student has satisfactorily improved his/her grades to conform to the above policy, he/she will be allowed to fully participate in the affected programs. If, at the time of review, the student has not satisfactorily improved his/her grades, he/she will remain ineligible until the next grading report is issued.

*Administrative discretion may be used in specific situations.*

**Behavior** – Participating in co-curricular activities is a privilege for students, thus, behavior is expected to adhere to the Aquinas Middle School Honor Level guidelines. The Honor Level system is used in determining student participation in co-curricular activities. Students must be on Honor Level 1 or 2 to have full privileges to participate in school co-curricular activities (*see Discipline*).

*Administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior.*

## **EMERGENCY FORM**

Each student is to have an Emergency Form on file in the office. This is to be completed by the parent or guardian at the beginning of the school year. *Information is to be kept current by the parent or guardian.*

## **END-OF-DAY**

The school day ends at 3:05 p.m. Students are expected to leave the premises by 3:15 p.m. and will not be supervised after 3:15 p.m. unless they are in a scheduled detention, after school study room, athletic or club meeting, rehearsal or practice. School and faculty responsibility for the student ends at 3:15 p.m. unless arrangements have been made with the faculty member for the student to remain in his/her classroom. Any student “hanging around” school beyond 3:15 p.m. may receive points and a detention.

## **ENROLLMENT CRITERION**

All students are considered candidates for enrollment upon completion of the enrollment form. The Aquinas Catholic School priority enrollment policy is available in its entirety in the ACS office. The principal may reject enrollment should it be determined that the school cannot provide for the student’s needs. The principal may also reject enrollment if circumstances indicate that the student may not be willing to adhere to the mission and philosophy of the school. With the above guidelines, if a student is new to Aquinas Catholic Schools and enrolls, he/she is automatically placed on a probationary period of up to 90 days. The school administrator may address concerns regarding continued enrollment of the student in a discussion with parents prior to the 90 day probationary period.

## **ENTRANCE TO MIDDLE SCHOOL**

The main entrance for Aquinas Middle School is through the main D2 Cameron Street door. Parents transporting students to school are asked to drop students off on Cameron Street where students should enter through these doors, if necessary students may also be dropped off at the Cass St. doors. Students are to report immediately to the commons, where supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. daily. Once in the commons, a student may request to go to the resource room for studying or academic assistance from a teacher beginning at 7:30 a.m. The commons supervisor must approve that the student is reporting to the resource room. Students will be dismissed to their lockers from the commons at approximately 7:45 a.m.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Along with athletics, a wide variety of extracurricular activities are available for the students. Such activities may include the following:

- Yearbook
- Student Council
- Battle of the Books
- Geography Bee
- Pep Club
- Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl
- Spelling Bee
- Brains and Brawn
- Art Club
- Drama Club
- Chess Club
- Robotics (gr. 8)
- Lego League (gr. 7)

Other clubs and activities may be formed based on student interest and advisor availability.

Parents and students are encouraged to limit the number of co and extracurricular activities, both in and outside of school, to assure that a balance is maintained between school, family, and activities.

## **FACILITY**

The Aquinas Middle School facility is home for two schools – Aquinas High School and Aquinas Middle School. While there will not be a physical barrier between respected schools, every consideration will be made by both administrators and all staff to keep the students separate.

## **FAITH FORMATION**

Aquinas Middle School students will be provided with many opportunities to live the Gospel message and to grow in their faith. Faith experiences will include planning and participating in regularly scheduled liturgies, special liturgies, Reconciliation Services, Lenten Stations of the Cross, ACS Masses, prayer services, meaningful service projects, and other devotional practices throughout the course of the year. Prayer will be an integral part of the school day. As part of the school and religion curriculum, all students are required to attend all scheduled services listed above.

## **FIELD/CLASS TRIPS**

Field/class trips, which enhance and enrich the educational curriculum, will be planned throughout the school year. All trips will be approved by the principal and written permission from a parent or legal guardian is required before any student is permitted to go on a trip off of the school grounds. **Students will not be allowed to go on any trip without a signed permission form.** When curricular related opportunities present themselves, it is expected that **all students will participate in these activities.** An exception to this is the Honor Level 3 or 4 student and/or a student who has received more than 22 points during the course of a quarter. As per the discipline code, that student may not necessarily be allowed to participate in the trip.

## **FIRST AID**

First aid material is located in the school office. All teachers are required to inform the principal when they have had to administer first aid. In the event of an accident or injury, an accident report will be filled out and kept on file in the school office. The teacher and principal will determine whether the parent or guardian should be contacted. Should any child receive a head injury at school, parents will be notified immediately and advised to remove the child from school for medical examination and/or observation.

## **FUND RAISING**

Aquinas Middle School will sponsor one major fundraiser, World's Finest Chocolate candy bars, during the school year. Monies from this fundraiser will be used for specifically designated needs. All students are expected to participate in our annual fundraiser (*buyouts by parents are considered participation*). Other fundraisers, approved through the ACS main office, will be held as are necessary but will be kept to a minimum.

## **GRADING POLICY (Progress Reports and Report Cards)**

**Progress Reports:** Progress reports are issued to all students after the first four/five weeks of each quarter. These reports indicate current grades for a student in all courses. They are unofficial documents used by students, parents and teachers in assisting with academic performance. The reports are to be signed by the parents and returned to the school.

**Report Cards:** Report cards are issued quarterly. Report cards are sent home, in sealed envelopes, with students via the family folders. Fourth quarter report cards are mailed home at the end of the school year (*usually the week following the end of the school year*). The reports are to be signed by the parents and returned to the school. The fourth quarter report card does not have to be signed and returned.

The grading scale is listed below:

A	95-100	B+	91-92	C+	83-84	D+	72-73
A-	93-94	B	87-90	C	76-82	D	68-71
		B-	85-86	C-	74-75	D-	66-67

F below 66. Any student who puts forth the appropriate effort, turns work in on time, and seeks and/or accepts teacher assistance when necessary should not receive a failing mark in any subject. Students who receive failing grades may be required to remain after school and/or meet with teachers and the Guidance Counselor in order to improve on future academic performance.

S Works sufficiently for this student's aptitude, although below grade level  
(*must have an ISP on file*)

In preparing for high school and beyond, the Aquinas Middle School report cards will have a quarter grade point average for your student. In figuring grade point average, the guidelines are:

CREDITS: Core Classes = 1.0 credit  
Encore Classes = 0.5 credits

GRADE POINTS:

A	4.00	B+	3.25	C+	2.25	D+	1.25
A-	3.75	B	3.00	C	2.00	D	1.00
		B-	2.75	C-	1.75	D-	0.75
						F	0.00

## **GRADUATION**

The eighth grade student who has satisfactorily completed the work prescribed by the State of Wisconsin and Aquinas Middle School receives a diploma at a special liturgy to which parents and friends are invited.

Students from Aquinas Middle School are encouraged to attend Aquinas High School, the central Catholic high school for this area. Registration is carried out within Aquinas Middle School by Aquinas High School staff who present their programs and offer assistance to the students in arranging their schedules.

## **GUIDANCE**

The Middle School guidance program will be comprised of guidance activities handled by the School Counselor. Confidentiality is upheld whenever possible and is considered standard operating procedure. Due to legal issues and the student's best interest, there will be times when confidentiality cannot be maintained. Parents wishing to know more about the guidance program should contact the school counselor via the main office.

## **HALL PASSES**

Hall passes are written in the student assignment notebook. This is the student's only available pass. Therefore, students should keep the assignment notebook with them at all times. Teachers will sign the assignment notebook if a student is leaving the classroom.

## **HARASSMENT**

All students and staff of Catholic schools of the Diocese of La Crosse are entitled to learn and work in an atmosphere that is **safe** and free from harassment. Harassment and bullying are inconsistent with our Christian atmosphere. Aquinas Middle School does not condone any language or behavior that constitutes harassment or bullying, such as, but not limited to:

### **Sexual Harassment**

As per Diocesan School Policy (DSP 5512) sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. “Unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature” includes, but is not limited to “the deliberate repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive, sexually graphic materials which is not necessary for school purposes.”

No student shall be subject to sexual harassment as a Catholic school student. Any student or employee who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to severe disciplinary measures. Any student who believes that he or she is being sexually harassed shall report immediately such information to the school principal. All claims of sexual harassment shall be thoroughly investigated by the school principal. No student shall receive any retaliation or disciplinary action for reports of sexual harassment made in good faith.

### **Racial or Ethnic Harassment**

Racial or Ethnic harassment is defined as any unwanted comments regarding a person’s ethnic or racial makeup. Examples: Ethnic or racial slurs, name calling, etc.

### **Verbal Harassment**

Verbal harassment is defined as any unwanted oral or written comments, which make a person feel bad or unsafe. Examples: Teasing to cause embarrassment, threatening to cause harm to the person, teasing about an individual’s clothing, hairstyle or appearance, etc.

### **Physical Harassment**

Physical harassment is defined as any unwanted behavior of a physical nature. Physical harassment often is a legal issue and is defined as battery, assault, or disorderly conduct.

Examples: Pushing, striking another student, or any action causing physical harm.

### **Intimidation**

Intimidation is defined as any unwanted threats to cause harm.

Examples: Telling someone to “watch your back,” warning that someone else is going to “beat you up”, etc.

### **Disability Harassment**

Disability harassment is defined as any unwanted comments or actions regarding a person’s disability, be it physical, learning, mental, etc.

### **Consequences for Harassment**

Since harassment is in direct conflict with Catholic values and shows a basic disrespect for others, all situations involving harassment will be dealt with severely and according to the school discipline plan.

## **HEALTH CARE**

Any health concerns, which the school staff should be aware of, are to be put into writing and submitted to the school office where it will be kept on file. A complete record of immunizations will be on file for each student as required by Wisconsin State statutes.

## **HOMEWORK**

Research findings indicate that student achievement rises significantly when teachers regularly assign homework and students conscientiously do that homework. This process gives students experience in following directions, making judgments, raising additional questions for study, and developing responsibility and self-discipline.

All work is expected to be turned in on time. In cases when this does not happen, the student’s grade for the work is affected. Disciplinary action may also be taken. Please note that it is the responsibility of the student to complete and turn in any late/missing work. Should parents feel their child is spending too much time on homework, the homeroom teacher should be contacted, via the main office, to discuss this.

In order to best assist students with homework and classwork, every student will receive and carry with them at all times, an Aquinas Middle School assignment notebook. If the assignment notebook is lost or damaged, replacements are available for purchase in the main office at the cost of \$6.00.

Students found copying another's work or doing work for one class during another class will receive no credit for that work. The work may be taken from the student by the teacher and not returned. Disciplinary action will also be taken.

### **ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS**

In the event a student becomes ill during the school day, the student (*with teacher permission*) is to report immediately to the office. The office and/or the student will contact the parent(s) so that the student may be taken home.

All accidents or injuries at school are reported to the main office and an accident report is to be completed by the supervising school personnel for each incident. In the case of serious injury, attempts to contact the parents will be made. In cases of serious injury, the principal, or her designee, shall determine if a 911 call for emergency medical personnel may be warranted.

Aquinas Catholic Schools does not carry accident insurance for its students. All medical expenses incurred are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Parents should obtain insurance to cover accidents if coverage is desired.

### **INTERNET/COMPUTER POLICY**

Aquinas Catholic Schools recognizes the importance and benefits to education that the availability and usage of a network computer system, access to the Internet, wireless devices and emerging technologies gives teachers, administrators and students. Access to a school's technology equipment, network and wireless systems and other technological devices is intended for use as an educational tool, not for recreational use.

The Internet is a global network, and along with access to computers and people all over the world, comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational or moral value in a Catholic school setting. However, Aquinas Catholic Schools believes that the information and interaction available on the worldwide network is valuable to teaching. Since anyone may create a web site, information found on the Internet must be scrutinized carefully. A school cannot be held responsible for false or misleading information obtained while online.

To maximize positive student experiences faculty and administrators will make every effort to provide students with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet and other technologies in ways appropriate to their educational needs and personal safety. School personnel will use a variety of methods to guide students to information and resources consistent with educational and Christian goals. Aquinas Catholic Schools utilizes a filtering system at each school to aid in blocking access to sites inconsistent with educational and Christian goals. Staff, also, supervise students' use of the Internet. Despite its best efforts, the school cannot guarantee that students will not gain access to sites which may be offensive to individual family values. When possible, parents and the community will be partners with a school in its use of technology, and will be informed about use their uses in a timely manner.

**Please review this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). You and your child will be required to read and sign the agreement before Internet use or full use of computers is granted in the lab or classroom.** Please feel free to contact the school with any questions or concerns regarding the school's use of this Acceptable Use Policy. You are not required to grant permission for your child to use a computer or access the Internet. If you do not wish for your child to have access to the Internet, your child will be assigned an alternative activity in order to complete the lesson. The administration and faculty of Aquinas Catholic Schools firmly believes that technology provides appropriate tools for the educational setting.

Also as more and more textbooks and classroom resources become digital, we need to know if your child has or is given access to a computer and the Internet at home. So please indicate on the AUP form whether your child has access to a computer and the Internet.



**Confidentiality:** The school reserves the right to review any materials or files students have access to via the Internet, e-mail, account files, school and personal devices or other technology for their appropriateness in light of legal, ethical and Christian standards.

**Discipline:** Any violation of this policy is also considered a violation of the general school discipline code as stated in the school student handbook and is subject to school disciplinary action. The privileges of using the computer network, Internet access or other means of technology can be suspended or revoked at any time. Please check each school handbook for additional technology rules/policies.

### **Student Technology Guidelines**

1. Use the Internet only when a teacher gives permission and in a way that meets the school's educational and Christian goals. Be polite. Any forms of communication or use that are harmful, vulgar, profane or non-Christian are not allowed.
2. Use of computers, the Internet and other technology devices is for school related activities only. School related activities are assignments or projects given and monitored by a teacher.
3. Any personal technology or electronic devices (including but not limited to-cell phones, BlackBerrys, i-pods, mp3 players, portable electronic games, SMART phones, SMART watches and tablets) may not be used during the school day except with the permission of school staff (see WCD policy for additional information),
4. Student should be aware that use of computer files, e-mail, Internet and school/personal devices are not private. The school can access these files for maintenance and monitoring purposes.
5. Students are to access only their technology accounts for any device, file or on-line accounts and no one else's. Their passwords should not be shared with other students.
6. The use of any type of social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, My Space blogs, Webkinz, Runescape) chat rooms, personal e-mail, or instant messaging is prohibited unless teacher uses this tool as an educational tool for the curriculum. Before or after school use is allowed with teacher permission and supervision only.
7. Students are to treat the equipment with respect and may not damage or misuse the hardware or software. If you have problems, please ask a teacher or staff member for help.
8. Students may not write, send, download or install any software programs to or from a school computer or any personal device via the school networks.
9. Students may not write, send, download, or display obscene, threatening, harassing or harmful messages or pictures.
10. Students may not use school equipment to make purchases, or offer items for sale. The school is not responsible for financial obligations resulting from a student's use of the Internet.
11. Practice personal safety. Students are not to share any personal information about themselves, friends, families or any other individual over the Internet or with any technology device.
12. When using the Internet for reports, students are to cite Internet sources (or any book, encyclopedia, or magazine) using the bibliography or reference page style adopted by the school. Teachers will instruct students in the use of the computer for research and how to cite the sources.
13. Copyright and plagiarism laws will be followed and enforced at all times.
14. Class assignments done at home may be printed out at school or displayed on a computer in the following ways to avoid virus problems: CD, flash drive or e-mail.
15. Printing access and use of approved and appropriate Internet sites is decided by the administrators, technology directors and teachers/staff of each school
16. Students may only use the Internet sites bookmarked on school web page or as approved on their account browser by a teacher. You may bring suggestions for new web sites, which will be reviewed by the teacher and the media director and added to the school web page and/or bookmarks if appropriate.
17. Students are to tell an adult if something on the computer, technology device or in the classroom bothers them in any way.

### **DISCIPLINE/CONSEQUENCES**

1. Students are to obey the rules of conduct as set forth in the school student handbook.
2. Failure to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy will result in loss of school technology usage for a time period set by media director, teacher and/or principal, and/or other consequences as stated in school student handbook.
3. Use of personal technology and school electronic devices during the school day without teacher permission will result in the device being taken from the student.
  - a). Student personal device will be sent to the school office where the student may retrieve it at the end of the school day.

- b) Second offense of using it during the school day will result in only a parent/guardian being allowed to retrieve the device from the school office (see WCD policy for additional information).
4. Students and their parents/guardians must sign and return the Acceptable Use Policy for students to have continued access to school technology devices and tools after the date assigned by Tech Director or School Principal. Check school's student handbook for signature form.

### **Student Use of School and Personal Wireless Communication Devices**

The use of wireless communication devices (WCDs) on school grounds must be appropriately regulated to protect students, staff, and the learning environment. The faculty and staff recognize that cellular phones and other personal wireless communication devices have become important tools through which parents communicate with their children. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular and wireless telephones, ipods, ereaders, Smartphones, WiFi-enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, laptops, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound, video or still images, text, or other information.

**ACCEPTED USES** --The following apply both to school and student personal devices. Students are permitted to possess personal WCD's on school property so long as the devices used during the instructional day are used as directed by school rules or school personnel, and do not interfere with the learning environment.

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during such use.

#### **During instruction time:**

1. Students may use WCDs for educational use during classroom instructional time only as permitted by the classroom teacher.
2. Students will access the school's network through the approved networks only when available.
3. Students must keep all WCD's sounds muted or off unless given permission from the teacher.
4. Printing will be available on a limited basis from WCD's and at staff discretion.
5. Students will completely charge personal devices prior to bringing them to school and operate them using battery power while at school. Students are not to charge WCDs while at school.
6. Students must have current virus protection software installed on their personal devices if using the school network and agree to keep the software updated on a regular basis.
7. At all other times students must have WCDs powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored in their locker.
8. Students may use WCD's before and after school, at school-sponsored activities, including extended day and other after-school activities provided the use does not interfere with the activity and follows the directives of the school's administration. Students may be disciplined for disruptive or inappropriate behavior related to the possession or use of WCDs at these activities.

#### **Prohibited Uses**

##### **Students may not:**

1. Use WCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.
2. Use WCDs at any time and/or place where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, restrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The building principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where use of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.
3. Use WCDs to capture, record, store, send, or transmit the spoken word or visual image (e.g., audio, video, text, or photographs) of any person, including other students or staff members at any time while on school property or at a school-sponsored event without express prior notice and explicit written consent. Using a WCD to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted.

## **Services**

Access to the school's network is available but not guaranteed in all classrooms at all times. All communications made through the school's network is subject to filtering and monitoring. School staff will monitor student use of WCDs in the classroom. The school is not responsible for providing troubleshooting or technical support for personal WCDs.

## **Discipline or Consequences**

Possession of a WCD by a student is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege. School employees may immediately confiscate any personal wireless communication devices that are on, used, displayed or visible in violation of this policy.

The following factors should be considered when determining appropriate consequences; Whether the wireless communication device was used (1) to reproduce images of tests, obtain unauthorized access to school information or assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any ACS system policy, administrative regulation or school rule; (2) to bully or harass other students; (3) to send illicit text messages; (4) to take and/or send illicit photographs; or (5) in any other manner that would make more severe disciplinary consequences appropriate.

Use of personal technology and school electronic devices during the school day without teacher permission will result in the device being taken from the student. It will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the school's central office. (See Accepted Use Policy for additional information)

The regulation of wireless communication devices (WCDs) on school grounds for appropriate use is to protect students, staff, and the learning environment. The faculty and staff recognize that cellular phones and other personal wireless communication devices have become important tools through which parents communicate with their children. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular and wireless telephones, ipods, e-readers, Smartphones, smart watches, WiFi-enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, laptops, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound, video or still images, text, or other information.

**ACCEPTED USES** --The following apply to both school and student personal devices at all Aquinas Catholic Schools' buildings. Students are permitted to possess personal WCD's on school property so long as the devices used during the instructional day as directed by each school's rules or school personnel, and do not interfere with the learning environment. Please refer to your student(s) school handbook for additional information on how personal WCD's are used in those buildings.

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided they supervise the students during such use.

## **During instruction time:**

1. Students may use WCDs for educational use during classroom instructional time only as permitted by the classroom teacher.
2. Students will access the school's network through the approved networks only when available.
3. Students must keep all WCD's sounds muted or off unless given permission from the teacher.
4. Printing will be available on a limited basis from WCD's and at staff discretion.
5. Students will completely charge personal devices prior to bringing them to school and operate them using battery power while at school. Students are not to charge WCDs while at school.
6. Students must have current virus protection software installed on their personal devices if using the school network and agree to keep the software updated on a regular basis. At all other times during school hours:
7. High school students allowed to use their tablets only during study hall, but only for school related activities. Game playing and messaging not allowed.
8. High school students allowed to use their WCD's at lunch. During this time, students are allowed to send personal emails and messages.
9. At all other times students must have WCDs powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight.

10. Students may use WCD's before and after school, at school-sponsored activities, including extended day and other after-school activities provided the use does not interfere with the activity and follows the directives of the school's administration. Students may be disciplined for disruptive or inappropriate behavior related to the possession or use of WCDs at these activities.

11. Refer to your student(s)' school handbook for other policies that are in place concerning WCD's.

### **Prohibited Uses**

1. Students may not: Use WCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that have been blocked to students at school.

2. Students may not: Use WCDs at any time and/or place where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, restrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The building principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where use of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.

3. Students may not: Use WCDs to capture, record, store, send, or transmit the spoken word or visual image (e.g., audio, video, text, or photographs) of any person, including other students or staff members at any time while on school property or at a school-sponsored event without express prior notice and explicit written consent. Using a WCD to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted.

### **Services**

Access to the school's network is available but not guaranteed in all classrooms at all times. All communications made through the school's network is subject to filtering and monitoring. School staff will monitor student use of WCDs in the classroom. The school is not responsible for providing troubleshooting or technical support for personal WCDs.

### **Discipline or Consequences**

Possession of a WCD by a student is a privilege that any student will forfeit who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege. School employees may immediately confiscate any personal wireless communication devices that are on, used, displayed or visible in violation of this policy.

The following factors should be considered when determining appropriate consequences; Whether the wireless communication device was used (1) to reproduce images of tests, obtain unauthorized access to school information or assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any ACS system policy, administrative regulation or school rule; (2) to bully or harass other students; (3) to send illicit text messages; (4) to take and/or send illicit photographs; or (5) in any other manner that would make more severe disciplinary consequences appropriate.

Use of personal technology and school electronic devices during the school day without teacher permission will result in the device being taken from the student. It will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the school's central office. (See Accepted Use Policy for additional information)

A student's wireless communication device and its contents, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will provide evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law, ACS Accepted Use Policy, the Code of Student Conduct or a school rule. Reasonable suspicion is not required if a student freely, voluntarily and knowingly consents and agrees to the search of his or her wireless communication device. The scope of such searches must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the suspected infraction.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. The building principal may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity. A student may lose his/her privilege to bring a WCD to school for a designated length of time.

### **Liability**

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone or other personal wireless communication. Students should record their device's serial number. Additional warranties and tracking software is recommended.

**Loss of School Property** – Students are responsible for the loss of computer devices, including any wireless devices that are assigned to them for any period of time. The student will be responsible for the replacement cost of the device if it is not found. Any equipment discovered missing or stolen must immediately be reported to the appropriate school departments and if appropriate the nearest law enforcement agency. Every effort will be made to locate and recover the missing device.

### **School wireless devices use and care**

Students may use a school WCD as available, and in accordance to the school’s check out/use policy. Students may not take them home without permission. Each device must be returned to the appropriate school department or the classroom teacher at the end of each school day. The student is responsible for its care during that school day.

### **Care**

- a. The WCD and all accessories may not be used at any time by anyone other than the student whom they are issued.
- b. No writing, scratching, stickers etc. may be placed on the WCD case or accessories.
- c. WCD’s must always be in their school issued protective case. Alternative cases will not be allowed.
- d. No food or drink may be consumed near the WCD. WCDs are not allowed in the cafeteria when food and drink are present.
- e. Do not attempt to dismantle or repair the WCD; take it to the school Media Center
- f. Do not attempt to hack or jailbreak the WCD.
- g. Do not attempt to bypass, disable or uninstall security software installed on the WCD

### **Repairs**

Report and return the device to the appropriate school department for technical support or repair as soon as possible.

This Accepted Use Policy is enforced at all Aquinas Catholic Schools buildings. Each school building also has additional rules and policies. Please consult each school’s handbook.

## **G SUITE FOR EDUCATION and EMAIL ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Students of Aquinas Catholic Schools has access to the Google program G Suite for Education. The Google Suite includes Docs, Sheets, Slides, Calendar, Gmail, Classroom and many other collaborative tools. Additionally, this suite of applications is available in “the cloud”, which allows our students immediate access to their work, from any device, be it a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer. Finally, a student’s G Suite login allows them to access our classroom mobile devices.

In order to create a safe, effective way for students and staff to communicate with one another, Aquinas Catholic Schools issues to each a student a G Suite account under the domain @aquinasschools.org. Students access their account using the Gmail App or signing in via the Google search engine via any browser. Access to using email via the Gmail App is only available ACS staff, and to high school students as of the 2017 school year.

Aquinas Catholic Schools is required by the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) to have measures in place to protect students from harmful materials. As such, Aquinas Catholic Schools takes the following steps with student email usage:

- Students only email staff and other students in the Aquinas Catholic Schools domain. They cannot send emails to any address that does NOT end in @aquinasschools.org. This applies to receiving emails as well. All email to students from outside of Aquinas Catholic Schools is blocked.

Aquinas Catholic Schools also has the duty to abide by the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), which limits companies from collecting personal information from children under 13. To meet this duty, Google advertising is turned off for all G Suite for Education users, both staff and students. No personal information is collected while students are utilizing the Google Apps core suite including Gmail, Classroom, Drive, Calendar, Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Sites. Aquinas Catholic Schools will act in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and not use the Google Apps for Education suite to publish any confidential student records for online public view. Additionally, parents have the right at any time to investigate the contents of their student’s email account, and/or their student’s G Suite for Education files. School staff are responsible for monitoring a student’s behavior online during the school day, while parents take over that

responsibility at home. Students are responsible for their behavior at all times. Students that adhere to proper use of G Suite for Education, including email (if applicable), will do so by demonstrating the following behavior:

- Students will have no expectation of privacy with their G Suite account, and thus should remain committed to using it academically and professionally.
- Students will avoid, at all costs, using their G Suite for Education to promote any unlawful activities or personal financial gain. Additionally, students should not use their account to promote or spread inappropriate or offensive content, or to threaten another student or staff member.
- Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people.
- Students will inform a member of the Aquinas Catholic Schools staff should they receive any message that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students will be responsible for their own accounts, and will not act in a way that compromises the security of their account. At the same time, students will not act in a way that jeopardizes the account security of another student or staff member.

Access to, and the use of, G Suite for Education is considered a privilege and benefit to students in our school. Aquinas Catholic Schools maintains the right to revoke the access and use of the G Suite for Education, including Gmail, where the school has reason to believe violations of law or school policy have occurred. Under normal circumstances, the school will follow the discipline process outlined in the school's student handbook.

Student Google Apps for Education Agreement is part of the Accepted Use Policy agreement that students and parents sign. Check school's student handbook for the form. IT MUST BE SIGNED BY STUDENT "I have read the terms and conditions of this policy and I agree to follow them" : and MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT or GUARDIAN which gives parental consent for Aquinas Catholic Schools to provide personal student identifying information (first and last name, user name) to G Suite for Education.

### **Guest Use Wireless Communication Devices**

Aquinas Catholic Schools allows visitors to access the wireless network as a guest. The following apply for both to school and personal devices, used by all students, faculty, staff, contractors, consultants, temporary employees, guests, volunteers, and other members of Aquinas Catholic Schools community, including those affiliated with third parties, who access or in any way make use of the wireless network. All of these individuals are responsible for also familiarizing themselves with the ACS Acceptable Use Policies for Technology and Wireless Devices.

Wireless will be available to guests as allowed by Aquinas Catholic Schools. Students will be disciplined for disruptive or inappropriate behavior related to the possession or use of wireless communication devices at these activities.

### **Responsibilities of Users**

The regulation and monitoring of wireless communication devices (WCDs) on school grounds to protect students, staff, and the learning environment. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular and wireless telephones, ipods, e-readers, Smartphones, smart watches, WiFi-enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, laptops, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound, video or still images, text, or other information.

1. Use of web sites blocked to students at school are not to be accessed on WCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.
2. Use of WCDs are not to be utilized at any time and/or place where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, and restrooms. Administration has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where use of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.
3. Using a WCD to capture, record, store, send, or transmit the spoken word or visual image of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted while on school property or at a school-sponsored event without consent of the individual.

The following factors are considered when determining appropriate consequences.

The wireless communication device was used (1) to reproduce images of tests, obtain unauthorized access to school information or assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any ACS system

policy, administrative regulation or school rule; (2) to bully or harass other students; (3) to send illicit text messages; (4) to take and/or send illicit photographs; or (5) in any other manner that would make more severe disciplinary consequences appropriate.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. The administration may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone or other personal wireless communication.

## **INVITATIONS**

Distribution of social invitations at school is not allowed.

## **LEAVING THE PREMISES**

During the school day, students are not allowed to leave the school grounds for any reason without the written permission of a parent or legal guardian. **The parent or legal guardian must sign the student out in the main office prior to the student's departure and sign the student back in upon the student's return.** This is done to ensure the safety of our students.

## **LIBRARY**

The library is open each day from approximately 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Before school, during, and after school hours provide maximum opportunity for student and staff library use. The library is specifically available to students during resource time as well as during certain class periods (*based on curriculum needs and teacher requests*).

**Circulation Procedures:** All books may be checked out for four weeks. The date stamped on the date due slip is the date by which the book should be returned. After a grace period of one week, students will serve detentions until the material(s) are returned or paid for.

During the one-week grace period, teachers and daily announcements may notify students of their overdue materials. Books may be renewed only if the student has the book with them. Students with overdue books or outstanding fines must clear their record before borrowing additional materials.

**Reference Books:** Reference books are for in-library use only. A copy machine is available in the library for student use at a cost of 5 cents per page.

**Periodicals:** Periodicals may not be checked out.

**Library Computers:** The library has computers for student use. Programs such as Badgerlink, Electric Library, SIRS and the Internet\* are available. Computer games, chatting, and e-mailing are not allowed in the library. Students must also follow the guidelines for computer use posted in the library. ***\*The Acceptable Use Policy form must be on file in middle school office.***

**General Location of Materials:** Our library is arranged according to the Dewey Decimal System of Classification (*nonfiction*). If you are unfamiliar with the system, ask the librarian to help you.

## **LOCKERS**

Student lockers are provided for the convenience of the students. Lockers may not be switched or a second locker used without permission. Students may not go into other lockers, at any time, without permission from a faculty member. Walkmans, radios, boom boxes, tape players, any type of electronic toy or game, beepers, cell phones, walkie-talkies, etc. are not allowed on a person nor may they be used during the school day. Those students who come to school with any of these items must store them in their backpack and/or locker and are responsible for them. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. School officials maintain the right to periodically inspect student lockers, desks, backpacks, etc. (*DSP 5520*)

When the student is not using the locker, the locker is to be closed. The locker must be locked by the student at the end of each day. The tops of lockers must also be cleaned off at the end of the school day.

Lockers may contain mirrors, appropriate pictures of friends or family (*applied with tape only*), a white board (*for writing assignments or reminders only*) and a supply holder. Student decoration on the outside of student lockers is not permitted.

## **LUNCH**

Aquinas Schools provides a variety of lunch choices for students. Chartwells, the Aquinas School food service company, prepares food in the Aquinas commons kitchen. Hot lunch is available for the students. Students may bring a cold lunch. Parents/students may put money into their individual account using Skyward or by writing a check. Please make all checks payable to Chartwells and place in mailbox provided on the kitchen's door. Students will then use the account for all purchases. In the event a student forgets his/her lunch and has no funds in his/her account, he/she will be allowed to charge a value meal and will be expected to repay the charge immediately the following morning. Students must eat lunch daily.

Since courtesy and neatness contribute to a desirable and enjoyable lunchtime atmosphere, these will be maintained at all times. Students are expected to go through the lunch line in an orderly manner. Moderate talking will be maintained in the lunchroom, and students will be expected to clean up their eating area when finished with their lunch. Students will have specific seating arrangements. Students will be dismissed by the lunchroom supervisor(s).

## **MUSIC ASSOCIATION**

The Aquinas Schools Music Association provides physical and financial support to the vocal and instrumental programs/staff of Aquinas Schools. It strives to assist in developing and promoting the musical talents of its students. The Association showcases these talents to the community and area through performances and competitions. This group is open to all parents of music students. Meetings are held monthly and are printed on the monthly calendar. Several music association fundraisers are held to assist in the operations of the association. Families are asked to help as best they can with these.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD**

Aquinas Middle School values good relations with our neighbors. Students may not congregate before or after school in the neighborhood. This causes serious distraction to our neighbors. Groups of two or more students who loiter in the neighborhood or cause any other disturbance will be subject to suspension and possible referral to the police. Students may not fraternize in the neighborhood with individuals on foot or in vehicles who are not connected to Aquinas Middle School.

## **NON-CATHOLIC STUDENT PARTICIPATION**

Non-Catholic students fully enrolled in a Catholic school are required to participate to the same extent in all school activities (*both curricular and extra-curricular*) and courses of study as Catholic students provided such activity is permitted by Catholic Church law. DSP 6225

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Aquinas Catholic Schools does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in admissions and the administration of school policies and programs.

In addition to the policies outlined in this handbook, Aquinas Middle School is also subject to the policies of Aquinas Catholic Schools and the Diocese of La Crosse. These policies may be reviewed by contacting the school principal.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

The normal operating hours of the office during school days are 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. In the summer the hours are 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., Monday through Wednesday.



## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The education of a child is a shared responsibility between the school and parents. Aquinas Middle School asks parents to take an active role in the education of their child. Parent involvement in Aquinas Middle School is encouraged. A Parent Advisory Board, with a minimum of one representative parent from each homeroom, will meet with the principal approximately once each quarter for the purpose of increasing parent communication with the school.

Additionally, at the beginning of the school year, we ask for parent volunteers to help with specific projects. A Parent Volunteer Form is distributed to help solicit this help.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical Education is a required class. To be excused from participation, the student must present a written note from the parent, approved by the principal, indicating the reason. To be excused from class for any extended period of time, a written statement from a physician indicating the cause for not participating will be required. To return to class after an extended period of time, a written note from the doctor, indicating extent of participation, will be required. Students, weather permitting, may be going to Weigent Park for class. A comprehensive permission slip for this must be on file in the main office in order for the student to go to Weigent Park.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS**

Complete physicals are required of all seventh grade students and any new eighth grade students. Physical forms must be signed by a licensed physician. Immunization records must be up to date and are kept on file in the school office.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is discussed at great length by classroom teachers with students. Any student who violates plagiarism guidelines will receive no credit for the work as well as Honor Level points. It is extremely important that students understand, respect, and value the importance of original work and the plagiarism guidelines.

## **PROOF OF GUARDIANSHIP**

In any situation where there is a custody agreement, the parent must provide the school with the portion of the agreement that stipulates custody and any other information pertinent for the school (such as financial responsibility for education.) Copies of custodial decrees must be on file at the school and it is the parents' responsibility to immediately notify the school of any court-approved change in the agreement. DSP 5302

## **RETENTION/ACCELERATION**

The school is responsible for making the decision to retain a child or to accelerate a child to another grade. The decision to retain or accelerate should be made only after serious reflections and evaluation and consultation with the teacher and parents. The school administrator is the individual responsible for making the final decision. DSP 5210

In cases where a student has failed more than two courses each of the four quarters and/or any one course three of the four quarters of the school year, retention is a very strong possibility. Should retention be recommended, it may be determined that the student should not repeat the grade at Aquinas Middle School.

## **SCHOOL COLORS**

The Aquinas Middle School colors are blue and gold.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

School pictures are taken in the fall, usually September. A class graduation picture is taken in the spring, usually in April. Individual graduation pictures are also taken in April. Parent(s)/students have the opportunity to purchase these.

## **SCHOOL STORE**

The “Grelle” school store (*room 2211*) will be operated after school daily. It will contain such items as school supplies, snacks, and beverages for students.

## **SCHOOL VISITS**

Parents are welcome to visit the school and classes. Arrangements for visitations must be made prior to the visit either through speaking with the teacher directly or calling the principal. Parents are not to interrupt a teacher during class time. ***If there is a matter to discuss with the teacher, or the principal, parents are to make an appointment.*** This is for the parent’s convenience as well as that of the teacher, all students and the principal. ***Anyone coming into the school for any reason must first report directly to the Cass Street reception desk.***

## **SNACKS**

Healthy snacks may be allowed during locker breaks each day. Specific locker break time is provided for this. Students are to provide their own snacks. Students may have water in a clear water bottle only with them at any time during the school day.

## **SOCIALS**

Schools are not to sponsor mixed parties and dances for grade school students, when they are such as to promote premature dating, exclusive and particular boy-girl associations and the pairing off of couples. School activities which are well supervised and which are instructive in social graces and productive of mature and wholesome relationships are encouraged. DSP 5790

Students and teachers will plan social activities at least four times during the school year (*Halloween, Winter, Spring, and Grade 8 Yearbook*). Once students arrive at a social they are to remain until the end of the social or until a parent/guardian comes into the social to pick up the student.

## **TELEPHONE**

***Students may use the telephone in the office for emergency calls only, and only with permission of the principal or secretary.*** Forgetting homework, books, or parental permission slips will not be considered an emergency. Also, students may NOT use or have cell phones, beepers, walkie-talkies, and any other type of communication device on their person during the school day (7:30 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.). In cases where a student may need a family communication device after school, it must be turned off and stored in their lockers. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen communication devices.

As the school office is a very busy place, parents are asked to finalize all communications with students prior to dropping them off at school. If there is a need for a student to receive a message, please know that messages are announced only at the end of each school day and are made available to students for pick up in the office. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up his/her message.

Parents are asked to deliver all items and/or messages, clearly marked, directly to the Cass St. reception desk. Parents may not go to the classroom as we strive to avoid any type of disruption in the learning that is occurring in each classroom.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The school issues textbooks for student use during the school year. These books are to be covered by the student. Books must be returned to each teacher in the same condition, aside from normal wear and tear, in which they were received. Fines will be issued for damaged books and any that are lost. Report cards will not be issued if fines are outstanding. Students are responsible for providing their own Bible, either received in a grade 6 Aquinas Catholic School or purchased in the middle school office.

**TRUANCY**

Truancy is any unexcused absence. A student who is truant from school violates not only school regulations, but also Section 40.77 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Students who are truant from all or any part of the school day will forfeit the right to submit all work due or to make up any work (*including tests/quizzes*) done in the class(es) missed.

**TUITION PAYMENT POLICY**

In order to meet its own financial obligations, Aquinas Catholic Schools must receive timely tuition payments. Families are provided several payment methods and schedules for fulfilling their financial obligations and are expected to honor that commitment. We are aware that financial crisis can happen to any family at any time and every effort will be made to accommodate families in need of additional time to pay tuition. However, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to notify the ACS Finance Office (784-8585) when payments cannot be made according to the agreed upon payment schedule in order that a new payment plan can be established.

- Financial obligations must be met before students will receive diplomas, final report cards, transcripts, and/or school records. The President of Aquinas Catholic Schools may waive this requirement for families who have demonstrated good faith in working with the finance office to resolve their account balance. Students with outstanding balances will not be allowed to re-enroll in subsequent school years without an acceptable payment plan.
- In the case of a student’s early withdrawal, tuition will be charged through the end of the academic quarter in which the student is enrolled.
- Aquinas Catholic Schools reserves the right to turn over any family account to collections after the family exits the system.

**VISITORS**

**All visitors must first report to the Cass St. Reception Desk.** Students who wish to bring a visitor for a day must receive permission from the principal. The visitor must be someone interested in attending Aquinas Middle School. Also, some students may be asked to host a visitor for a day of school. A student will never host more than one visitor each day.

**VOLUNTEERS**

We welcome parents and other volunteers to work in our school. Volunteers may need to complete the Aquinas Middle School Volunteer Background Check Form, and submit it to the office if you wish to help.

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## **CLOSING NOTES:**

The notations DSP and DSR refer to specific Diocesan Policies and Regulations.

*This policy handbook is a guideline for students, parents, teachers and staff to insure smooth, day to day operations of the Aquinas Middle School. These policies along with common sense, parental backing, and student responsibility lead to sound decisions with students being held accountable for their actions. Please note that this is by no means meant to be an all-inclusive document. Situations not mentioned in this handbook are to be handled by the discretion and best judgment of the school administration.*

The educational institutions of the Catholic Diocese of La Crosse are subject to the limitations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination and Employment Act, the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Wisconsin Fair Employment Practices Act, and do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, handicap, arrest and/or conviction record, marital status or sexual preference, except as permitted by law. DSP 51

"This institution is and equal opportunity provider."

# Sexual Misconduct Procedures

A Pastoral Letter to Christ's Faithful  
of The Diocese of La Crosse

The Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke  
Bishop of La Crosse

October 18, 1997  
Feast of Saint Luke, Evangelist

## **On the Promulgation of The Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures For the Diocese of La Crosse**

To Christ's Faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Church is our second home. Each of our individual homes is meant to be a small Church which finds its spiritual birth and growth in the larger Church, our parish. Our participation in the life of the Church is, therefore, our greatest treasure after the gift of life itself. It is sacred to us, for it unites our individual lives to God, the source of all life, and to one another, the family of God's children.

Those who serve us in the Church represent, in one way or another, our Lord Jesus Christ as He shares His divine life with us in the Church. Priests and deacons, consecrated persons and laity who serve us in the Church, also as volunteers, are therefore held to the highest standard of moral conduct. Any breach of moral conduct on their part carries an additional burden of responsibility, for it betrays the trust which the Church places in them.

Sexual misconduct, because it is a violation of a person in his or her intimate being, always inflicts a most severe wound in the victim. When the act of sexual misconduct is carried out in the context of the Church's work, the wound is even more severe, for it touches upon the victim's faith in God and in His love for us. For that reason the Church, together with society in general, has become increasingly aware of the nature and gravity of acts of sexual misconduct, and desires to address such acts committed by agents of the Church with all of the spiritual remedies at her disposal.

The revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse indicate the practical ways by which our Diocese will continue to address the situation of sexual misconduct by those who serve God's people in the name of the Church. First of all, they mandate ongoing education for all agents of the Church regarding proper conduct, especially in the delicate area of human sexuality. In the sad case of an act of sexual misconduct, they aim to do what is just for all involved: the victim, the perpetrator and the whole body of the Church. What is more, they aim to bring the love of God to those who suffer the terrible wound inflicted by acts of sexual misconduct.

I take the occasion of the promulgation of the revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures to invite all who have suffered the severe wound inflicted by sexual misconduct on the part of an agent of the Church to seek the healing and reconciliation which our Lord Jesus Christ alone can provide. The holy Gospels attest to the healing power of our Lord Jesus Christ. I invite you to place your trust in the Lord and in the grace of healing which He continues to pour out for us in the Church.

Saint Luke, whose feast we celebrate today, tells us that our Lord Jesus sent forth the Twelve on their mission "to proclaim the reign of God and heal the afflicted." (Lk 9,2) Let us pray that the revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures will be a fit instrument to assist in healing the terrible affliction of sexual misconduct. Let us invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, to bring health and healing to all in the Church.

Invoking God's blessing upon you and your homes, I remain

Yours sincerely in Christ

(Most Rev.) Raymond L. Burke  
*Bishop of La Crosse*

# Decree

## Promulgating the Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures for the Diocese of La Crosse

The Diocese of La Crosse has had, for a number of years, a policy and procedures to respond to allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of Diocesan employees and agents. In order that the policy and procedures might respond more fully and effectively to such allegations, in the light of up-to-date knowledge in the matter and the Church's experience, it has been necessary to undertake their revision. For this reason a committee was convened and, as a result of its work, this revision of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures for the Diocese of La Crosse has been formulated.

I hereby decree that the *Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures for the Diocese of La Crosse* is to be published and to become effective today.

Given at La Crosse this eighteenth day of October in the year of Our Lord 1997, the Feast of Saint Luke, Evangelist.

(Most Rev.) Raymond L. Burke  
*Bishop of La Crosse*

Sr. Marlene Weisenbeck, F.S.P.A.  
*Chancellor*

### Sexual Misconduct Policy

1. Sexual misconduct by any Diocesan agent, while performing the work of the Diocese, is contrary to Catholic faith and morals, is outside of the scope of his or her duties and responsibilities, and is absolutely prohibited.
2. No person shall be subjected to sexual misconduct by any Diocesan agent, including clergy, consecrated persons, employees or volunteers of the Diocese of La Crosse.
3. All Diocesan agents shall comply with all federal, state or local, civil and criminal laws, prohibiting sexual misconduct; all laws requiring the reporting of known or suspected instances of sexual misconduct; and all requirements, procedural and substantive, set forth in this policy.

### Sexual Misconduct Procedures

- PURPOSE

1. **To convey the message** by word and deed that sexual misconduct is a moral outrage; that it will not be tolerated or condoned in the Church, regardless of the status of the offender; and that the time and resources of Church authority are committed to a just, pastoral response to all involved.
2. **To provide a prompt, compassionate and appropriate response** to reporters of sexual misconduct.
3. **To respect the canonical and civil rights** of the parties involved.
4. **To provide a confidential procedure to gather all relevant facts** which respects the privacy of the reporter and of the accused.
5. **To provide a mechanism**, when appropriate, to make available competent and supportive professional resources to victims, perpetrators and the accused.
6. **To provide and develop a climate and opportunities** for remediation, reconciliation and forgiveness.
7. **To provide a process** which seeks to restore trust.

- PROCEDURE

1. All allegations of sexual misconduct against Diocesan agents (clergy, consecrated persons and/or lay persons) shall be immediately reported to the Diocesan Bishop. All such reports are confidential.
2. The Diocesan Bishop shall meet with the Diocesan Attorney and may meet with others to assess initially the nature of the allegations and appropriate response to the allegations. This initial assessment will address the issues of possible risks to the accuser and potential victims, possible risks to the accused, reporting requirements, the selection of the persons to represent the Diocesan Bishop to the accuser and the accused (see Paragraphs 7 and 8 below), and the investigative protocol.
3. The Diocesan Bishop and/or his designee shall promptly respond to the accuser/reporter acknowledging the allegations and providing the accuser/reporter a copy of the Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Procedures.
4. The Diocesan Bishop and/or his designee shall notify the accused that an accusation has been made and provide the accused with a copy of the Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Procedures. If the accused is a cleric of another Diocese or a consecrated person, the ecclesiastical superior of the accused shall also be notified.
5. When necessary, the Diocesan Bishop shall take immediate steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all persons, which may include a leave of absence for the accused, reports to the appropriate authorities, notice to the insurance carriers and/or referral to professionals (medical, psychological or legal).
6. The investigative protocol shall be carried out in a timely manner.
7. The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a person to act as a liaison between the Bishop and the accuser/reporter; to represent the compassionate pastoral presence of the Diocesan Bishop; to gather detailed facts, including written statements from the accuser/reporter, documents, witness statements and records (releases); to submit written reports to the Diocesan Bishop; and ultimately to facilitate reconciliation and healing. All information and communication with the accuser and to the Diocesan Bishop shall be confidential.
8. The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a person to act as a liaison between the Bishop and the accused; to represent the compassionate pastoral presence of the Diocesan Bishop; to gather detailed facts including a written statement from the accused, documents, witness statements and records (releases); to submit written reports to the Diocesan Bishop; and ultimately to facilitate reconciliation and healing. All information and communications with the accused and to the Diocesan Bishop shall be confidential.
9. When appropriate, the Diocesan Bishop may request a third-party assessment of the accuser and/or accused, including independent medical, psychological or other examinations at Diocesan expense. All documents and/or reports are confidential.
10. After the investigative protocol is completed, the Diocesan Bishop shall make a determination whether or not the accusation is sufficiently confirmed.
11. If the accusation is not sufficiently confirmed, the Diocesan Bishop, with the respective liaisons to the accuser/reporter and the accused, shall communicate such determination to both parties. In addition, the Diocesan Bishop shall assist the parties to achieve reconciliation. A written statement shall be made, placed and recorded in the confidential records of the Diocese.
12. The following will apply if the accusation is sufficiently confirmed:
  - a. The Diocesan Bishop shall take reasonable immediate steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the victim and others involved and to prevent the misconduct from being repeated.
  - b. At the sole discretion of the Diocesan Bishop, when appropriate, the Diocese may make assistance available to the victim. The nature, content and extent of the assistance will depend upon each circumstance. Factors to be considered include the nature of the offense; the harm caused by the offense; the degree of culpability of the Diocese; the financial and professional resources available to the Diocese; and what canon law, civil law and contractual agreements of the Diocese permit.
  - c. At the sole discretion of the Diocesan Bishop, when appropriate, the Diocese may make professional resources available to the perpetrator. The nature, content and extent of the assistance will depend upon each circumstance. Factors to be considered include the nature of the offense; the harm caused by the offense; the degree of culpability of the Diocese; the financial and professional resources available to the perpetrator and the Diocese; and what canon law, civil law and contractual agreements of the Diocese permit.

d. No cleric, consecrated person or lay person who has engaged in sexual misconduct may be assigned in the future, if ever, to any Diocesan position, unless and until he or she has successfully completed any and all recommended assessment and initial therapy, is professionally deemed as presenting no unreasonable risk of reoffense, has had a prolonged period without recidivism, is reasonably monitored and supervised, and demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Diocesan Bishop that he or she presents no reasonable risk of harm.

e. Confidential written records shall be maintained by the Diocese concerning any accusations of sexual misconduct. All records of the investigative protocol are confidential and shall be kept in the secret archives.

13. When it is apparent that the accusation of sexual misconduct has caused hurt and scandal in the communities in which it is alleged to have occurred or did occur, the Diocesan Bishop shall direct the Dean to assess the nature and degree of the harm caused, and recommend and implement a plan of community healing and reconciliation.

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures**

- SCOPE

1. These Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures govern all Diocesan agents, including clergy, consecrated persons, employees and volunteers, while they are performing the work of the Diocese.

2. The Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures are not intended to cover other moral transgressions or matters involving violations of the Code of Canon Law.



# Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse

A Pastoral Letter to Christ's Faithful  
of

The Diocese of La Crosse

On the Promulgation of the  
Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures  
of the Diocese of La Crosse

To Christ's Faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

For over a year now, the Church in our nation has been suffering a most severe crisis regarding child sexual abuse by her clergy. In the Diocese of La Crosse, the *Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures*, which I promulgated on October 18, 1997, have been faithfully followed in dealing with any allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of any agent of the Diocese. They have been applied with special attention to the care and protection of children who may have been victims of sexual abuse.

In response to the present crisis, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in June of 2002, promulgated the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* to assist Diocesan Bishops in responding more effectively to the grievous crime of sexual abuse of a child by a priest or deacon. At the same time, the Bishops approved the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, which required the review and approval of the Holy See. In accord with the requirements of the *Charter*, with the assistance of a special committee, I formulated and promulgated on August 6, 2002, the *Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*.

Once the Holy See had completed the review of the *Charter* and the *Essential Norms*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the revised text of both documents at its meeting in November of 2002. On December 8, 2002, the Holy Father's Congregation for Bishops reviewed the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, and the United States Conference of Bishops promulgated them on December 12, 2002, making them particular Church law for our nation.

Now that the revised *Charter* and the *Essential Norms* have been promulgated and published, I, once again with the help of a special committee, have prepared a revision of the policy and procedures which I promulgated on August 6, 2002. Today I am happy to promulgate and publish the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*. Cases of child sexual abuse by other Church personnel will continue to be handled according to the *Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*.

The special policy and procedures serve a number of important purposes. First of all, they convey clearly the message that sexual abuse of a child by a priest or deacon is a moral outrage; that it will not be tolerated or condoned in the Church, regardless of the status of the offender; and that the time and resources of Church authority are committed to a just and pastoral response to all involved.

The policy and procedures also provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by a priest or deacon. At the same time, they respect the canonical and civil rights of all parties.

As is fitting in such cases, the policy and procedures provide the confidential means of gathering all relevant facts, which respect the privacy of the reporter and of the accused. They also offer, when appropriate, the means of making available competent and supportive professional resources to the accuser, the accused, the victim and the perpetrator.

Faithful to the Gospel and Church teaching, the policy and procedures foster and promote remediation, reconciliation, and forgiveness. They aim to restore trust among all in the Church.

Let us pray through the intercession of Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr, whose memory we celebrate today, that the implementation of this policy and these procedures will help to bring the healing of Christ to those who, as children, have suffered the deep and most

injurious wound of sexual abuse by a priest or deacon. May the promulgation of the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures* be the occasion for all in the Church to make reparation for the crimes of sexual abuse perpetrated against children and to seek an ever greater holiness of life. Through our prayer and penance, may we all be instruments of healing and reconciliation for our brothers and sisters involved in acts of child sexual abuse.

Let us confide to the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, and Saint Joseph the Workman, Patron of the Universal Church and of the Diocese of La Crosse, the just implementation of the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures* for the good of all in the Church.

I invoke God's blessings upon you and your homes.

Given at La Crosse, this fifth day of February in the year of Our Lord 2003, the Memorial of Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr.

(Most Rev.) Raymond L. Burke  
*Bishop of La Crosse*

Benedict T. Nguyen  
*Chancellor*

## DECREE

### PROMULGATING THE REVISED CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES OF THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE

The Diocese of La Crosse has been following the *Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures*, promulgated on October 18, 1997, which have applied also to cases of allegations of sexual abuse of children by a priest or deacon.

At its General Meeting in June of 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* required that the Diocese of La Crosse have specific policy and procedures to be followed in cases of child sexual abuse by priests and deacons, in order to address more effectively the grievous crime involved in such cases. In accord with the mandate of the *Charter*, I, with the assistance of a special committee, prepared and promulgated on August 6, 2002, the *Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*.

At its General Meeting in November of 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a revision of the *Charter* and the *Essential Norms*. On December 8, 2002, the Congregation for Bishops reviewed the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, and the United States Conference of Bishops promulgated them on December 12, 2002, making them particular law for the Church in the United States of America.

Both the revised *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* required some revision of the *Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*. Therefore, once again with the assistance of a special committee, I have prepared a revision of the special policy and procedures to be employed in the Diocese of La Crosse in cases of allegation of child sexual abuse by a priest or deacon. Allegations of child sexual abuse by other personnel of the Church will continue to be handled according to the *Revised Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*.

I hereby promulgate the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*, including the *Norms Governing the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board*, effective today.

Given at La Crosse, this fifth day of February in the year of Our Lord 2003, the Memorial of Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr.

(Most Rev.) Raymond L. Burke  
*Bishop of La Crosse*

Benedict T. Nguyen  
*Chancellor*

Revised  
Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures  
of the Diocese of La Crosse

- SCOPE

1. The Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse governs priests and deacons, while they are performing the work of the Diocese, with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop.
2. They are not intended to cover other moral transgressions or matters involving other violations of the Code of Canon Law.

- DEFINITIONS

Child: A person under the age of 18 years.

Diocesan Priest or Deacon: A priest or deacon appointed to serve in the Diocese of La Crosse by the Diocesan Bishop.

Sexual Abuse of a Child: Sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a child and other behavior by which an adult uses a child as an object of sexual gratification.

- POLICY

1. Sexual abuse of a child is a crime and “an appalling sin in the eyes of God.” (cf. *Address of Pope John Paul II to the Cardinals of the United States*, April 23, 2002)
2. Sexual abuse of a child by any Diocesan priest or deacon is contrary to Catholic faith and morals, is outside the scope of his duties and responsibilities, and is absolutely prohibited.
3. No child shall be subjected to sexual abuse by any Diocesan priest or deacon.
4. All Diocesan agents shall comply with all federal, state or local, civil and criminal laws, prohibiting sexual abuse of minors; all laws requiring the reporting of known or suspected instances of sexual abuse of minors; and all requirements, procedural and substantive, set forth in this policy.

- PROCEDURES

1. All allegations of sexual abuse of a child against a priest or deacon of the Diocese shall be immediately reported to the Diocesan Bishop. All such reports are confidential.
2. The Diocesan Bishop shall meet with the Diocesan Attorney and may meet with others to assess initially the nature of the allegations and the appropriate response to the allegations. The initial assessment will address issues of the possible risks to the accuser and potential victims, possible risks to the accused, reporting requirements, the selection of the persons to represent the Diocesan Bishop to the accuser and the accused (see Paragraphs 7 and 8 below), and the investigative protocol.
3. The Diocesan Bishop and/or his designee shall promptly respond to the accuser/reporter, acknowledging the allegations and providing the accuser/reporter a copy of the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*. The accuser shall be advised of any civil or criminal law reporting requirements and shall be assisted in such reporting, if the accuser desires.
4. The Diocesan Bishop and/or his designee shall notify the accused that an accusation has been made and provide the accused a copy of the *Revised Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*. If the accused is a cleric of another diocese, or a consecrated person of an institute of the consecrated life or society of apostolic life, the ecclesiastical superior of the accused shall be notified.  
The accused shall be informed of the nature of the accusation and of any civil or criminal law reporting requirements, and shall be advised to retain the counsel of both a civil/criminal lawyer and a canon lawyer before making any statements.
5. The Diocesan Bishop shall take immediate steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all persons, which may include a leave of absence for the accused, reports to the appropriate authorities, notice to the insurance carriers and/or referral to professionals (medical, psychological or legal).
6. The canonical preliminary investigation shall be carried out in a timely manner.
7. The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a person to act as a liaison between the Bishop and the accuser/reporter to represent the compassionate pastoral presence of the Diocesan Bishop; to gather detailed facts, including written statements from the accuser/reporter, documents, witness statements and records (releases); to submit written reports to the Diocesan Bishop; and ultimately to facilitate reconciliation and healing. All documents and all communications with the accuser shall be confidential.
8. The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a person to act as a liaison between the Bishop and the accused to represent the compassionate pastoral presence of the Diocesan Bishop; to gather detailed facts including written statements from the accused, documents, witness statements and records (releases); to submit written reports to the Diocesan Bishop; and ultimately to facilitate reconciliation and healing. All documents and all communications with the accused shall be confidential.

9. When appropriate, the Diocesan Bishop may request a mutually-acceptable third-party assessment of the accused and/or accuser, including independent medical, psychological or other examinations at Diocesan expense, provided this does not interfere with the investigation by civil authorities. All documents and communications shall be confidential.
10. If the accusation is not admitted, the matter will be referred to the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board.
11. After the canonical preliminary investigation and the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board process have been followed, the Diocesan Bishop shall make a determination of whether or not the accusation is sufficiently confirmed.
12. If the accusation is not admitted or sufficiently confirmed, the Diocesan Bishop, with the respective liaisons to the accuser/reporter and the accused, shall communicate such determination to both parties. In addition, the Diocesan Bishop shall assist the parties to achieve reconciliation. A written statement shall be made, and shall be placed and recorded in the confidential records of the Diocese. Every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the priest or deacon.
13. The following will apply if the accusation is either admitted or sufficiently confirmed by the Diocesan Bishop.
  - A. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith shall be notified.
  - B. The perpetrator shall be permanently removed from the ministry. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly, to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest or deacon.
  - C. The Diocesan Bishop shall take reasonable immediate steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the victim and others involved, and to prevent child sexual abuse from being repeated.
  - D. At the sole discretion of the Diocesan Bishop, when appropriate, the Diocese may make assistance available to the victim. The nature and extent of the assistance will depend upon each case. Factors to be considered include the nature of the offense; the harm caused by the offense; the degree of culpability of the Diocese; the financial and professional resources available to the Diocese; and what canon law, civil law and contractual agreements of the Diocese permit.
  - E. At the sole discretion of the Diocesan Bishop, when appropriate, the Diocese may make professional resources available to the perpetrator. The nature and extent of the assistance will depend upon each case. Factors to be considered include the nature of the offense; the harm caused by the offense; the degree of culpability of the Diocese; the financial and professional resources available to the perpetrator and the Diocese; and what canon law, civil law and contractual agreements of the Diocese permit.
  - F. Confidential written records concerning any accusations of sexual abuse shall be maintained by the Diocese. All records of the canonical preliminary investigation and of the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board process are confidential.
14. In any case involving canonical penalties, the processes provided for in canon law must be observed.
15. When it is apparent that the accusation of sexual abuse has caused hurt and scandal in the communities in which it is alleged to have occurred or did occur, the Diocesan Bishop shall direct the Dean to assess the nature and degree of the harm caused, and recommend and implement a plan of community healing and reconciliation.

## Norms

### Governing the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse and Review Board

1. **Composition and Appointment.**  
The Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board shall consist of six persons appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and who serve at the pleasure of the Diocesan Bishop. All persons must be of outstanding integrity and good judgment. At least five of the persons must be in full communion with the Church.
2. **Qualifications.**  
No less than four (4) of the members shall be adult lay persons not in the employ of the Diocese of La Crosse, one of which, at least, shall have particular expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of children. In addition, one experienced and respected pastor of the Diocese and the Diocesan Attorney shall also serve on the Board.
3. **Term.**  
The term for each Review Board member shall be five (5) years, which can be renewed.
4. **Purpose.**  
The purpose of the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board shall be:
  - A. To assist the Diocesan Bishop, at his request, in assessing specific allegations of child sexual abuse by a priest or deacon, when the allegations have not been admitted;
  - B. To review regularly the Diocesan policy and procedures for dealing with child sexual abuse by a priest or deacon and to recommend to the Diocesan Bishop any modifications; and
  - C. To render such other advice and counsel regarding child sexual abuse, when requested by the Diocesan Bishop.
5. **Confidentiality.**  
All matters submitted to and proceedings of the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board are confidential. The procedures constitute part of the process to assess the fitness for assignment and the assignment of clergy. The process is therefore privileged under the First Amendment. The procedures may require the examination of documents and records

which are privileged. They may require seeking and hearing legal advice which is privileged, and may require the review of privileged communications between priests, doctors, psychologists, social workers, and lawyers. By its very nature, the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board's proceedings involve matters of a highly personal nature, protected by the Wisconsin Privacy Law. Therefore, all of its communications, proceedings and records are confidential and may not be disclosed or made public.

6. Norms Governing the Assessment of Allegations.

- A. Issue: "Is the allegation true?"
- B. Burden of proof: the accuser carries the burden of proof, consistent with concepts of fundamental fairness.
- C. Standard of proof: moral certitude which excludes every prudent doubt or every doubt founded on positive reasons.
- D. Representation:
  - (1) The accuser may be represented by a civil and/or canon lawyer at his or her own expense.
  - (2) The accused may be represented by a civil and/or canon lawyer at his own expense.
  - (3) When necessary, the Diocese will supply canonical counsel to a priest or deacon.
  - (4) The Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board shall be represented by the Diocesan Attorney.

7. Record.

There shall be no record made of the proceedings of the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board.

8. Rules of Evidence.

Adherence to the application of the strict rules of evidence shall not be required.

9. Discovery.

There shall be no discovery by any party before the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board.

10. Nature of the Proceeding.

Initially, the Diocese of La Crosse Child Sexual Abuse Review Board shall review the records submitted to it by the Diocesan Bishop. If testimonial proof is necessary, the Review Board shall secure sworn statements from witnesses. If the record review and written testimonial proof is insufficient to make a recommendation to the Diocesan Bishop, oral testimony may be obtained.

## AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A partnership of Parishes, Families, and Educators

In seeking to enroll your child in Aquinas Catholic Schools, you are entering into a long-enduring partnership of parishes and pastors; of parents and children; of teachers, administrators and staff. As is true with most partnerships, this relationship includes hopes and expectations on the part of all involved, and it includes a declaration of commitment. By enrolling your child, you are indicating your commitment to the various components of this partnership.

### **Hopes & Expectations: The Parishes**

Parishes are the central component of Catholic communal life and they are central to Aquinas Catholic Schools (ACS) as well. Those associated with our shared system of Catholic education are grateful for the generous support of our parishes. Parishes of the La Crosse Deanery contribute significantly to the system's annual budget. In addition, parishes with schools on their property fund ongoing maintenance and improvement of those facilities. Catholic schools are a fundamental aspect of Catholic life and the parishes which support ACS are proud to fulfill this important dimension of their mission to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and to help young people grow in faith and in knowledge.

### **Hopes & Expectations: Parents & Children**

The financial support of our parishes makes it possible for ACS to offer a significantly reduced tuition rate to children from area parishes. In exchange for this generous support, it is understandable that our parishes would have expectations of those parents and children who are enrolled in our schools and share in this partnership.

- **Parish Membership and Expectations:** Formal parish membership is a fundamental expectation. The expectations of parish membership are the same for ACS families as for all parishioners:
  - Participation at Mass on Sunday (or Saturday night). Giving God thanks and praise at Mass is fundamental to Catholic life and it is an essential element of our children's growth in living and celebrating their Christian faith. The significance of all children and parents attending Mass each Lord's Day cannot be overstated.
  - Involvement in Parish Life. A parish is vibrant only if all members participate in various ministries and volunteer opportunities. The commitment of ACS parents to these parish ministries and programs not only benefits the parish but also provides an important witness to our children in connecting faith and service.
  - Financial Support. The generous financial support of all parishioners is necessary for parish life. Some parishes might indicate how parishioners would determine a pledge of financial support each year. Regardless, it is necessary for every family to recognize the obvious financial need of their parish, to consider one's ability and responsibility to support the parish, and then to plan and support their parish financially.

### **The Commitment**

This is a brief overview of our ACS partnership and the commitment we all make as part of this partnership to provide for strong and vibrant parishes and a solid foundation for Catholic education in order to enable our children to mature in faith, hope and love. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your pastor or the President of ACS, Ted Knutson at [Ted.Knutson@aquinasschools.org](mailto:Ted.Knutson@aquinasschools.org).

3/1/2021