St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School

REGISTRATION HANDBOOK

2012-2013

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The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in the registration process. More information about the school, including this handbook and a copy of the current policy book can be found at www.aquinas.org. All CISVA policies can be found at www.cisva.bc.ca.

A. Welcome Letter from the STA Regional Education Committee

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Registration time for the 2012/2013 school year has arrived at STA. We are happy to welcome you back and would like to extend a special greeting to our new students and their families. If you are registering for the first time, please read the information contained in this handbook carefully. It will guide you through the registration process and provide you with other important information. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office at 604-987-4431.

REGISTRATION: Last year we implemented a new online registration system so that families could complete the majority of the registration documents electronically, through the school website. This year, if you are re-registering current students, your family information will already be entered into the system. You will only need to review that information and update it, as needed.

If you are registering a student for grade 8, or you are a new family and registering for the first time, you will need to complete the online registration as well as a number of paper forms included in this package. The paper forms are for information where we are required, by law or policy, to have a written signature.

Before you can proceed with the online registration, you must submit the Pastor's Authorization Form to your own parish priest or parish office. Your priest will confirm your category status, authorize the form and forward it to STA. If you require confirmation of your category, please contact your parish directly. This information MUST be received by STA before you can do the online registration.

After completing the online registration, your registration checklist, along with any required paper forms and your fee payment must be presented in person by a parent or guardian at one of the designated REGISTRATION PAYMENT SESSIONS listed on page 4.

If you have any questions, or need assistance with the online registration, please contact the school office.

TUITION: As an independent school, STA receives a per-pupil grant from the Provincial Government, which is equal to 50% of the per-pupil operating grant in public schools. The Ministry of Education determines this amount each year. No part of this grant can be applied to capital expenses such as buildings or equipment. The remainder of the STA operating budget is derived from tuition fees, fundraising and support from the Regional Parishes in the form of a per-pupil subsidy.

We work hard to keep the cost of Catholic education within the reach of as many families as possible. A detailed fee chart can be found on page 6 of this handbook.

INCOME TAX RECEIPTS: Through the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA), STA issues income tax receipts for a significant percentage of tuition fees. This percentage is calculated each year based on what portion of your tuition fees are used for Religious instruction. This receipt is used as a charitable deduction on your Income Tax Return, not as an education deduction. 100% of tuition fees paid in 2011 will qualify as a charitable deduction.

PARTICIPATION PROGRAM: There will be some changes in the coming year to the STA Participation Program. The number of required hours per family per month has been **reduced from 8 hours to 6 hours**, for a family with a single student and **from 12 hours to 9 hours**, for a family with 2 or more students. More information about the Participation Program can be found on page 8 of this handbook or on the school website under COMMUNITY.

Thank you for your cooperation and for your continuing support of STA and Catholic education.

Yours truly,
Anne Pearsall,
STA Education Committee, Chair

B. Registration Requirements and Procedures

RE-REGISTRATION FOR STUDENTS CURRENTLY ENROLLED AT STA

If you are re-registering a student who already attends STA, you must complete the following steps:

STEP 1 Complete and submit the Pastor's Authorization Form to your parish

You MUST submit this form to your parish before you can complete the online registration.

Complete the top section on this form and take it to your parish office for the pastor to authorize and sign. He will confirm the Category status of your family and return the form to the STA office so that the school fees for the coming year will be calculated when you register on the new electronic system. *A complete description of the requirements for each category can be found on the back of the Pastor's Authorization Form.*

The Parish office will **NOT** return this form to you, but will send it directly to STA.

If you are unsure of the category assigned to your family, please contact your parish office.

NON-CATHOLIC FAMILIES who are registering students should complete the top section of the form and then return it to the STA school office as soon as possible, before completing the online process.

STEP 2 Complete the online registration process – Your login and password will be emailed to you

STEP 3 Attend one of the Registration Payment Sessions

A parent or guardian must attend in person to confirm the registration documents and make the required payments.

REGISTRATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

If you are registering a new student at STA, you must complete the following steps:

STEP 1 Complete and submit the Pastor's Authorization Form to your parish (see information above)

STEP 2 Complete the following paper forms included in this package.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT – 2 copies

The student and parents should sign both copies. Keep one at home and return the 2nd copy with your other forms at one of the payment sessions.

LEGAL RESIDENCY OF PARENT – FORM A/B

This form must be completed for ALL new students

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION & RELEASE AND STORAGE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION PARENT CONSENT

The main method of communication between home and school is by email. We ask that you provide an email address so that your family can receive any important information from the school including the monthly newsletter.

The school requires you to provide personal information about students and families. That information is protected and will not be disclosed without your consent.

STEP 3 Complete the online registration process – If you are a new family to STA, your login and password have been included in this package. If you already have a student at STA, use the login information that you received by email for your older student.

STEP 4 Attend one of the Registration Payment Sessions

A parent or guardian must attend in person to submit the required paper forms, confirm the registration documents and make the required payments.

REGISTRATION PAYMENT SESSIONS:
Before attending any of the scheduled Registration Payment Sessions, you MUST login and complete the online registration process. Once complete, the online system will calculate the fees your family will need to pay and print a checklist of the items you will need to bring to one of the payment sessions.

The registration process is complete once you have done the online portion, submitted any required paper forms and made payment on of the days listed below.

Paper forms and payments MUST BE PRESENTED IN PERSON BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN. They will not be accepted from students or at the School office. Incomplete registrations cannot be accepted.

Thursday, March 8, 2012	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	STA Cafeteria
Saturday, March 10, 2012	10:00 am to 2:00 pm	STA Cafeteria
Wednesday, March 28, 2012	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	STA Cafeteria

The re-registration of current students is conditional upon previous satisfactory behaviour and academic standing. If students do not pass core subjects (Religion, PE, English, Social Studies, Math or Science) in June or in Summer School, it is possible that they may not be accommodated into these subjects the following year. This is dependent on the Programming Schedule.

Registration will not be accepted from families who, for any reason, have an outstanding account with the school. Please contact the office as soon as possible to make payment arrangements. Should you be experiencing insurmountable financial difficulties, please contact your parish priest, and if appropriate he will refer you to the STA Tuition Assistance Committee. More information about the Tuition Assistance Program can be found on page 7 of this handbook.

MANDATORY NEW STUDENT INFORMATION MEETING:
Parents of all grade 8 and other new students MUST attend an information meeting on Tuesday, May 1, 2012 at 7:00 pm. This meeting is compulsory for at least one parent and their grade 8 child. Your child's application is conditional on you and your child's attendance. If you cannot attend for emergency reasons, please contact the school immediately.

C. Entrance Priority for Students and the Parish Subsidy

1. ENTRANCE PRIORITY FOR STUDENTS:

The following entrance priorities apply only if registration is completed on the specified dates with all forms completed and signed and all payments submitted as per CISVA guidelines (Admissions to Regional Secondary Schools Policy 401).

1. Children presently enrolled in the school if they and their families meet the expectations of the school.
2. Siblings of children already in the school, whose families are practicing Catholics active in one of the parishes of North or West Vancouver.
3. Children whose families are practicing Catholics active in one of the parishes of North or West Vancouver.
4. Siblings of children already in the school, whose families are practicing Catholics active in a parish from outside the North Shore Region.
5. Children whose families are practicing Catholics active in a parish from outside the North Shore region.
6. Children whose families are either not practicing Catholics or not active in their parishes.
7. Non-Catholics. Once accepted, non-Catholics need meet only the criteria expected of other students to be re-admitted in subsequent years. However, siblings of non-Catholics cannot be given priority over Catholics.

2. REGIONAL PARISH SUBSIDY TO THE SCHOOL

The supporting Regional Parishes for St. Thomas Aquinas are:

Christ the Redeemer, West Vancouver	Msgr. Gregory Smith	604-922-1371
Holy Trinity, North Vancouver	Rev. James Comey	604-988-6304
St. Anthony's, West Vancouver	Rev. Gary Frankin	604-926-6881
St. Edmund's, North Vancouver	Rev. Gerald D'Souza	604-988-3211
St. Paul's, North Vancouver	Rev. John Brioux	604-984-6709
St. Pius X, North Vancouver	Msgr. Pedro Lopez-Gallo	604-929-1404
St. Stephen's, North Vancouver	Rev. Frank Landry (Archbishop's Rep.)	604-985-1962

All parishes served by the regional high school must contribute financially to support the school's operational costs. To be fair to each parish, the amount given to the school is calculated using a formula that takes into account the number of students attending the regional school from that parish, multiplied by the subsidy figure agreed upon by the pastors. The Regional Parish Subsidy to the school is **NOT** a deduction from tuition. The parishes only pay the subsidy for Category 1 students.

For purposes of admission to St. Thomas Aquinas, the Categories are defined as:

CATEGORY 1 – QUALIFYING CATHOLIC PARISHIONER

A family is considered **Qualifying Catholic Parishioners** if they are:

- **registered** in one of the supporting regional North Shore parishes listed above.
- **regularly attending Mass** at that parish
- **using Sunday envelopes** (no amount specified) from that parish on a regular basis
- **participating** in the work activities required of them by that parish
- **authorized** by their pastor to attend the school

CATEGORY 2 - NON-QUALIFYING CATHOLIC PARISHIONER or
NON-REGIONAL CATHOLIC PARISHIONER

A family is considered **Non-qualifying Catholic Parishioners** if they are:

- **registered** members of a regional North Shore Catholic parish but **DO NOT** meet all the requirements of Category 1 as described above. *(i.e. not attending Mass or contributing financially to that parish on a regular basis, or not participating in parish activities.)*
- **authorized** by their pastor to attend the school

A family is considered **Non-regional Catholic Parishioners** if they are:

- **registered** and practicing members of a Catholic parish outside the North Shore region
- **authorized** by their own pastor to attend the school

CATEGORY 3 - NON-CATHOLIC

All other families except international students

Full registration policy of the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA) can be found at www.cisva.bc.ca/policy_manual/index.asp

D. School Fees

There are five main types of school fees:

1. **APPLICATION FEE:** The Application Fee is due at the time of registration for all applications. No post-dated cheques will be accepted. This fee is non-refundable.
2. **TUITION FEE:**
3. **PARENT PARTICIPATION FEE:**
4. **ACTIVITY FEE:** Will be payable on the first day of school, September 4, 2012.

5. **SPECIAL ACTIVITY FEE:** Specific fees are applied to specialized curricular and extra curricular programs that vary from year to year. This includes PE 11/12.

PAYMENT TERMS
STA DOES NOT ACCEPT ANY FEE PAYMENTS BY CREDIT CARD.

A family may choose from the following payment options for tuition and participation fees:

Tuition Fees:

1. **Annual Tuition.** Full advance payment of tuition fees by cheque, dated September 1, 2012.
2. **Monthly Tuition payments** can be made by:

- completing a pre-authorized payment form and providing a void cheque from your account. *The monthly tuition will be withdrawn from your account on the **first** of each month.*
- 10 post-dated cheques (dated 1st of each month, September thru June)

Participation Fees

1. **Annual Participation** - one advance payment by cheque for participation fees ($650 for 1 student or $1,000 for 2 or more students) dated September 15, 2011.
2. **Monthly Participation payments** can be made by:

- completing a pre-authorized payment form (a void cheque is required) *The monthly participation fee will be withdrawn from your account on the 15th of the month.*
- 10 post-dated cheques (dated 15th of each month September thru June)

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS: There is a $25.00 NSF levied to the family for insufficient funds.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
If your family is experiencing financial hardship, you should contact your pastor before May 31, 2012 to discuss any financial assistance needed to help you meet your tuition payments. The pastor, on an individual case basis, will determine the assistance to families in need.

Tuition Assistance Forms are available at your Parish office.
More information about the Tuition Assistance Program can be found on page 7.

TUITION AND FEES – 2012/2013 SCHOOL YEAR

APPLICATION FEE:	$175 for 1 student	$290 for 2 students	$345 for 3+ students

TUITION FEES:	**Category 1** (Qualifying Catholics)	**Category 2** (Non-qualifying or Non-regional Catholics)	**Category 3** (Non-Catholic)
1 student	$295/month or $2,950/year	$400/month or $4,000/year	$590/month or $5,900/year
2 students	$590/month or $5,900/year	$800/month or $8,000/year	$1,180/month or $11,800/year
3 or more students	$737/month or $7,370/year	$1,000/month or $10,000/year	$1,475/month or $14,750/year

PARTICIPATION FEES	1 student	2 or more students
Per month	$ 65.00	$100.00
Per year	$ 650.00	$ 1,000.00

E. Government Funding

In order for a student to qualify for government funding under the Independent School Support Act, that student must be in attendance for a minimum of 600 instructional hours (medical reasons excepted with written documentation) by May 15 of the school year. Parents/Guardians of students not qualifying for funding will be required to pay that portion of the government grant that is lost. This payment would be in addition to the regular monthly tuition fee.

F. Financial Assistance Program

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School endeavors to ensure that no Catholic student is denied a Catholic education because of financial difficulty. Some limited funding is available for partial assistance with tuition.

In order to qualify for assistance from the school, a family must be Catholic (Category 1) and be registered for and fulfilling the requirements of the participation program. Families in need of financial assistance must first speak with their pastor before approaching the STA Tuition Assistance Committee.

Should you anticipate serious problems with the ability to manage tuition fees, please follow these steps:

1. Contact your parish priest to discuss assistance from the parish (Tuition Assistance forms are available in your parish office).

2. Outline your situation in a letter addressed to the Chairperson of the Education Committee to be delivered to the school office by May 31, 2012. Please include the Parish Tuition Assistance Form.

A member of the Tuition Assistance Committee will contact you. All communication will be strictly confidential.

Please be aware that only under exceptional circumstances is tuition assistance granted to students registering at STA for the first time.

Tuition assistance once granted should NOT be considered as automatic for subsequent years. A new application is required each school year.

If you need more information about the STA Tuition Assistance Program, please contact Mike Mutsaerts (604-506-5015) at muts@shaw.ca

St. Thomas Aquinas also attempts to assist those Catholic students who require additional financial support in order to participate in school enrichment opportunities.

G. Parent Participation Program

The STA Participation Program was developed to assist in fundraising activities or to provide cost saving services for the school in return for a reduction of the participation fee. Once your child has been admitted to the school, as a member of the STA Community, you are required to participate in various activities of the school, including fundraising. If you are not able to participate in these activities, you will be assessed a penalty fee (CISVA Policy 404.5). There are a limited number of full time participation positions. Seasonal and part time credits are available throughout the school year.

THERE ARE FOUR MAIN AREAS WHERE PARTICIPATION CREDITS ARE AVAILABLE:

1. **Cafeteria:** The cafeteria is operated by Canuel Caterers in cooperation with the school administration. A paid kitchen manager looks after the day-to-day operations. Participants must be able to commit to the regular hours, as outlined on the application form. Duties include assisting with food preparation, serving and clean-up. This position operates from September to June on days when the cafeteria is open to students. The Cafeteria Coordinator will provide a schedule for all participants.
2. **School Maintenance:** (Indoor and outdoor) Maintenance jobs generally involve grounds keeping – grass cutting and weeding. Due to the nature of the work and because the grounds are divided into sections, participation credits are awarded based on the completion of assigned tasks, rather than on an hourly basis. Much of the work is weather dependent, so some assignments need to be completed during the summer months with much less work required in January and February. The Maintenance Coordinator will provide each participant with a schedule of assigned tasks.
3. **Traffic Supervision:** Participants monitor and supervise the front and back parking and driveway areas of the school during drop-off and pick-up times.
4. **Seasonal / Partial:** There are a number of events which take place during the school year where parents can earn Participation credits. These events include Walk-a-thon, Christmas Craft Fair, semi-annual yard clean-ups and International Night. Full credit is awarded to selected chairs for some of these events (pending application). The chair positions require previous experience in the particular event and are awarded at the discretion of the Participation Committee. Partial credits can also be earned for these events. Notice of eligible events is through the STA Newsletter, the Parent Association, or if you specify on the Participation Application, your name and email can be added to a list and you will receive specific notice by email.

POLICIES GOVERNING THE PARTICIPATION PROGRAM:

Full Credit Positions

- Approximately 60 - 90 hours per year per family is required for full credit. (60 hours for $650 fee/one student or 90 hours for $1,000 fee/2 or more students)
- There is a maximum of one full credit per family.
- Full credit positions for the coming year, are assigned by the end of the current school year. Participants will be informed by mail.
- Participation begins September 1st and ends June 30th. (except for School Maintenance and some coordinator positions)

Seasonal / Partial Credit Positions

- The number of available hours varies depending on the position.
- Part time participants must submit completed time sheets, which have been signed by the event coordinator or their supervisor. Parents should submit time sheets to the office upon completion of their assignment, or after 6/9 hours have been accumulated.
- All seasonal hours must be submitted by June 15th.
- Credits will be applied to future months participation fees
- If there is a balance of 4 or fewer hours at the end of the school year (June 15th), no credit or refund is given.

G. School Uniform

Uniforms can be purchased at: Cambridge & Company, 135-1305 Welch Street
North Vancouver, BC Phone: 604-924-9309

The following is an excerpt from the STA Parent/Student Handbook Dress Code Policy:

Philosophy of Personal Appearance

A student's personal appearance not only reflects an image of our school to the community, but also has an impact on his/her attitude as well as behaviour, and thus the learning process. Respect for both the individual and the school is manifested by an attitude of "dressing-up" for school. Students are to dress with a sense of decorum befitting an academic environment. The dress code is based on modesty, neatness, cleanliness, good taste and safety.

BOYS UNIFORM
Red STA Sweater (Black - Grade 12)
Grey slacks
White monogram STA shirt - long or short sleeves
Grey socks (Black - Grade 12)
Black leather shoes - no boots or athletic shoes
Gym strip (if required)

GIRLS UNIFORM
Red STA Sweater (Black - Grade 12)
Plaid STA Kilt - (no more than 3" above the knee)
White monogram STA shirt - long or short sleeves
Grey knee highs or tights (Black - Grade 12)
Black leather shoes – no ankle boots, sandals or athletic shoes (heel height up to 3")
Gym strip (if required)

Note: Hair, beards and mustaches must be neatly groomed. Students are allowed a limit of two (2) earrings per ear (studs or sleeper only). Exaggerated haircuts, and hair dyed to unnatural colours are unacceptable.

GYM STRIP *(Girls and Boys)*
For PE classes, all students are required to be in regulation gym strip: black STA shorts, grey STA T-shirt, white athletic socks, running shoes.
If sweats/warm-ups are worn they must be STA issue.

Uniform - Regulations

i. Students are expected to arrive and depart from school in full uniform. Exceptions may apply (i.e. STA extra-curricular activities)
ii Students out of uniform must submit to administration, an explanatory note from their parents, before lst period . Uniform Slips will be issued for one day only. If the student does not have a parental note he/she may be sent home to change and must report to the office upon his/her return. Any class time missed will be made up after school.
iii At no time will the following be tolerated at school and/or at <u>school sponsored events throughout the calendar year:</u> (12 months)
    - Body piercing or tattoos
    - Colored or patterned T-shirts under STA shirt or blouse.
iv The Administration reserves the right to confiscate any article of clothing contrary to the school dress code.
v. If dress code violations are frequent, the student may be asked to withdraw from the school.
vi School sweaters are to be worn at special events at the discretion of school administration.

Spirit Days

Spirit days are held periodically (i.e. Out of Dress Code). On these occasions, students are expected to dress modestly and in good taste, according to the theme set for the day. The school administration reserves the right to send home students who are not dressed appropriately.