Frequently Asked Questions

St. Thomas School has a tradition of offering children a Catholic-based education with a focus on academics, socialization, and spirituality. Choosing the right school for your family is an important decision. Below are some frequently asked questions. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact St. Thomas School at 783-3517 or email principal Jill Bierman, jillbierman@stthomassaints.com.

Is there a busing program? Yes. St. Thomas students utilize busing services from Jasper Unit #1. Our school calendar follows their schedule.

Is there a hot lunch program? Yes. Students may receive a hot lunch for $2.45 per day. Extra milk is $0.30. Reduced and free lunches are available for qualifying students through an application process.

Can my child attend St. Thomas School if he/she is not Catholic?
Yes. We welcome children of all faiths. We feel the children can learn from one another about God's presence. All of our students are required to participate in religion class and to attend mass with their grade. However, they do not have to participate in mass.

Are students required to wear uniforms?
No. St. Thomas has a dress code that all students are expected to follow, which can be found in the student handbook. The dress code begins mostly in 5th grade. All students should purchase a royal blue St. Thomas polo to wear to all-school masses. Most of the boys wear khaki pants (khaki shorts when it is hot) with their polos, while the girls wear dress pants, capris, or skirts with theirs. Every day of the week, shoes must have backs to them.

Does St. Thomas School offer Title I, speech, and services for students with other ISP's?
Yes. Staff from Jasper Unit #1 comes to St. Thomas School to offer speech and learning disability services. However, it is for a limited time frame each day. St. Thomas teachers offer Title I services in reading and/or math.

Is the Accelerated Reading program used at St. Thomas?
Yes. In K/1 students go to the library, check out books, and read with their 7th/8th grade buddies. In second grade, they begin taking AR tests on their own. There are literally thousands of books that are AR. Each student's point goal is dependent on the STAR reading test results given by their teacher.

What extracurricular activities are offered?
Baseball, softball, cross-country, girls' and boys' basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, scholastic bowl, and track. We also have a marching band that is part of the band curriculum in grades 6-8. We co-op with Jasper Unit #1 for cross-country, girls' softball and girls' basketball.

When is our first payment for tuition and books due?
It depends if you choose a 10-month or 12-month payment plan. The 12-month plan begins in June, while the 10-month plan starts in August. Most families choose the 10-month plan, so they make their first payment at registration. All payments have to be finished in May. If other payment arrangements need to be made, Father Dean Probst, our pastor, is willing to talk to families on an individual basis.

What type of computer technology is available?
St. Thomas School has a Smartboard in every classroom that is used on a regular basis. There are computer stations in each classroom. There is controlled access to the Internet for school projects. St. Thomas School has a set technology curriculum for grades K-8, so they are prepared to enter high school. We use Samsung tablets in Kindergarten, and Chromebooks in grades 1-8. Our 5-8 graders are 1 to 1 with Chromebooks while they are at school. They do not take them home, but when they graduate they take their Chromebook with them.

What are the hours of the school day?
Students can be dropped off as early as 7:30. The bell rings at 8:00 to indicate the start of the school day. At 8:05 we say a prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, sing Happy Birthday to those with a birthday that day, and then recognize those who displayed a virtue the previous day. We load busses at 2:55 and our parent pick-up line follows.

Is there an opportunity to be involved in the school?
Yes. Volunteer service is a vital part of St. Thomas School. Since all the funding for educating your child at St. Thomas is provided through tuition, book fees, Booster Club dues, parish contributions, donations, and fundraisers, all school parents are asked to volunteer time to help keep the school tuition as low as possible. Most of our families choose to be involved as a part of their children's school and faith experience. We have a Fair-Share contract that all parents are asked to sign. Some of the ways that parents volunteer are morning playground duty (7:30-8:00), lunch playground duty (11:20-12:40), library, classroom, coaching, etc. A detailed list is on the back of the Fair-Share contract.

What is the class size at St. Thomas?
Currently, our smallest class has 11 students while our largest has 29 students. The maximum number of students we will enroll per grade, unless extenuating circumstances is 25. When we have a large kindergarten class, there is at least one aide with them during the day. First and Second grades are dependent on numbers and need.

Do you meet the requirements set by the Illinois State Board of Education?
Yes. Both the Illinois State Board of Education and the Diocese of Springfield accredit St. Thomas School.

Is there communication between school and home?
Yes. There is a weekly packet that is sent home the first day of school each week containing numerous items such as a letter from the administration, monthly lunch menu, monthly calendar, lunch account balances, etc. All of the teachers are very good at communicating with the parents on a regular basis. Each teacher has an informative page on the school website where you can see upcoming tests and projects, along with miscellaneous information. St. Thomas also uses a computer program that allows parents to check on their child's grades at any time over the Internet. In grades 5-8 weekly eligibility is sent home with all students who have a D or F in a subject. All teachers are available to meet with parents before or after school by appointment if an email or phone call is not preferred.

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