



Helping students find Connection, Compassion, & Character

2023-2024

Parent & Student Handbook

Thomas Academy Charter School

Phone 910-646-2237 Fax 910-646-5083

Website: thomasacademync.org

The **Mission** of Thomas Academy, Inc. shall be to provide individualized education in a strength based approach that addresses students' unique learning styles, cultivates lifelong learning, and promotes the building of character, allowing them to give back to their communities in a meaningful way.

The **Vision** of Thomas Academy is to be a school that serves the whole student and helps them find connections, compassion, and character. The Thomas Academy is a Community-Based Educational Program of Boys and Girls Homes of North Carolina.

A message from the Principal

Greetings and a warm welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Thomas Academy Charter School! We look forward to partnering with you and your student/s in making for a pleasant and rigorous academic and social experience. Please consider becoming involved by serving on TA's School Improvement Team and/or attending one of our many parent involvement events. TA's SIT meets the second and fourth Monday of the month at 2: 45 pm in the high school library.

We hope the information contained within this handbook will be helpful in preparing you and your student for success. Please read through this information and share with Thomas Academy any suggestions you have to help ensure Thomas Academy is the best educational setting for your child. I look forward to working with you to support a positive and proactive learning environment in every classroom at TA.

Sincerely,



Dr. Cathy C. Gantz- cathy.gantz@thomasacademync.org
Principal of Thomas Academy Charter School

Governing Board – Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm via Go to Meeting.

- Owen Robinson, Thomas Academy Board of Directors Chairperson
- Dave Wyatt
- Julie Wolf
- Woody Weddington
- Christy Hopkins
- Patricia Medlin
- Dr. Leonard Holmes

Staff

Administrative and Support Staff

- Dr.Cathy Gantz.....Principal
- Courtney Swoboda.....Academic Coach
- Sherry Kennedy.....Assessment Coordinator
- Jonathan Crawley.....Behavioral Support Specialist
- Shannon Britt.....Administrative Assistant

Teaching Staff

Middle School

- Georgia Mathis.....ELA
- Anita Harrell.....Math
- Charlotte Mitchell.....Science
- Drake Harper.....S.S.
- Courtney Swaboda.....E.C.

High School

- Tara Haynes.....ELA
- Sean Swoboda.....Math
- Wayne Helms.....Science
- Courtney Swaboda.....E.C./Academic Coach
- Annese Haire.....History

Electives

- Ashlee Ramirez.....Online Course Teacher
- Demetrius Gibson.....Health/P.E./Basketball Coach
- JodyWatts.....Theater/Broadcasting/Speech & Debate
- Drake Harper.....Theater Production/Transportation/Voc Ed

Calendar

Thomas Academy will follow a traditional calendar which will include a two semester grading period. Each semester will have approximately two 9 week grading periods. Interim progress reports will be sent home at the 5 week period. See attached school calendar.

Daily Schedule

Normal school hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Students may not be dropped off before 8:00 am. Students are tardy at 8:10 a.m. Each Monday we will follow a half day schedule. No lunch served on Mondays or early release days.

Afternoon Dismissal Procedures

Students will be dismissed from their classes at 2:30 pm. Students will only be released to their Residential Counselor (RC) or an adult authorized to pick them up. Any adult with permission to check out or pick up a student MUST be listed on the student's Emergency Contact Form and must show ID to a Thomas Academy staff member upon request. If there is any change to transportation, notification should go to Ms. Britt before 11:30 a.m. (shannon.britt@thomasacademync.org or 910-646-2237)

Attendance Policy

It is the responsibility of the student to attend school every day. North Carolina Law requires that children between the ages of 7 and 16 years must attend school. Thomas Academy will diligently adhere to the North Carolina Compulsory School Attendance Law, including N.C.G.S. 115C-378. The principal or designee may excuse a student's absence for the following reasons if adequate evidence is provided:

- Illness or injury: When absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school
- Quarantine: When isolation of the student is ordered by the local health official or the State Board of Health
- Death in the immediate family: The immediate family includes, but is not limited to, parent, grandparent, or sibling
- Medical or Dental appointment
- Court or administrative proceedings
- Religious observance: When the student, or the student's parent/guardian, adheres to a religion in which the tenets require or suggest the observance of a religious event, the parents must seek prior approval from the Principal for such absence. The approval of such absence is within the discretion of the Principal. Approval should be granted unless the religious observance or cumulative effect of religious observances is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the student.
- Educational Opportunity: When the student misses school due to a valid educational opportunity and obtains the Principal's prior approval
 - The written request must be received by the Principal at least one week prior to absence.
 - The student must be in good academic standing.
- Absence related to deployment activities: A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting said parent or legal guardian.

Absence Policy

Middle School

Parents will be contacted by the teacher after a student absence of two consecutive days.

Students who miss more than 10 days per year (regardless of reason) will be in danger of failing for the year. Students must be in school for 3.5 hours to be considered present. Additionally, excessive tardiness and early check-outs will accumulate absences as well.

High School

Parents will be contacted by the teacher after a student absence of two consecutive days.

Attendance will be taken for each class. Students must be in class for at least 35 minutes in order to be counted present for that class. A student who accumulates more than 8 absences in a class is in danger of failing that course.

Notification and Excuse Notes

If your child is going to miss all or part of the school day, the parent/RC is asked to contact the office as soon as possible. A written explanation is required upon the student's return and should be given to the Office Manager/Administrative Assistant within 3 days following the student's return.

Early Dismissal

If a student needs to leave school for any reason, the student's parent/RC must sign them out at the front office. If the student returns to school during the same day, he/she must present a written excuse to the office, sign back in, and receive an Admit Slip.

Lunch

There will be 5 separate school lunch periods: 2 middle school and 3 high school lunches. Each will be approximately 20 min long. During this time students will go to the cafeteria where every child will be provided a hot lunch or they may eat a lunch they brought from home. **Please remember soft drinks and outside food will not be allowed in the school or cafeteria.**

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences will be held after the first progress report each semester to discuss student progress. Typically conferences will be scheduled from 1:00-6:00 p.m. There will be a sign up process and a meeting will be held for EVERY individual child. We believe in the philosophy of "It takes a village" and to do that, everyone should be aware and on the same page with the child's plan. If the scheduled date is not convenient, the parent/RC is responsible for contacting the teachers to set up an alternate date/time. There is also no food or drink allowed in the classroom.

Health Care

As preventative measures, we encourage everyone to wash hands often with soap and water, especially after a cough or sneeze (into the arm or tissue, please) and to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.

Parents/RCs : Please do not send your child to school if they have been sick the previous night or morning in the cottage/home.

If children become sick during the school day, they will be sent to the office to call the parent/RC. Please keep your child at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat with fever
- Watering or discharging eyes
- Skin rash, spots, or bumps
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or chills
- Lice
- Fever

No student will be allowed to return to school until they have been fever free without aid of medicine (i.e. Tylenol) for 24 hours.

Make-up Work

Students are entitled to make up work from all absences. **STUDENTS** are responsible for securing and arranging to make up work directly with their teachers. Make-up work shall be assigned at the discretion and convenience of the teacher and may be specific material missed by the student, or may be reinforcement or enrichment assignments.

Emergency Closing, School Cancellation, Inclement Weather

During extremely bad weather or other emergencies, it may become necessary to delay school, cancel school or close school early. Once a decision has been made to alter the schedule in any way:

- All homes/cottages will be notified via ClassDojo by the Administration/Office; in case of inclement weather, please be sure to check your phone for notices.
- Thomas Academy's facebook will reflect this notice.

Announcements will be distributed in a timely manner to notify campus and community students when the make-up day(s) will be scheduled.

- School closings and delays will be announced by the local T.V./Radio stations.

School Property

Students are expected to respect school property at all times. Damage to school property may result in a fee for damages and/or replacement. Malicious damage will lead to disciplinary consequences.

Food/Drink

Students are not allowed to bring food and/or drinks into the classrooms, other than water or for their lunch. This includes snacks from the cottages/homes or unfinished food from the dining hall. We request that parents/RCS cooperate with the school by ensuring that students bring ONLY WATER as a beverage.

Visitors/ Volunteers

All visitors to the school, including parents must enter and leave by the main front door and sign in at the office upon arrival. From there, they will be allowed to visit the school area ONLY. All visitors to the Boys and Girls Home Campus should report to the main office and sign in.

All volunteers must have a Criminal Background Check before they will be allowed to work with students. The Principal may, at her sole discretion, deny access to any school space by any visitor or volunteer.

Student Conduct Policies and Procedures

Code of Academic Conduct

The faculty and administration of Thomas Academy will strive to provide appropriate support and direction to any student who needs assistance meeting educational goals, including meeting the requirements of the Code of Academic Conduct. Thomas Academy strives to bring out the best in every student, including students who are having difficulties, while deterring any student from undermining the education of other students through actions which violate the Code of Academic Conduct.

The Code of Academic Conduct requires that students:

- Attend all classes daily, unless excused by the Principal or designee.
- Arrive on time to all classes with necessary materials, as required by teacher.
- Follow teacher/staff directions at all times and in all locations.
- Complete all work assigned by teachers and turn in when due.
- Following these simple guidelines will ensure your child's success.

School Level System Discipline Policy

Thomas Academy utilizes the Teaching Family Model, a positive focused behavior management system which focuses on reinforcing positive behaviors, while teaching alternative behaviors when deficiencies are observed. The system focuses on "catching students being good" and immediately providing positive feedback which translates into incentives at the end of the week. The system identifies individual needs and assigns specific social skills to assist students being successful not only at school, but also in the community. The system is designed to provide feedback to parents on how their child is performing daily with the use of a daily school note. The school note not only provides a summary of the skills reinforced or addressed for that

day as well as any assignments that may be given for that evening. Each parent will be provided with a link to track their students behavior not only daily but hourly if they choose. There is also an opportunity for parents to add comments and provide feedback for teachers.

The system uses three levels based upon the students progression and consistent use of the social skills being taught. All students begin on the white system focusing on five basic social skills; following instructions, accepting no, accepting feedback, asking permission and greeting skills. Once they consistently demonstrate these skills they will progress to the green level which becomes more individualized based upon the students needs. As the child shows mastery of higher level skills they will progress to the yellow level providing much more independence, decision making and opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Individualized incentives are provided based upon each student's individual likes and interests as well as group incentives are developed by a student committee.

Thomas Academy provides a unique opportunity for children to develop life-long, consistent habits regarding behavior, work and character. We place special emphasis on this development to nurture and promote the whole child as the student moves through developmental milestones during their school years.

To develop consistent behavior habits, Thomas Academy strives to:

- Provide positive reinforcement at every opportunity
- Create opportunities for children to demonstrate positive behavior
- Develop and articulate appropriate behavior expectations at each grade level
- Foster a relationship with parents/RCs to support student learning in the home and in the school.

To develop consistent work habits, Thomas Academy strives to:

- Set high expectations per grade level as to quality of work
- Value effort while promoting academic improvement

To develop positive character, Thomas Academy strives to:

- Create a mutually respectful environment in the classroom
- Create opportunities for children to show gratitude and appreciation
- Develop lesson plans to teach specific character skills and acknowledge their use by students
- Provide positive reinforcement for cooperative skills
- Provide opportunities for leadership.

For more information on The Teaching Family Model , please visit the following website:
<https://www.smarterparenting.com/>

Although the goal of these policies is to alleviate the need for punitive discipline, Thomas Academy is committed to providing a safe and appropriate educational environment for all students at all times. Thomas Academy students are expected to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner. Any disciplinary matters that disrupt the learning environment will be dealt with by the administrative staff and the parents/RCs. Therefore, the school administration has discretion to apply disciplinary consequences when necessary.

The purpose of a consequence is to change the behavior. Consequences issued may range from a conference with an administrator to out of school suspension and will be based on the severity of the incident as well as the frequency of the behavior. Ultimately we want your child in school so they can learn. However we must ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

Under no circumstances will drugs, alcohol or weapons be tolerated on the campus of Thomas Academy. Additionally, any behaviors that may result in criminal charges being filed will be turned over to local law enforcement and parents will be notified.

Authority to conduct Searches and Seizures

The objective of any search and/or seizure is not the eradication of crime in the community. Searches may be carried out to recover stolen property, to detect illegal substances or weapons, or to uncover any matter reasonably believed to be a threat to the maintenance of an orderly educational environment. The Board authorizes Thomas Academy authorities to conduct reasonable searches of Thomas Academy property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects, to maintain order and security in the Academy.

The search of a student, by authorized Thomas Academy authorities, is reasonable if it is both:

1. justified at its inception, and
2. Reasonably related in scope to the circumstances which justified the interference in the first place.

Thomas Academy authorities are authorized to utilize any reasonable means, without touching the student, when conducting searches, including but not limited to the following:

1. A search of the student's clothing, including pockets;
2. A search of any container or object used by, belonging to, or otherwise in the possession or control of a student; and/or
3. Devices or tools such as breath-test instruments, saliva tests strips, etc.

All student's wireless communication devices are taken up each morning and stored in a locked cabinet. At the end of the day, it is returned to the student as they depart from school. The wireless communication device and its contents, including but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched whenever a school official has reason to believe the search will provide evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law or a school rule. The scope of such searches must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search.

Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy

Thomas Academy is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to learning, free from improper and illegal discrimination and harassment, particularly that which is based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, or disability. The faculty and staff will establish and maintain an atmosphere in which students can develop attitudes and skills for effective, cooperative living, including the following:

- Respect for individuals
- Respect for cultural differences
- Respect for economic, political, and social rights of others
- Respect for the rights of others to seek and maintain their own identities

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes bullying, harassment, or intimidation via electronic communication devices ("cyber bullying").

Any student who believes she/he is the victim of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination should immediately inform a teacher or adult whom they trust. Students may also directly inform the Principal/Behavior Intervention Teacher. The incident must be investigated within 24 hours.

Discrimination involves intentionally treating anyone in an unequal or disparate manner because of that person's inherent or natural personal characteristics when such treatment causes the victim to suffer adverse educational, employment, or other school-related consequences. Harassment is any unwelcome offensive verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive as to significantly affect the conditions of one's employment or a student's learning. Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following: abusive jokes, insults, slurs, name calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcome sexual advances, or the exchange of benefits for performance of sexual favors.

Bullying includes behaviors or communications, explicit and implicit, by one person or group toward another person or group that intimidates, threatens, or otherwise reasonably places the recipient(s) in fear of harm of person, property, or reputation. Bullying can occur in person, through traditional forms of communication, electronically via means such as social media, email, text messaging and similar venues.

Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are prohibited at the school and during school-related activities between students, employees, school agents, volunteers, visitors and any other person associated with or under the control of the school.

Procedures established by Thomas Academy for reporting suspected discrimination, harassment or bullying shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct. Thomas Academy prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination,

harassment, or bullying. This policy, however, shall not be used to bring frivolous or malicious complaints.

The Principal is authorized and expected to establish training and administrative procedures to help eliminate discrimination, harassment, and bullying to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Of the various types of harassment, sexual harassment is worthy of special considerations beyond those applicable under the school's general Harassment Policy. No employee or student shall engage in sexual harassment against any other student, employee, or another person in the school community. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or sexually suggestive comments when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for student or employment decisions affecting such individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment. The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to unwelcome touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, pressure for sexual activity, intimidation by words, actions, insults, or name calling, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

Students who believe that they may have been sexually harassed or intimidated should consult a counselor, The Administration and Behavior Intervention Teacher will assist them in the complaint process. TA Administration, Faculty, and Staff who knowingly condone or fail to report or assist a student to take action to remediate such behavior of sexual harassment or intimidation may themselves be subject to discipline.

Any Academy employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any student of the Academy who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the Academy's discipline policy. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding sexual harassment likewise will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge with regard to employees or suspension and expulsion with regard to students.

The Academy will make every effort to ensure that employees or students accused of sexual harassment or intimidation is given an appropriate opportunity to defend themselves against such accusations.

To the greatest extent possible, the Academy will treat complaints in a confidential manner. The Academy realizes that limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation. Retaliation against persons who file a complaint is a violation of law prohibiting discrimination and will lead to disciplinary action against an offender.

Reporting

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated within 24 hours. Any student, employee, or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy or feels he/she has been a victim of hazing, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report his/her concerns to the Principal, who has overall responsibility for such investigations.

Procedures for handling discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

1. Any student who believes he/she is the victim of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination should immediately inform a trusted teacher or advisor. Students may also directly inform the Principal. Students are also encouraged to inform their parent/RC.
2. Any adult (faculty, parent volunteer, visitor, et al) who believes he/she is the victim of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination should immediately inform a member of the administrative leadership team.
3. When anyone reports harassment, bullying, or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the Principal as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
4. Complaints against the Principal shall be filed with the Board of Trustees and the President/CEO of B&GH.
5. The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation and, as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

Acceptable Use Policy

Thomas Academy offers a computer network with Internet access and email services for teachers, and staff within the school system. Email access for students may be provided at a later date, but it is currently not being offered. Use of technological resources should be integrated into the educational programming and should be used to teach the North Carolina Common Core State Curriculum in meeting the educational goals of the Thomas Academy

Board. Teachers are encouraged to further incorporate the use of technology resources into their lesson plans.

Federal Online Protection Act requirements are designed to ensure that websites protect the information and personal safety of children. As a result, many valuable instructional resources require that children, especially under the age of 13, have parental permission prior to using these sites. Monitoring the use and teaching students about online safety is best done through practice. It is recommended that teachers communicate with parents/RCs prior to assigning students to use these resources. Parents/RCs have the right to refuse the use of any such resource.

The Principal shall ensure that school system computers with Internet access comply with federal requirements regarding filtering software, Internet monitoring and Internet safety policies. The Principal shall develop any regulations and will submit any certifications necessary to meet such requirements.

Expectations of Users

The Thomas Academy area computer network and other technological resources are intended for support and delivery of the Thomas Academy instructional program. Users of the school's system network and technological resources will report any misuse of such resources to the system administrator. Misuse of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state and federal laws, and users of the Thomas Academy technological resources can be prosecuted for violating those laws. All the rules of conduct described elsewhere in the policies, procedures, and expectations of Thomas Academy will apply while using the network and other technological resources.

Privileges – Students

All students registered in Thomas Academy will automatically be given access to the system's Internet. Parents have the option of denying their child's access to the Internet.

At the beginning of each school year, students and parents/RCs of students under the age of 18 shall be notified in writing of this policy and that the student will be granted access to the Internet unless they object in writing. **Failure to object to the child's access shall be deemed parental consent for Internet access and consent to the school system monitoring the student's use.**

To exercise the right to object, the parent/RC must complete the *Parental Request to Deny Access to Internet*, available from the Principal, and return it to Thomas Academy. Thomas Academy may supplement any provision of this policy with additional requirements consistent with this policy, and may require parent/RC releases and approvals.

Employees are expected to comply with the requirements of this policy and all other relevant Board policies when accessing technological resources.

Restricted Material

The Board is aware that there is information on the Internet that is not related to the educational program. The Board is also aware that the Internet may provide information and opportunities to communicate on subjects that are not suitable for school-age children and that many parents would find objectionable. School system personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from having access to inappropriate materials, such as violence, nudity, obscenity or graphic language which does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. The Principal shall ensure that the Internet service provider or technology personnel have a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access to audio or visual depictions that are obscene, that are considered child pornography or that are harmful to minors. School officials may disable such filters for an adult who uses a school-owned computer for a bona fide research or other lawful educational purpose. School system personnel may not restrict Internet access to ideas, perspectives or viewpoints if the restriction is motivated solely by disapproval of the idea involved.

Faculty and Staff Network Etiquette

Users are expected to abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Be polite, professional and respectful in all communications with others when using the Thomas Academy network;
- B. Be conscientious of your use of school system network resources to help conserve resources such as bandwidth and to minimize disruptions on the Thomas Academy network;
- C. Brevity is preferred;
- D. Minimize spelling errors and proofread email messages;
- E. Use accurate and descriptive titles for your email messages;
- F. Remember that humor and satire can often be misinterpreted;
- G. Reduce the number of email messages by using the same message for multiple addresses if that is appropriate;
- H. Do not use the email system as a forum to broadcast political or religious opinion lobby for support or advertise services or products not approved by the administration; and
- I. Refrain from typing messages in all upper case because the reader may interpret it as shouting.

Privacy

Thomas Academy's technological resources are primarily provided for school-related purposes only. No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources, including any communication through the network or the Internet or while using any school system electronic information resource. School system administrators or individuals designated by the Director may review files, monitor all communications, intercept email messages, and search data or email on school system-owned or leased computers, servers or other electronic information resources at any time to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. School system personnel shall make reasonable attempts to monitor online activities of minors who access the Internet via a school-owned computer or electronic device while on the school campus.

Requirements for Use of the Internet

The use of Thomas Academy technological resources, such as the network, email system and Internet, is a privilege, not a right. The network system administrator and/or Principal will decide what is appropriate use in accordance with this policy. administrator. The administration, staff, or faculty of Thomas Academy may request that a student's privilege to internet access be revoked or denied.

Any user of Thomas Academy network, email system, Internet or other technological resources, including staff and students, must comply with the following requirements:

- A. Students must meet all standards of expected student behavior and comply with all Board policies, administrative rules, and school standards and rules when using technological resources.
- B. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally accessing, downloading, storing, printing, displaying or transmitting images, documents, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, messages or other material that is obscene, defamatory, pornographic, lewd, vulgar, sexually explicit, harassing or considered to be harmful to minors.
- C. All applicable laws and Board policies apply, including those relating to copyrights/trademark, confidential information, and public records. Any use that violates state or federal laws is strictly prohibited. Under no circumstances may software purchased by Academy be copied for personal use.
- D. Users must respect the privacy of others. When using, blogs or other forms of electronic communication, students must not reveal personally identifiable, private or confidential information, such as home address or telephone number, of themselves or fellow students. In addition, school personnel shall not disclose on the Internet or on school system web sites/pages any personally identifiable information concerning students (including name, address or pictures) without the permission of a parent/RC or an eligible student, except as otherwise permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Student Records. Users also

may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.

- E. Users of the school computer system or Internet access are prohibited from using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers or computer systems, including entry into an administrative and/or unauthorized LAN, WAN or server, or otherwise engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities such as "hacking", port sniffing or using other programs, tools or utilities against the network or any Internet/intranet resource.
- F. If a user identifies a security problem on the Internet or with other technological resources, he/she must immediately notify a system administrator. Users shall not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk shall be denied access.
- G. Users are prohibited from using another individual's computer account or files without prior written permission from the individual, including through use of an ID and/or password not assigned to the user. Users may not read, alter, change, execute or delete files belonging to another user without the owner's express permission.
- H. Users shall not intentionally waste or abuse limited resources, such as through distribution of mass email messages (e.g., chain mail, spamming, solicitations), creation of and/or participation in unauthorized new groups, or unauthorized storage of files on the server.
- I. Teachers shall make reasonable efforts to supervise a student's use of the Internet during instructional times.
- J. Use of the Internet for commercial gain or profit is not allowed from an educational site.
- K. Views may be expressed as representing the view of Thomas Academy and/or Boys & Girls Home only with prior approval from the Principal or his/her designee.
- L. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).
- M. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, and software or computer networks. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance. Users must scan any downloaded files or viruses.
- N. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs or any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device or network without the express permission of the Director or designee.

Personal Websites

The Principal may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize Thomas Academy or Boys & Girls Home name, logo or trademark without permission.

A. Students

Though school personnel do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school system computers during non-school hours, when the student's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with Thomas Academy Board policies.

B. Employees

All employees must use the school system network when communicating with students about any school-related matters. Thus, employees may not use personal websites or online networking profiles to post information in an attempt to communicate with students about school-related matters.

Employees are to maintain an appropriate relationship with students at all times. Employees are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on employee personal website or online networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. If an employee creates and/or posts inappropriate content on a website or profile and it has a negative impact on the employee's ability to perform his or her job as it relates to working with students, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. This section applies to all employees, volunteers and student teachers working in the school system.

No Warranties of Service

Thomas Academy makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Thomas Academy will not be responsible for any damages that users suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, no deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the school system's own negligence or the users' errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the information system is at the risk of the user. Thomas Academy specifically denies and disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or quality or type of information obtained through its services.

Consequences for Violations of Acceptable Use Policy

This policy is applicable to all users of Thomas Academy computers and refers to all electronic information or other technological resources whether individually controlled, shared, stand alone, or networked. Disciplinary action, if any, for staff, students or other users shall be consistent with the Thomas Academy Board policies and practices,

including the Student Code of Conduct. Violations may constitute cause for revocation of access privileges, suspension of access to Thomas Academy system computers, other disciplinary action, dismissal, or appropriate legal action. Specific disciplinary actions will be determined on a case by case basis.

Grievance Policy

Procedure for appeals:

In the event that a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the Principal's decision, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Principal to review the decision. During the meeting, a written report of the incident will be reviewed and every effort will be made to resolve the misunderstandings in the best interests of the student. If further review is needed, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Thomas Academy Board to review the decision.

Grading Policy

Thomas Academy strives to have clear expectations for students. The school year is divided into 2 semesters which are 19/20 weeks each in length. Additionally a summer school session may be offered for credit recovery or remediation.

Each teacher is required to post/provide the following information:

- Class expectations
- Grading policy
- Homework policy
- Course outline

The teachers will use the following grading scale:

- A – 90-100
- B – 80-89
- C – 70-78
- D – 60-69

Any student who earns a grade below a C will be expected and given assistance as needed to redo the assignment or test. We strive to help students understand that “just getting by” doesn't set them up for the best future they can have. Hard work breeds success. Fortunately, we have a staff that will guide them and support them as much as needed. However, students must do their part to complete these assignments because no one can DO the work FOR the student and it would hinder their education to simply pass them on without having mastered the work. For this, we need the support of the students AND the parents/RC's to help us stay on top of the situations to make certain that everyone is doing their part. It truly takes a “village” and we are grateful that you and your child/children are a part of that village.

Students must maintain an overall grade of C average or better in all academic work to be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities including sports.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- For students who entered 9th grade in 2021-2022 or later: **22 credits total**
 - English – 4 credits (English 1,2,3,4)
 - Mathematics – 4 credits
 - **Math I**
 - **Math II**
 - **Math III**
 - 1 math course aligned with the student’s post-secondary plans (Usually Math IV)
 - Science – 3 credits
 - Biology
 - Physical Science
 - Earth/Environmental Science
 - Social Studies – **4 credits**
 1. Founding Principles of US and NC Civic Literacy
 2. Economics and Personal Finance
 3. America History
 4. World History
 - Health and Physical Education – 1 credit
 - Electives – 7 credits including one of the following areas:
 - Fine Arts
 - World Language
 - CPR certification is required of all NC graduates

NC mandatory Standardized Tests:

- 6th Grade End of Grade Tests – Reading, Math
- 7th Grade End of Grade Tests – Reading, Math
- 8th Grade End of Grade Tests – Reading, Math, Science
- Math I and Math 3 EOC
- Biology EOC
- English II EOC
- Pre Act- 10th grade
- Act- 11th grade
- Acceptance in any UNC System University requires 2 credits of the same foreign language and a fourth science credit in addition to all the requirements listed above.

Thomas Academy College and Career Promise

Eligibility and Drop Policy

Effective August 2022

Career and College Promise

The Career and College Promise program is designed to offer qualified high school students structured dual enrollment opportunities that provide both entry-level job skills as well as pathways leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree.

The board, in collaboration with local community colleges, may provide for dual enrollment of a qualified high school student in community college courses through (1) a Career and Technical Education Pathway leading to a job credential, certificate, or diploma aligned with one or more high school Career Clusters or (2) a College Transfer Pathway leading to college transfer credits.

The board may also partner with institutions of higher education to establish cooperative innovative high school programs that enable a student to concurrently obtain a high school diploma and (1) begin or complete an associate degree program, (2) master a certificate or vocational program, or (3) earn up to two years of college credits within five years. Students are eligible for these programs beginning in eleventh grade.

The superintendent shall develop procedures consistent with this policy, state law, and State Board policies.

I. Enrollment in Career and College Promise

Career and College Promise is the result of a partnership between the North Carolina State Board of Education, the North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina system, and many of North Carolina's independent colleges and universities. Rules governing Career and College Promise are established by those entities. This regulation provides general information about Career and College Promise. For more specific information, students and parents should consult the prospective community college and/or the student's school counselor.

A. Career and College Promise Description

Career and College Promise provides structured opportunities for eligible high school students to dually enroll in community college courses and earn college credit and free tuition while still in high school. Academic credits earned through Career and College Promise enable students to accelerate the completion of a postsecondary credential, such as a certificate, diploma, or degree that leads to college transfer or provides entry-level job skills. Students may choose from the following types of options or “pathways”: College Transfer Pathways leading to a minimum of 30 hours of college transfer credit; Career Technical Education Pathways leading to a job credential, certificate, or diploma; or the Cooperative Innovative High School Pathway, which enables a student to begin earning tuition-free college credits as a high school freshman.

B. College Transfer Pathways

1. Description

The Career and College Promise College Transfer Pathways are designed for students who wish to begin earning credit towards a two-year associate degree and a four-year baccalaureate degree. These pathways are a structured set of general education courses designed to, upon successful completion, transfer to any North Carolina public university or participating private college or university. The College Transfer Pathway (for students who wish to begin study toward the Associate in Arts degree and a baccalaureate degree in a non-STEM major) or the Associate in Science College Transfer Pathway (for students who wish to begin study towards the Associate in Science degree and a baccalaureate degree in a STEM or technical major).

2. Eligibility

To be eligible for initial enrollment in a College Transfer Pathway, the student must:

- Be a high school junior or senior,
- Have a weighted 3.0 grade point average on high school courses, or
- Demonstrate college readiness in English/writing, reading, and mathematics on an approved assessment or placement test.

To remain Eligible for continued enrollment in a College Transfer Pathway, a student must:

- Maintain a 2.0 or higher grade point average on college coursework after completing two courses, and
Be progressing toward high school graduation, as determined by the student's principal.
- A student who falls below a 2.0 grade point average is subject to the community college's policy for satisfactory academic progress.

Students participating in a College Transfer Pathway must meet college pre-requisite requirements established by the community college and comply with any other rules or requirements of the community college applicable to students participating in Career and College Promise.

C. Career Technical Education Pathways

1. For Juniors and Seniors

The Career Technical Education Pathway for high school juniors and seniors leads to a certificate or diploma aligned with a high school career cluster.

To be eligible for initial enrollment in a Career Technical Education Pathway, a high school junior or senior must meet the following criteria:

- Have a weighted 3.0 grade point average OR be recommended by the principal or designee; and
- Meet the course prerequisites for the career pathway if applicable

To remain eligible for continued enrollment in the Career Technical Education Pathway, the student must:

- Maintain a 2.0 or higher grade point average on college coursework after completing two courses, and
- Be progressing toward high school graduation, as determined by the student's principal

A student who falls below a 2.0 grade point average after completing two college courses will be subject to the community college's policy for satisfactory academic progress

II. Calculation of Grade Point Average

The grades for any course approved for high school credit will be calculated into the students grade point average in accordance with State Board of Education Policy GCS-L-004.

III. Cost for CCP

The state of North Carolina pays the tuition costs for all eligible CCP students. Thomas Academy will pay the registration fees (currently \$31 per registered student). The cost of required books and codes will be the responsibility of the student and parent/guardians. SCC also partners with Thomas Academy and provides free hot posts for CCP students who lack internet access at their home.

IV. Withdrawal From an SCC Course

Students who wish to withdraw from an SCC course must do so in writing before the college drop period. The student will earn a W on their SCC transcript. Students can withdraw from their SCC course before day 10 without affecting their high school transcript. Students who drop a course(s) will be on a probationary period for 1 semester and will not be allowed to enroll in CCP courses for the following semester.

Students are allowed one semester grace period of dropping a class. In the first semester a student drops an SCC course, they will receive a WF on their high school transcript. A WF-Withdrawn Failing does not count in GPA students receive no GPA points and no graduation credit. In any other semester following their first SCC class dropped, students will receive a 59 on their transcript for any SCC course dropped. A grade of 59 will count as a failing grade and will negatively impact their GPA. The student will not receive course credit for a grade of 59.

Dress Code

Monday-Thursday:

Students are required to wear khaki pants and green or white polo style shirts. Uniform pieces are the student and parent/guardian's responsibility.

Friday:

Friday dress code will be based on the Teaching Family Model.

Thomas academy strives to create an environment which allows our students to concentrate on academic and character education of the highest quality. Our mandatory uniform policy is designed so that the clothing and physical appearance of an individual does not disrupt or distract from the education environment. We believe that this dress code will take the learning environment to an even higher level, will instill a common identity among students and a pride in the school, and will create a safer and more disciplined learning environment.

Shirts

- The dark green or white polo style shirts may be purchased at Walmart

Bottoms: Pants, Shorts, Capris, or Skorts

- Solid khaki only. (No jeans or stretchy material are permitted, such as yoga pants or jeggings)
- Bottoms must be worn above the hips at all times with a fastened belt
- Form-fitting spandex material, denim, yoga and sweat pants of any description are not allowed
- Bottoms must be free of labels, graphics, or logos
- Bottoms must be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee
- Undergarments must not be visible

Outer Garments-coats/sweat shirts

Should a student wear an outer garment over their school shirt, it must be one that can open completely and remain open while in the building. All other outer garments must be removed while in the building.

Additional Items

- Blankets are not permitted in school
- Belts must be worn buckled at all times
- Shoes such as flip flops and slides are not permitted
- Students are not permitted to wear sunglasses in class on any day
- Hats must be removed anytime a student is in the building

Violation of the dress code

If students come to school in violation of the dress code, parents/RC will be required to bring additional clothing, and students will be sent back to the cottage/home to change. Students may be given alternative clothing to wear until new clothing arrives.

Field trips or off campus

In addition, students on school sponsored field trips will be required to wear the school uniform. Students leaving for off campus appointments, must wear their school uniform. Should they return prior to the end of the day, they must be in school uniform. Students are not permitted to wear hats or sunglasses in the building.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THOMAS ACADEMY UNIFORMS



- HUNTER GREEN AND WHITE POLO STYLE SHIRTS
- PANTS, SKIRTS, AND SHORTS **KHAKI ONLY (THIS IS A CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR.)**
- STUDENTS MAY NOT WEAR LEGGINS, YOGA PANTS, SWEATPANTS OR JEANS.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THOMAS ACADEMY UNIFORMS



- HUNTER GREEN AND WHITE POLO STYLE SHIRTS
- PANTS, SKIRTS, AND SHORTS **KHAKI ONLY (THIS IS A CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR.)**
- STUDENTS MAY NOT WEAR LEGGINS, YOGA PANTS, SWEATPANTS OR JEANS.