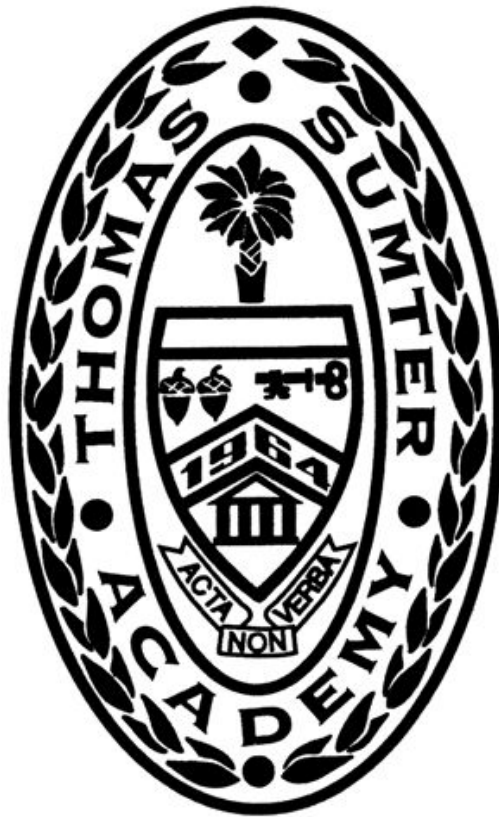


2009 – 2010
TSA STUDENT HANDBOOK



Thomas Sumter Academy
5265 Camden Highway
Rembert, SC 29128
Phone: (803) 499-3378
Fax: (803) 499-3391
Website: www.thomassumter.org
Email: tsa.generals@thomassumter.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Mission Statement	4
II. General Information	
Introduction	4
Philosophy	4
Spiritual Life	4
Accreditation and Memberships	4
Admissions	4
Business Office	5
Communications	5
Development	5
III. Academic Programs	
Lower School	5
Preschool	5
Elementary School (grades one through five)	6
LS Guidance	6
Summer Reading	6
Parent Involvement	6
Upper School	6
Middle School (grades six through eight)	6
High School (grades nine through twelve)	7
IV. Academics	
Honor Code	7
Graduation Requirements	8
Guidance	8
Schedule Changes	8
Grading	8
SC Uniform Grading Scale	9
Exams	10
Exam Exemptions	10
Interims/Report Cards	10
Policy on Make-Up Work	11
Promotion	11
Summer School	11
Honor Rolls	11
V. Health Care	
Health Requirements	11
Student Illness Guidelines	11
Medication	12
Insurance	12
Child Abuse	12
VI. School Safety	
School Safety Act of 1997	12
Visitors	12
Emergency Closing of Schools	12
VII. Student Services	
Lunch Program	13
Transportation	13

TSA Bus Program	13
TSA Bus Rules	13
Car Pool	14
Driving on Campus	14
Daycare	14
Media Centers	15
VIII. General Rules of Conduct	
Attendance & Tardies	16
Sign Out Policy	17
Discipline Code	17
Multi-Media Security Policy	19
Substance Use	19
Student Behavior Off-Campus	20
Right to Search	20
Computer Access & Regulations	20
Internet Access	20
Dress Standards	21
IX. Parent and Teacher Organizations	
PTO	23
TSA Booster Club	23
X. Student Activities	
Student Council	23
Student Clubs	24
Anchor Club	24
Art Club	24
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	24
First Priority	24
French and Spanish Clubs	24
Key Club	24
Math Club	24
National Honor Society	25
Publications	25
Literary Magazine	25
Student Newspaper	25
Yearbook	25
Fine Arts Department	25
Choral Music	25
Visual Arts	26
Dance	26
Drama	26
XI. TSA Athletics	
Strength and Conditioning	26
Team Travel	26
Athletic Eligibility	27
SCISA Code of Conduct	27
TSA Athletic Teams	27
Fall Sports	27
Winter Sports	27
Spring Sports	28
XII. TSA Acknowledgment Form	29

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Thomas Sumter Academy is to develop, in a safe Christian environment, well-rounded individuals who are fully prepared for college and for life.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The information contained in this handbook sets forth information, principles, and guidelines for student and parent involvement, participation, and conduct at Thomas Sumter Academy. The material included is not all inclusive, and the administration realizes that events may arise that are not specifically addressed in this document. However, the administration and the Board of Trustees reserve the right and the obligation to amend, add, or delete rules and regulations when deemed necessary to facilitate the smooth operation of TSA and its programs.

PHILOSOPHY

“Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge.” 2 Peter 1:5

Thomas Sumter Academy is an educational institution serving students in an environment of Christian love and discipline within which students learn to link bodies of knowledge and develop an enthusiasm for living. Recognizing that academic success cannot stand alone, Thomas Sumter Academy places importance on participation in interscholastic athletics, fine arts, and extracurricular activities, in conjunction with the development of personal skills and attitudes in leadership, dependability, initiative, and fairness. A primary goal of TSA is to assist each student in maximum growth toward independence in thought and action. Expectations are high, and the calling to be one’s best is very real.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Thomas Sumter Academy is a school with a solid Christian foundation. Emphasis on Christian principles is an integral part of school culture through daily devotions, prayer, and required chapel programs. TSA encourages all students to develop a steadfast commitment to follow Christ in their daily lives.

ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIPS

Thomas Sumter Academy is an independent coeducational day school for students from preschool 3’s through grade twelve. We are fully and jointly accredited by the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Additionally, TSA holds memberships in:

- Palmetto Association of Independent Schools (PAIS)
- S.C. Independent School Association (SCISA)
- National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)
- Southern Association for College Admission Counseling (SACAC)
- School Scholarship Services (SSS)
- Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (AAHPERD)

ADMISSIONS

New students may apply for admission to Thomas Sumter Academy throughout the year. Normally, decisions are made in the spring and summer preceding each school year; however, students may be enrolled during the school year if circumstances justify and space permits. Class sizes are limited, and waiting lists are utilized. Applications are processed, and the date applications are received is relevant to acceptance.

Admission to Thomas Sumter Academy is based on several criteria including an entrance evaluation, a personal interview, prior academic records, performance on standardized tests, and recommendations. Thomas Sumter Academy has an open admission policy and does not discriminate in its admission policies or in any other school administered program on the basis of race, color, creed, or national origin.

For more information and specific forms, please see our website: www.thomassumter.org.

BUSINESS OFFICE

The Business Office of Thomas Sumter Academy handles all the financial functions of the school. TSA is a private, not-for-profit entity with 501§C(3) status that is almost entirely dependent upon student fees, auxiliary activities, and donations to support the operations of TSA.

The Business Office oversees all charges, collections, and payments for Thomas Sumter Academy. The personnel, payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and the budget are essential areas that fall under the umbrella of the Business Office. Financial statements are generated on a monthly basis and distributed to the Board of Trustees who is ultimately responsible for the financial viability of the school.

COMMUNICATIONS

Public Communication:

The TSA staff, along with parent and alumni volunteers, provides news releases of current school events and student achievements to various news media, civic groups, alumni, and members of the TSA family. Many of the students of Thomas Sumter Academy frequently find their achievements and group activities highlighted in their local newspapers, television news broadcasts, radio interviews, and alumni publications.

Publications outlining student accomplishments and major events of TSA are published both monthly and quarterly and are available for viewing on the TSA website at www.thomassumter.org.

A Publication Release form must be completed for each student by his/her parents giving the school permission to publish the student's works and/or photo in any publication such as the yearbook, local newspapers, etc. These are kept on file. If a parent chooses to change his/her preference in this matter, they need to sign a new form and turn it in to the front office.

Parent Communication:

Upcoming events, student achievements, lunch menus, and other important school information are available through Edline that is updated regularly. Every parent has access to Edline through an individual account that is secure and private. A monthly newsletter, *E-news on the Hill*, is sent electronically to all members of the TSA family and provides updated information concerning TSA activities and events.

Each spring, TSA holds a formal parent meeting to highlight the current school year's achievements, to present the upcoming school year's goals, and to elect new trustees. Parents are encouraged to attend and exercise their right to vote for the leadership of the school.

In keeping with the philosophy of Thomas Sumter Academy, parents are always invited and encouraged to meet with the teachers and staff who work directly with their children. Parents can monitor their student's progress through Edline with weekly updates by the teachers as well as school administrators, club sponsors, and coaches. The administration maintains an open door policy for students and parents.

DEVELOPMENT

Building community and donor support is one of the main responsibilities of the staff in the Development Office. Fund development activities are carried out by the cooperative efforts of both the TSA development staff and volunteers. In all fundraising activities, the school prohibits door-to-door fundraising.

The Development Office is responsible for the creation and execution of all development programs including major gift solicitation, corporate and foundation gifts, special events, community promotions, grant writing, alumni programs, and the annual fund.

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Thomas Sumter Academy serves students in 3's through grade twelve. Preschool 3's through grade five are referred to as the Lower School, with Upper School encompassing grades six through twelve. The establishment of these separate schools allows for programs to be tailored accommodating various ages and grades while maintaining unity to the campus as a whole.

LOWER SCHOOL

The Preschool Program:

TSA's preschool program includes ages three through Kindergarten. The preschool curriculum uses a progressive and developmentally appropriate approach to learning. It is built on strong, fundamental academic self-help skills,

socialization, physical education, spiritual, and character growth. An introduction to the fine arts and technology is also an important aspect of this program.

Elementary School:

Children in grades one through three are placed in self-contained classroom settings. All subjects are integrated with a strong emphasis on reading, writing, and math skills. Children in grades four and five are given departmentalized instruction to better serve varying ability and maturity levels. These children change classes at various times during the day for college preparatory or honors instruction in math, while being heterogeneously grouped for language arts, science and social studies.

All students in grades one through five attend enrichment classes that include computer science, science lab, music, physical education, art, and library. Each grade will receive one quarter of instruction in conversational Spanish. Dance is an optional enrichment opportunity.

Lower School Guidance:

Lower School guidance topics will be discussed in individual, small group, and classroom settings. The Lower School lead teacher or the Head of School may lead the sessions. The Upper School guidance counselor and the Head of School will address more serious guidance issues.

Summer Reading and Math:

A summer reading program is in place for rising PK 3's – 5th graders. Contracts and guidelines for each grade level are sent home each spring. Summer reading logs and projects are brought in the first week of school. Lower school students are also given summer math assignments appropriate to their grade to be completed over the summer. Students not fulfilling their summer reading and/or math requirements must use their recess or break time to complete the missing work. Accommodations are made for students who enroll late in the summer.

Parent Involvement:

There are many opportunities for parent involvement in the lower school. If you have time or talents that you want to share, please let your child's teacher know and sign up for volunteer activities through the PTO.

UPPER SCHOOL

The Upper School consists of a Middle School and a High School.

The Middle School:

Thomas Sumter Academy sets grades 6-8 apart into a Middle School in order to best serve the needs of students and their families during this key developmental period in a child's life. The Middle School has the following distinctive characteristics:

- Curriculum - Curriculum focuses on strong academics in the following core subjects: math, science, English, social studies, and physical education.
 - Dual Track System
 - The college preparatory track builds academic stamina and enables our students to develop the study skills and knowledge base to succeed in high school and beyond.
 - All eighth grade students are required to take a course in computer applications for a high school credit.
 - The honors track enables gifted students to accelerate their learning and challenges them to exceed the rigors of TSA's college preparatory track.
 - Honors track students are able to begin high school classes in Algebra, English, and Physical Science in their 8th grade year, allowing them the opportunity to take dual enrollment college classes in high school.
 - Specific skill-building semester classes are part of the sixth grade curriculum. The classes are Bible and personal development.
 - A special focus on English includes separate courses in literature and grammar for sixth and seventh grade students to maximize mastery before proceeding on to High School.
 - Arts Program
 - A year-long fine arts elective is available in the areas of dance, choir, art, or drama for seventh and eighth graders.

- Sixth grade students may take dance on designated days during their scheduled P.E. period.
- Students may choose a different elective each year or study the same discipline their entire Middle School career.
- Extra-curricular Activities:
 - Each Middle School year culminates with an exciting four-day class trip to an educational attraction along the East Coast.
 - Students in Middle School may participate in B-Team or Junior Varsity athletics.
 - Students may elect to participate in various clubs and organizations designed to reflect the interests of students at this age.

The High School:

TSA's High School consists of grades 9-12. TSA graduation standards meet or exceed South Carolina requirements for graduation, ensuring that TSA students meet all academic requirements to attend the university of their choice.

- Curriculum:
 - Three levels of rigor:
 - College preparatory classes prepare our High School students to meet the challenges of our top local and national universities.
 - Honors classes add depth and increase the scope of our college preparatory classes, requiring students to perform at an even higher level of academic achievement.
 - AP courses
 - Dual Enrollment classes are classes taught by University of South Carolina professors on Thomas Sumter's campus.
 - Students not only earn TSA credit toward graduation but also earn USC college credits that can be transferred to most colleges and universities throughout the nation.
 - Enrollment in college courses is definitely considered an asset by prospective college admissions officers.
 - Some TSA graduates have entered their higher-level educational institution with sophomore status due to their Dual Enrollment coursework.
- Extra-Curricular Activities:
 - Students may choose from many clubs and organizations to complement and round out their high school experience.
 - TSA offers more than ten different Varsity and Junior Varsity sports along with various academic and artistic competitions.
 - Each grade level participates in a four-day class trip designed to broaden the students' educational experiences outside the classroom as well as to boost camaraderie among classmates. Additionally, students in TSA's choir, dance, and foreign language programs may travel nationally or internationally to perform and enhance learning.

IV. ACADEMICS

HONOR CODE

The purpose of the TSA Honor Code is to create an atmosphere of trust, honesty, and integrity with mutual respect among administration, faculty, and students. To promote personal honor and strong morals, Thomas Sumter Academy students are expected to live by this Honor Code and to uphold the tradition of honor throughout their years at TSA as well as throughout their lives. To preserve the integrity of each individual and of Thomas Sumter Academy, each student is expected to abide by the following:

The Honor Code of Thomas Sumter Academy

**“As a student of Thomas Sumter Academy,
I will not lie, cheat, or steal,
nor will I tolerate those who do.”**

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-four (24) units are required for graduation. These units must be selected from a curriculum solidly composed of college prep courses, nineteen (19) of which must be earned as follows:

English - 4 Units	One credit every year in high school
Mathematics - 4 Units	One credit every year in high school; Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II are required along with one other math.
Science – 3 Units	Physical science, biology, and chemistry are required.
Social Studies - 3 Units	World History, US History, government and economics are required.
Foreign Language -2 units	Two consecutive years of the same language are required for students in the Class of 2010; three consecutive years are required for students in the Class of 2011 and younger.
Fine Arts - 1 Unit	One credit from the following: art, drama, choral, dance
Computer Science - 1 Unit	
Physical Education - 1 Unit	Participation in team sports from grades 9-12 earns ¼ credit per sport per season. Intermediate or advanced dance, although offered as fine arts performance classes, will satisfy the physical education unit but can't count for both.

UPPER SCHOOL COLLEGE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Thomas Sumter Academy provides a comprehensive guidance program that helps prepare students and their families for college and life. TSA's Office of College Guidance offers the most current college resources and individual counseling for every Thomas Sumter family.

The goals of our college guidance program are:

- To help direct students, according to their fullest potential, on their best path to college admissions.
- To provide resources regarding college information, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities.
- To help parents and students choose the best college options.
- To offer guidance for our graduates as they prepare to enter their freshman year of college.

Thomas Sumter's strong core curriculum and high academic standards help ensure the ideal preparation for college for all TSA students. TSA's guidance counselor also assists TSA students in developing a personalized college admissions plan that will best meet the individual needs of each student and his/her family.

The college admissions process can be an exciting but stressful time for students and parents. The college guidance program at Thomas Sumter seeks to provide each family with the encouragement, guidance, and support they need so that every Thomas Sumter student may find and fulfill the purpose and plans God has for his/her life.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Upper School students have a two-week drop/add period at the start of each new semester. Once the drop/add period has passed, students enrolled in a course are expected to remain enrolled and complete the program of study. The Head of School will consider any extenuating circumstances.

Students dropping a USC course will be required to reimburse the school for the full college tuition paid on their behalf.

GRADING AND EXAMS

Grading

The Upper School employs the South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale (SCUGS) to weight its classes according to difficulty. The scale is listed on page 9. The SCUGS groups classes into tiers of difficulty. TSA offers three of the tiers: college preparatory, honors, and dual enrollment. Each tier represents a 50 basis point (.5) increase over the lower tier. For example, in a college preparatory class, a 93 would earn 4.0; the same grade of 93 in an honors class would earn 4.5; and a 93 in a dual enrollment class would earn 5.0. Grades are averaged on a 4.0 scale. In addition to weight by rigor, the SCUGS also gives a greater weight for each additional point earned in the class. For example, a 93 in a college preparatory course earns a 4.0, while a 94 in the same class would earn a 4.12.

Thomas Sumter Academy's Letter Grade Scale for grades six through twelve is as follows:

A = 93-100 B = 85-92 C = 77-84 D = 70-76 F = 0-69

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale

Average	Grade	College Preparatory	Honors	Dual Enrollment/AP
100	A	4.87	5.37	5.87
99	A	4.75	5.25	5.75
98	A	4.62	5.12	5.62
97	A	4.50	5.00	5.50
96	A	4.37	4.87	5.37
95	A	4.25	4.75	5.25
94	A	4.12	4.62	5.12
93	A	4.00	4.50	5.00
92	B	3.87	4.37	4.87
91	B	3.75	4.25	4.75
90	B	3.62	4.12	4.62
89	B	3.50	4.00	4.50
88	B	3.37	3.87	4.37
87	B	3.25	3.75	4.25
86	B	3.12	3.62	4.12
85	B	3.00	3.50	4.00
84	C	2.87	3.37	3.87
83	C	2.75	3.25	3.75
82	C	2.62	3.12	3.62
81	C	2.50	3.00	3.50
80	C	2.37	2.87	3.37
79	C	2.25	2.75	3.25
78	C	2.12	2.62	3.12
77	C	2.00	2.50	3.00
76	D	1.86	2.36	2.86
75	D	1.72	2.22	2.72
74	D	1.57	2.07	2.57
73	D	1.43	1.93	2.43
72	D	1.29	1.79	2.29
71	D	1.14	1.64	2.14
70	D	1.00	1.50	2.00
69	F	0.87	1.37	1.87
68	F	0.75	1.25	1.75
67	F	0.62	1.12	1.62
66	F	0.50	1.00	1.50
65	F	0.37	0.87	1.37
64	F	0.25	0.75	1.25
63	F	0.12	0.62	1.12
0 - 62	F	0.00	0.00	0.00

Exams

High school students take exams at the end of each semester in the following core classes: mathematics, English, science, social studies, and foreign language. Middle School students take three exams: mathematics, English and either social studies or science (administered on a rotating basis.) Eighth graders enrolled in High School level courses must follow the exam requirements for those courses.

Semester exams count for 20% of the semester grade. Students must take exams when scheduled and must remain in the classroom where the exam is being administered for the full two hours allotted for each exam. It is the teacher's prerogative to decide whether to give second semester exams to seniors. Any student who serves an out-of-school suspension must take all semester exams.

Lower School students do not take semester exams.

Exemptions

- All students should have experience preparing for and taking semester exams in order to adequately prepare them for their post-graduate studies. Therefore, each Upper School student must take **at least one exam** per semester even if he or she has all A's or has earned a fundraising exam exemption. In addition, the one exam taken each semester must be in a different subject. This policy does not apply to seniors during second semester (see below). A student who exempts an exam can opt to take that exam with the understanding that the exam will not bring his/her grade down. Any student who serves an out-of-school suspension must take all semester exams.

Exam exemptions are awarded according to the following guidelines:

- Grades 6-12, first semester
 - Earn a 93 or above average in a class
 - Sell at least \$250 of TSA's annual fall fund raising products. Only one exemption may be earned in this way and the student must have at least a 75 average in that class.
- Second Semester Seniors:
 - Exams are given at the discretion of the teacher if the senior has at least a 75 average.
- Grades 6-11, second semester:
 - Earn a 93 or above average in that class for the semester

Interims/Report Cards

Report cards are issued each nine weeks in grades one through five with two required parent/teacher conferences annually. In preschool, mid-year and end-of-the-year conferences are held with the parents to discuss academic progress. Interim reports are posted on Edline's private report link for the last quarter in fifth grade.

Interim reports for all students in grades six through twelve are posted on Edline's private report link. Parents must acknowledge to each teacher that they have seen their child's interim report for that class; they may do this by sending an email or printing off the report, signing it, and sending it to the teacher. Acknowledgments must be sent no later than three days after the interim reports are posted or disciplinary action will be taken (break detention if returned on the fourth day and A.M. detention after that). Teachers will note any comments parents have made and take appropriate action.

Report cards for students in grades 1-12 are sent home with the students quarterly. All report cards are to be signed by the parents/guardians and returned no later than three days after the report cards are issued or disciplinary action will be taken for students in grades 6-12. Teachers will note any comments parents have made and take appropriate action.

POLICY COVERING MAKE-UP WORK

A student who is absent is responsible for making up all missed work or tests.

Students must meet with their teachers on the day they return to school to arrange for all make-up work. The student has time equivalent to the length of the absence to complete and turn in all missed assignments without a grade penalty. If additional time is needed, it must be discussed and arranged by the student and teacher. Make-up tests will be appropriately and reasonably scheduled by the teacher.

If it is known that a student will be absent on a particular day, arrangements must be made with the teacher several days in advance, if possible, so that missed work can be sent with the child ahead of time and turned in upon returning

from the absence. If a student knows he/she will be absent on a scheduled test day, he/she is expected to be prepared to make up that scheduled test on the day he/she returns.

Weekly homework assignments will be posted on Edline. If health permits, it is the student's responsibility to check Edline and complete assignments during his/her absence.

PROMOTION

Every effort is made to help each student be academically successful at Thomas Sumter Academy. Communication among teachers, parents, and students is an on-going process. Parents must be proactive in staying abreast of their child's grades. Conferences, interim grades, regular progress reports, quarterly grade reports, and on-line access to grades are tools for parents to use to ensure that adequate academic progress is being made.

In preschool, promotion to the next level is discussed with the parents at the end-of-the-year conference.

In grades one through five, if a student receives a year average of 69 or below in math or language arts, the student is encouraged to attend summer school or receive tutoring by a certified teacher and make sufficient progress in order to be promoted to the next grade level. TSA maintains the sole right to determine "sufficient progress" by a student.

Promotion in the Upper School is determined by the necessary credits earned by a student. If a class is failed, a conference must be held with the parent, student, and guidance counselor to discuss remediation that must be taken in order for the student to progress to the next level.

The school administration reserves the right to make the final decision concerning a student's promotion at all grade levels.

SUMMER SCHOOL

All summer school work must be approved by the guidance counselor or the Head of School. Students in grades 6-8 who fail English and/or mathematics for the year must receive a minimum of 60 hours of tutoring during the summer by an approved instructor in order to be promoted to the next grade. Documentation of the tutoring must be provided at least one week prior to the beginning of school and will be placed in the student's permanent record.

HONOR ROLLS

At the end of each quarter, two honor rolls are announced for all grades: Head of School Honors and Faculty Honors. Head of School Honors are awarded to all students with a 93 average or above in all subjects, and Faculty Honors are awarded to all students with an 85 or above average in all subjects.

At the end of each semester, a list of those students in grades 6-12 who have earned Head of School Honors and Faculty Honors for the semester in all subjects will be displayed in the front hallway. Students in grades 1-5 who have earned this achievement will be honored at Recognition Rally.

V. HEALTH CARE

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records and a birth certificate copy should be submitted at the time of application for all ages. A valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization can be obtained from your county health department. A current physical examination is also required for all new students upon enrollment to TSA. Students in the preschool program will need to submit an updated immunization form within one month after their fifth birthday. If you are military, SC law requires your immunization records be on a SC Immunization Form. The base medical facility can make this transfer.

STUDENT ILLNESS GUIDELINES

It is very important that your child attend school regularly. However, if your child is sick, please keep him/her home. Your child must be without a fever for twenty-four (24) hours before returning to school. If for any reason your child is seriously injured at school, the child will be sent to the health office, and you will be notified immediately. A child with a temperature of 100° or higher will be sent home.

MEDICATION

It is mandatory that each child has a completed emergency card on file in the health office so that parents may be readily contacted in the event of an emergency. The classroom teacher, coaches, daycare director, and health office personnel will administer simple first aid for minor cuts and scrapes. Upon parent or guardian consent (indicated by a signature on the emergency contact card), health office attendants will also administer Tylenol or Pepto-Bismol on an

as-needed basis. If your child does not have an emergency card on file within three weeks after school has started, he/she will not be permitted to return to school until the card is on file.

Any additional medication that your child might require during the school day must be kept in its original container, with dispensing instructions and appropriate parent consent for dispensation. The medication will be stored under lock and key in the health office. Children are not to keep medication with them during the school day.

The daycare staff, coaches, and several teachers have First Aid and CPR certification.

INSURANCE

The school provides student accident insurance for injuries occurring during school activities. Parents can elect to extend coverage throughout the child's day for an additional fee. Please contact the front office for information and enrollment forms.

CHILD ABUSE

It is the policy of The Board of Trustees and Administration of Thomas Sumter Academy that any discovered or suspected child abuse will be immediately reported to the appropriate authorities. In order to ensure the safety of TSA students, the Board and the Head of School require all employees to pass a criminal background check before they are hired. All students are encouraged to report any type of abuse including verbal, sexual, and/or physical to a teacher, the guidance counselor, or the Head of School. All employees are required to report any suspicion of child abuse to the Head for investigation.

VI. SCHOOL SAFETY

SCHOOL SAFETY ACT OF 1997

In June of 1997, the legislature passed SC Code §16-3-612, which requires that if a student commits an assault and battery that is not aggravated on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event, against any person affiliated with the school in an official capacity, the student is guilty of assault and battery on school personnel. The section defines school to include all public and private schools. The section states that the assault and battery against school personnel is a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one thousand dollars, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both. SC Code §59-63-370 has been added to require the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections, or the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services when a student is assigned to it, to notify the senior administrator of the school in which the student is enrolled of a student's conviction of certain crimes, to provide notification to each teacher in whose class the student is enrolled of such convictions, and to provide for the inclusion of this information in the student's permanent record. Also, SC Code §59-63-390 has been added to require the senior administrator of each school to include a summary of the school crime report act and the provisions of SC Code §16-3-612 in the school's student handbook each year.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following precautions are in place on the Thomas Sumter Academy campus.

- All faculty and staff members including substitute teachers undergo a background check before being employed.
- Regularly scheduled drills are held for fire, earthquake, intruder, and tornado situations.
- All gates except the front entrance gate are locked at 8:30 am until 2:00 pm. All visitors are to use that gate for entering and exiting during that time.
- Students in grades 6-12 are not to use the bathrooms in the lower school building.
- Students in grades 6-12 must enter the lower school building through the end doors.
- The outside doors located by the lower school bathrooms are locked.
- Students in grades 1-5 will always use the buddy system when going to the bathroom. Whether they are going from their classroom or a special, there will always be at least two students going together.
- All lower school teachers will walk their classes to and from the special classes and all programs involving students.
- Lower school teachers will always be in their room when an upper school student is present.
- An upper school student will never be alone with a lower school student.
- Upper school students will never take lower school students to the bathroom.

- All visitors are required to report to the main office immediately upon entering school property to have the visit approved and to receive a visitor's pass. All visitors must have a legitimate purpose for being on campus. Visiting students must comply with TSA dress code and all TSA rules. Visitors who don't get a visitor's pass will be asked to leave our campus.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Information regarding closing of school due to inclement weather or other conditions will be broadcast on the following radio and television stations:

- WIS TV NBC
- WLTX CBS
- WMHK FM 89.7
- WICI FM 94.7
- WNOK FM 104.7

Information will also be posted on Edline and recorded on the school's phone system if conditions allow.

VII. STUDENT SERVICES

LUNCH PROGRAM

Thomas Sumter Academy offers an outsourcing lunch program from local restaurants for our students. New order forms are distributed through homerooms every two weeks, can be picked up in the front office, or printed off Edline. They must be returned by the return date listed on the form in order to be included in the order. Additional copies are located in the front office or you can find them on Edline.

TRANSPORTATION

TSA Bus Program:

Bus transportation to and from school is provided at a nominal cost. All buses are driven by licensed adults. Buses pick up and drop off students at central locations within Sumter, Richland and Kershaw counties. Parents interested in one-way transportation on a regular basis will be accommodated at half fare. Information and application forms are available in the front office. Please contact the Bus Coordinator with any questions.

Parents must complete a form available in the front office listing any and all people who might possibly pick up their child from the bus stop. Names may be added or deleted by notifying the front office.

TSA Bus Rules:

In order to have a safe and efficient transportation system, all concerned parties must work together. All students and parents are requested to study the following rules and regulations governing school bus transportation and to become familiar with them whether they are daily transported or transported only for field trips, etc. They are made for the students' protection and safety.

- Rules:
 - Be on time at pick-up stations. Each bus stops only at its designated stops and will not stop to load riders elsewhere.
 - Seats may be assigned as deemed necessary.
 - No objects may be thrown on the buses or out windows.
 - Entering and exiting the bus are to be done without crowding or pushing others.
 - Arms, elbows, legs, and heads must be kept inside the bus at all times.
 - The emergency door is not to be tampered with unless there is an emergency.
 - Fighting or scuffling on the bus is not permitted.
 - Students must not talk to the driver while the bus is in motion except in emergency situations.
 - Students are not to stand up, change seats, or move about while on the bus.
 - Students must obey the driver completely and promptly.
 - Students must be absolutely quiet when the bus approaches a railroad crossing.
 - Students must sit in their seats, facing forward with feet in front of them at all times.
 - When leaving the bus, students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Students in front seats leave the bus first.
 - Buses may not be entered during the school day without permission.

- Students found guilty of destroying school bus property will be required to pay for damages and are subject to additional disciplinary action which could lead to the loss of riding privileges. (Examples of destroying bus property: damaging or defacing seats, tampering with the emergency door, breaking glass, etc.)
- Bus misconduct (including improper language) will be reported to school administration for disciplinary action.
- Bus disciplinary action
 - First Offense
 - After repeated verbal warnings to correct action, the student is given a bus referral which is a written notice to the school bus director notifying him/her of the student's infraction.
 - Second Offense
 - If the misbehavior continues after a verbal warning, the bus driver will contact the parents to communicate the behavior to them. The parent and the bus driver will partner together to correct the misbehavior. A bus referral form will be given to the school discipline coordinator notifying him/her of the second offense.
 - Third Offense
 - If the misbehavior continues, the bus driver will communicate the misbehavior to the school discipline coordinator by a bus referral form. The school discipline coordinator will meet with the student, and the student will receive appropriate disciplinary consequences.
 - Fourth Offense
 - After repeated attempts on the bus driver and school discipline coordinator's part to improve behavior, the student and his/her parents will be required to meet with the Head of School to discuss further action. Disciplinary action could include suspension from the bus for one or more days.

CARPOOL

Morning Drop-Off

Thomas Sumter Academy has a safe and efficient carpool system in place. Morning drop-off begins at 7:45 a.m. at three different locations which are the entrance to the daycare facility, the main school entrance, and inside the back gate behind the football stadium on Highway 441. Early drop-off is available beginning at 7:15 a.m. in the Lower School library for an additional fee.

Lower School Afternoon Dismissal

Families who will be picking up children in grades 3's – grade five at 2:45 p.m. are asked to complete a carpool application. Each family is assigned a number which is to be displayed on the driver's side of the windshield each afternoon. Cars are to form two lines in the front parking lot. At 2:45 p.m., numbers are called using a walkie-talkie system, and students are escorted and loaded into their car at the side entrance of the Lower School building. Parents are asked not to come inside to pick up children. The carpool line system must be used for safety reasons as well as to avoid delays.

Students who ride the bus, carpool with middle or upper school siblings, or attend daycare facilities off campus are escorted to their designated locations in the back of the school and are supervised until they are loaded on the bus/van or picked up by the appropriate individual. Students not picked up by 3:05 are taken to Late-Pickup and are charged accordingly.

Students enrolled in TSA Daycare or Late-Pickup are also escorted to their designated areas and supervised until picked up by the appropriate individual.

Parents must send a note to their child's teacher if the student is varying his/her normal dismissal routine. Students will not be allowed to go to an alternate dismissal area unless the school or teacher has been properly notified by the parent.

Late-Pickup

Thomas Sumter Academy offers a late-pickup service for parents who cannot make it for pickup at 2:45 pm but do not need daycare on a long-term basis. Late-Pickup begins at 3:05 p.m. and lasts until 4:00 p.m. Parents are charged accordingly.

DRIVING ON CAMPUS

Driving and parking on the TSA campus must be safe for all; therefore, the speed limit on the TSA campus is 10 mph. Students and parents must drive with extreme caution at all times. Additionally, students who drive and park on campus must register each vehicle used and brought on campus. Parking applications and guidelines are available in the front office.

Students must go to the front office in the Main Building and sign out to go to their car during the regular school day. The student must return to the front office and sign in before returning to class or to any other activity on campus. Reckless driving on campus or violation of any parking guideline can result in loss of driving and parking privileges for the entire school year.

DAYCARE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As our families experience an increasing need for quality after-school care for their children, an on-campus center is available for TSA students in 3's through grade five. Emphasis is on the word "quality," and the center is fully licensed by the Department of Social Services.

You may reach TSA's Daycare at 499-1264.

CHANGES IN ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Please notify us promptly in writing about changes in:

- Home address and telephone numbers
- Business addresses and telephone numbers
- Carpool and bus arrangements
- Additional emergency information

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The daycare will be open from 11:00 a.m. (at the end of our 3's program) until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday during the school year. The hours are 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. during summer and school holidays. If your child is brought early or picked up late, there will be a \$1.00 fee per minute, per child. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

There will be no deduction for absent days or holidays. If you set up a weekly fee, your child becomes full-time, and you must pay whether your child is here or not. You must give a one-week notice before taking your child out of daycare.

Once a year full-time children are granted one free week away from the daycare and another week at half-price.

The daycare will be closed the following holidays: Labor Day (September 1), Election Day (November 4), Thanksgiving (November 26, 27, 28), Teacher Work Day (December 19), Christmas (December 24, 25, 26, 31, and January 1 & 2), Martin Luther King Day (January 19), Fabulous February Holidays (February 13 & 16 and February 27 & March 2), Spring Break (April 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17), Memorial Day (May 25), and July 4th week (July 6 – 10.)

Daycare bills will be sent one month in advance by the business office, but the daycare fee is due weekly to the business office. Any questions concerning your account will be answered by the business office. A service charge for late payments will be charged monthly.

Children will be encouraged to play outdoors daily, except during intense heat or inclement weather. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather each day. During bad weather the daycare will close if the school closes. If your child is too sick to go outside in the afternoon at daycare, please don't send him/her to daycare. Parents will be called to pick up their children who become ill and/or have a temperature of 100° or higher. We do not have a sick room to isolate sick children. Your child must be without fever for twenty-four hours before returning to daycare.

The safety of your child is our first concern. If your child will be absent, please notify the daycare an hour in advance. There will be a sign-out sheet in the hall, and each parent is responsible for signing his/her child out of the daycare.

Children must have current medical and immunization records prior to enrollment and submit updated records in compliance with state laws.

Each preschool student will have an afternoon rest period as required by law. Parents must provide a mat, pillowcase, pillow, and blanket for their child to use. Preschool students must have a change of clothing to be left at the daycare.

There will be a supervised study period for the older children. We will provide a quiet place for homework, but your child will be responsible for his/her homework. If students have not finished their homework in a reasonable

amount of time due to misbehavior, they will be asked to pack their books and complete their assignments at home. While others are finishing their homework, your child will be completing age-appropriate activities.

Corporal punishment will not be administered at the daycare. There will be a time-out period where your child will be able to think about his/her actions. Unusual aggressive behavior or the inability to follow rules repeatedly will not be tolerated at our daycare. You will be asked to withdraw your child from the daycare if this behavior continues.

Our daycare program is equipped to serve children from age three until the student completes the fifth grade. There is no summer daycare available for students after they have completed the fifth grade.

Your child will be released only to the people who are on your application; identification will be required. If someone not listed on your application is picking up your child, you must call ahead or your child will not be allowed to leave. The daycare is not responsible for your child until he/she arrives at daycare.

It is the desire of this daycare to provide a wholesome, safe environment for your child. We always welcome any suggestions or comments that will improve our daycare.

There is an application fee of \$60.00 per family to enroll your child in TSA's daycare.

MEDIA CENTERS

Lower School

Lower School students beginning with our three-year-old program attend scheduled times in the media center each week where they are encouraged to check out books on the library loan system. Starting in kindergarten, students participate in the Accelerated Reader program where computerized comprehension tests and vocabulary quizzes are taken upon completion of books. Classroom incentives as well as quarterly library incentives are motivational tools used to encourage children to read.

Upper School

The Upper School media center is available for students in grades six through twelve, offering a wide range of literary works, research materials, and access to the Accelerated Reader program. Computers are also available for students to utilize for research and writing papers.

VIII. GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES

Absences:

- Policy:
 - Attendance is mandatory except in cases of illness or family emergency.
 - Thomas Sumter recognizes that some illnesses do not require a doctor's care; therefore, a student is allowed ten (10) sick/personal days verified by a note from a parent or guardian for the school year.
 - An additional ten (10) days due to illness will be excused if the student is able to provide a note from a medical professional.
 - Students must present an original excuse to the homeroom teacher, classroom teacher, or front office within five (5) days of their return to school, or the absence will not be excused.
 - An absence will be considered unexcused if no note is received.
 - Attendance in dual enrollment through the University of South Carolina is based on USC attendance requirements.
- Consequences for Lower School:
 - Once a lower school student has exhausted all his/her twenty (20) absences (excused or not), promotion to the next grade will be affected.
- Consequences for Upper School:
 - Once an upper school student has exceeded his/her ten (10) absences with parental notes or twenty (20) absences with a combination of ten (10) parental and ten (10) medical excuses, credit for the year will be forfeited in each class that has exceeded the allotted number of absences.
 - Upper School absences are counted on a class-by-class basis; thus, credit will only be lost in the individual classes where the absences have exceeded the maximum allotment.
- The absentee policy and its consequences are at the discretion of the administration.

Tardies

- Policy:
 - Students are considered tardy for the school day if they arrive in their classroom or homeroom after 8:00 a.m.
 - All students arriving late to school must sign in with the attendance secretary in the front office.
 - Upper School students are also tardy if they arrive up to 30 minutes after the start of any individual class.
 - If an Upper School student arrives in the classroom after the class has been in session for 30 minutes, the student will be counted as absent from class.
 - A student is allowed two (2) tardies per quarter, per class.
- Consequences for Upper School (per quarter):
 - 3-4 Tardies: Break detention
 - 5-6 Tardies: Morning detention
 - 7 Tardies: 1 day out-of-school suspension
 - 8 Tardies: 2 days out-of-school suspension
 - 9 Tardies: 3 day out-of-school suspension
 - 10 Tardies: Expulsion
- Notes:
 - Every day a student serves out-of-school suspension will result in the loss of one (1) point from the student's quarter average in each class.
 - Any student serving out-of-school suspension must take all semester exams.

SIGN-OUT POLICY

No student will be allowed to leave school unless there is a signed note from the parent given to the homeroom teacher on or before the morning of the anticipated absence. If there is no note, the student will not be allowed to leave. If certain circumstances require a student to sign out early, the student must go to the front office to receive personal assistance in dealing with the situation.

TSA will not allow students to sign out of school before assemblies or pep rallies based on a note, parent phone calls, or spoken conversations with front office personnel.

DISCIPLINE CODE

Thomas Sumter Academy believes that acceptable student behavior includes the following:

- Respect to peers, faculty and staff through actions and speech.
- Pride in personal and school property by the care of the physical building and respect of the property rights of others.
- Demonstration of a desire to achieve academically by following directions, reporting to class promptly, and being prepared to work without interfering with instruction.
- Obedience to all laws, discipline codes, and rules.

Thomas Sumter Academy believes that all students should receive fair and consistent discipline when school rules are violated. The discipline code of Thomas Sumter Academy will be in effect on campus, at bus stops, on school buses, and at all school-sponsored activities on and off campus. The school's jurisdiction will extend within sight and sound of the school building or beyond if the student's outside conduct affects the school and is detrimental to the best interest of the school.

Rules are categorized and punishments are assigned based on the severity of the violation. Rules and consequences are as follows:

Disciplinary consequences are defined as the following:

Break Detention: Students report to an assigned teacher during the entire break period immediately following second period for the duration of the break. They are not allowed to eat or drink. This means they may not stop by the cafeteria to buy any food at the beginning or end of break, and they cannot bring anything from home. During this time students serving break detention must do what is requested by the supervising teacher.

Morning Detention: Students report to the gymnasium at 6:45 A.M. The supervising teacher will instruct the students on what they are to do until 7:45 A.M. when they are to be dismissed to prepare for the start of school. They are not allowed to eat or drink.

In-School Suspension: Students report to the designated adult supervisor for duties to be performed that entire day on our campus. They should bring their own lunch on this day as they will not be allowed to report to the cafeteria for lunch. They are responsible for any makeup work including tests scheduled on that day. Their quarter averages will be dropped by one point per subject per day of suspension. Students who serve in-school suspension will not be allowed to exempt any exams for that semester. During their time of suspension, students may not come on Thomas Sumter Academy's campus for any after-school activity or event. Nor may they participate in any athletic event (game or practice) scheduled during their time of suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension: Students will remain home on the designated day(s). They are responsible for any makeup work including tests scheduled on that day. Their quarter averages will be dropped by one point per subject per day of suspension. Students who serve in-school suspension will not be allowed to exempt any exams for that semester. During their time of suspension, students may not come on Thomas Sumter Academy's campus for any after-school activity or event. Nor may they participate in any athletic event (game or practice) scheduled during their time of suspension.

Concerning all of the above disciplinary consequences: Depending on the time of day and/or the severity of the incident, the resulting disciplinary consequences might go into effect that day and/or the following day.

Category I

- Rules
 - Students are to be prepared for class with all needed materials.
 - Students will adhere to the Thomas Sumter Academy dress code policy.
 - All cell phones and personal music players must be kept in lockers or in vehicles from the time the student arrives on campus in the morning until 3 p.m.
 - Students will not have gum, food, or drink (with the exception of a water bottle) in class or in the hallways from the time they arrive on campus in the morning until 3 p.m.
 - Students will consume all lunch and break food and drink in designated areas during the appropriate times.
 - Students will not act in a disruptive or disorderly manner in the classroom, hallways, or buses.
 - Students will respect their peers by refraining from teasing or using any language that is disrespectful to others.
 - Students will use proper trash disposal receptacles in all areas of the campus as well as on the bus.
 - Students will refrain from public displays of affection while on the school grounds.
 - Students will obtain permission to access any computer not designated for student use.
- Disciplinary Actions (number of total Category I offenses per year):
 - 1-3....Break detention
 - 4.....Morning detention (1 day)
 - 5.....Morning detention (2 days)
 - 6.....Morning detention (3 days)
 - 7.....1 day out-of-school suspension
 - 8.....2 days out-of-school suspension
 - 9.....3 days out-of-school suspension
 - 10....4 days out-of-school suspension
- For dress code violations, a student will receive the above disciplinary actions as well as being required to change into appropriate attire.

Category II

- Rules
 - Students will refrain from the use of obscene language or gestures.
 - Students will refrain from behavior that will cause minor damage to school property such as damaging books, desks, bus seats, restrooms, and/or lockers.
 - Students will not bring tobacco products on campus.

- Students will refrain from lying.
 - Students will attend all scheduled classes unless excused by proper authority beforehand.
 - Students will refrain from verbal altercations with students or adults.
 - Students will report to detention at the time and place designated by the teacher who administered the detention.
- Disciplinary Actions (number of total Category II offenses per year):
 - 1...Morning Detention (Upper School) or Recess Detention (Lower School.)
 - 2...1 day out-of-school suspension
 - 3...2 days out-of-school suspension
 - 4...3 days out-of-school suspension
 - 5...Expulsion

Category III

- Rules
 - Students will refrain from any action that causes major damage to school property including buses.
 - Students will refrain from cheating or stealing; this includes plagiarism.
 - *Plagiarism* is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific citations, as well as quotation marks if verbatim statements are included. By placing their name on work submitted for credit, students certify the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. (pg 26. "Academic Dishonesty")
 - Students will refrain from inappropriate sexual activity including possession of pornography.
 - Students will not bring illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages on campus or be under the influence of such products.
 - Students will refrain from smoking or using any tobacco product on campus or at school-sponsored events.
 - Students will not engage in activity that is considered "bullying" which includes physical and verbal threats, intimidation, or harassment of any kind.
 - Students will not engage in fighting.
 - Students will not bring weapons or any object that could be used as a weapon to school.
- Disciplinary Actions (number of total Category III offenses per year):
 - 1...1 day out-of-school suspension (OSS)
 - 2...2 days out-of-school suspension
 - 3...3 days out-of-school suspension
 - 4...Expulsion

Notes:

- Every day a student serves out-of-school suspension will result in the loss of one (1) point from the student's quarter average per class.
- Any student serving out-of-school suspension must take all exams at the end of the semester.
- In addition to other consequences, a student receiving a second out-of-school suspension will be unable to attend his or her class trip in the spring unless accompanied by a parent or guardian who must stay in the hotel room with the student.
- Disciplinary actions, especially for Category III offenses, are subject to modification at the discretion of the administration and Head of School at TSA, depending on the individual circumstances surrounding the violation.
- After the decision has been made that expulsion is necessary, TSA's procedure is to notify the parents of the student and ask them to come to school immediately. A meeting is held with the parents, student, guidance counselor and Headmaster. The student's locker is cleaned out at this time by TSA staff, and all items are given to the parents. The student is asked to leave the campus immediately following the meeting and is informed that he/she cannot come on TSA's campus for the remaining part of the school year without approval from the Headmaster. A written statement outlining the expulsion and the procedure to be followed is mailed to the parents.

MULTI-MEDIA SECURITY POLICY

Thomas Sumter Academy acknowledges the right that all citizens, both faculty members and students, are protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. With these protections also come restrictions based on the academy's policies in regards to faculty and student behavior and school electronic media security. Both faculty and student electronic posts to website blogs and chat rooms that are open to the public domain will fall under the guidelines of school policy in regards to student discipline and faculty termination. Both policies are listed in the Thomas Sumter Academy Student Handbook and the Thomas Sumter Academy Faculty Handbook.

The following guidelines apply to posting electronic messages in the public domain for both faculty members and students. Violations of the listed restrictions may result in disciplinary actions taken by the academy up to expulsion and termination. In accordance with the Safe Schools Act (2006), students that make threatening remarks through electronic media devices will be turned in to the Sumter County Sheriff's Department for possible prosecution.

Faculty members should not post:

1. Student progress
2. Student discipline
3. Faculty communication with students
4. School personnel issues
5. Personal descriptive photos or communications
6. Threats or demeaning communication
7. Disparaging remarks about the school, administration, or other faculty members
8. Intentional disruption or sabotage of school electronic media
9. Downloading of unapproved programs, spy wear, or viruses

Students should not post:

1. Threats or demeaning communications about other students
2. Threats or demeaning communications about faculty members
3. Disparaging remarks about the school, administration, or faculty members
4. Personal descriptive photos or communications related to school personnel or policy
5. Student communication with faculty members
6. Intentional disruption or sabotage of school electronic media
7. Downloading of unapproved programs, spy wear, or viruses

SUBSTANCE USE

The Thomas Sumter community believes that students should be alcohol and drug-free and actively supports programs and initiatives that aim to reduce risky behavior and unhealthy lifestyle choices. At the least, we must be assured that our students do not use, are not in possession of, or are not under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on this campus or at school-related events. A student who disregards this guideline shows the greatest disrespect for our community and violates its trust to such a degree that he/she may be asked to leave the school.

If the school becomes aware of a student's alcohol or illegal drug use outside of school, the school may make any number of recommendations dependent on the nature of the incident, its legal disposition, the danger posed to others, and the impact it has on the full school community. Courses of action may include a required professional assessment of drug or alcohol dependence, counseling for the student and family, possible suspension or withdrawal from the school community, dismissal, or expulsion

The school believes parents and students should take seriously the issue of substance use by our young people, and it will take steps to educate, to support non-users, and to do all in its power to help youngsters make wise decisions.

In addition to the school's disciplinary action, South Carolina and Sumter County laws specify actions that must be taken to both public and private schools if a student of any age is on school campus with illegal substances. In such a situation, the school is required to confiscate the illegal substances and bring the student immediately to his or her principal's office. The school will secure the evidence, and the Sumter County Sheriff's Office will be notified. The student will be taken into custody by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office and detained at the Sheriff's headquarters. The parents of the student will be notified by both the school and by the Sheriff's Officer after the appropriate reports have been filed and the student has been processed into their system. Schools are required by law to

follow these procedures and school officials who do not comply subject themselves to criminal penalties. The school is not permitted under current law to exercise its discretion, and these actions will trigger the above procedures.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR OFF-CAMPUS

Thomas Sumter Academy students whose action on- or off-campus results in legal ramifications will be held to those possible disciplinary actions listed above.

RIGHT TO SEARCH

Thomas Sumter Academy reserves the right to search the person, property, lockers, or automobile of any student on campus or attending a school-sponsored event at any time there is reason to believe that the student may be concealing illegal or potentially dangerous objects, instruments, stolen goods, chemicals, drugs, or other substances. The school also reserves the right to confiscate any objects, instruments, chemicals, drugs, or substances it believes may be illegal or potentially dangerous. This right is reserved to protect the student body at large and will be employed with discretion.

COMPUTER ACCESS AND REGULATIONS

Thomas Sumter Academy offers the opportunity to use school computers for educational purposes. The use of this network is controlled. Violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action.

- **INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS AND PASSWORDS:** Each student is given an individual account on the school network to give student access to specific resources. At the first of each year, each student is required to set a private password to secure this account. This account is specifically for the use of the designated student and **no one else**. Students should not disclose passwords to anyone. Usage is monitored through computer software.
- **LOG OFF:** Once finished using a computer, the user is required to log off so the next student may log on. Leaving a computer without logging off for any reason leaves the student responsible for any network abuse conducted under his/her sign-on.
- **MISUSE OF SCHOOL COMPUTER EQUIPMENT:** Use of TSA computer equipment for any purpose other than what it is specifically designated for is unacceptable. Rough handling of any equipment will not be tolerated. Students are to check their equipment to make sure there is no damage at the start of each class. If there is damage, the student should notify the teacher immediately. If the student does not notify the teacher immediately, the student is financially liable for replacement of the damaged equipment. No students should be on a computer anywhere on campus unless under the supervision of a faculty member. If a student is found on a computer without proper supervision, disciplinary action will occur.
- **INSTALLING SOFTWARE OR HARDWARE:** Students are not allowed to load any software on a school computer without express permission from the system administrator. Students are allowed to access document and image files via a flash drive as long as the material is supporting the educational requirements of the student and the teacher has instructed the student to make use of a flash drive.
- **VANDALISM:** Vandalism of computer equipment will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as a deliberate or attempted act intended to harm or destroy data of any other user or altering the original state of any equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses, or any other effort to interfere with another user on the system.
- **GAMES:** Educational games may be installed on the computers when the operating system is installed. At times, students may be directed to utilize these games for designated educational purposes. **Playing any of these games other than when directed by a teacher constitutes a misuse of school equipment and is not allowed.**
- **EMAIL:** Although email has become a prominent means of communication in our society, students at Thomas Sumter Academy are not to use email, instant messaging, or chat rooms on school computers. Attempts to enter chat rooms, to email, or to use instant messaging will result in disciplinary action.

INTERNET ACCESS

Thomas Sumter Academy gives students the opportunity to access the Internet through the school network. Although it is possible for a student to inadvertently or unintentionally find undesirable Internet material, TSA tries to minimize the occurrences of this through constant supervision and filtering software. TSA believes the benefit to

students from access to the Internet exceeds any disadvantages. The following guidelines for Internet usage have been established by Thomas Sumter Academy:

- **PRIVILEGE:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. The system administrator and school administrators will determine whether an individual's use violates the standards of acceptable use set forth in the preceding paragraph, and their decision is final.

- **ACCEPTABLE USE:** Thomas Sumter Academy maintains a high speed Internet access through Time Warner Cable. Internet games are not considered an educational use of the Internet and tie up valuable connection bandwidth. Therefore, games may not be played when students are logged in at school. Transmission or download of any material in violation of any United States or state law or regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, use of copyrighted material without the necessary permission of the copyright owner, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

- **SOCIAL NETWORKING:** Although social networking through the internet sites such as Facebook and MySpace is a popular activity for individuals in today's world, it is not a proper use of computer time at Thomas Sumter Academy due to the associated dangers and privacy concerns. The filtering software blocks these sites. However, attempts to utilize sites such as Facebook and MySpace will result in disciplinary action.

- **NETIQUETTE:** You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

- **NO WARRANTIES:** The school makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Thomas Sumter Academy will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. Thomas Sumter Academy specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

- **SECURITY:** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system is involved in many uses. If you feel you can identify a security problem, you must notify the system administrator.

Please return the sheet found at the back of the handbook stating you and your child have read the Technology Access page and fully understand the rules to using technology on campus.

DRESS STANDARDS

Thomas Sumter Academy is a conservative school. Students are expected to be neat and clean at all times and to reflect a proper feminine or masculine identity in their appearance. Extreme or fad fashions in clothing and grooming do not meet the dress standards at Thomas Sumter Academy. The final judgment of acceptable attire and personal appearance is at the discretion of the school administration. The dress code will be monitored throughout the year to determine any changes deemed necessary.

Lower School

Lower School students are expected to dress appropriately. Due to the wide ranges of age and stages of development for Lower School students, dress standards vary according to the following criteria:

- 3's- Kindergarten

- Girls and boys are to dress comfortably and appropriately for their daily activities.

- 1st - 3rd Grade

- Girls and boys are to dress comfortably and appropriately for their daily activities.

- For young girls, no bare skin is to be shown between pants and blouses.

- Extremely short skirts and shorts should be avoided.

- Boys are to wear appropriately sized shirts and pants. No oversized, extremely long shirts or saggy pants are to be worn.

- When choosing shoes, keep in mind that students in third grade use stairways on a regular basis; plan accordingly.

- 4th - 5th grade

- Girls:

- Spaghetti straps and halter style shirts are not permitted. No bare skin is to be shown between the shirt and pants.

- Skirts and shorts must be fingertip length or longer.
- Extremely long shirrtails should not be worn.
- Boys:
 - Extremely long shirrtails should not be worn.
 - Tank tops with deep cut arm holes are not to be worn.
 - Pants must be appropriately sized. No oversized, saggy pants are to be worn.
 - In fifth grade, no athletic shorts can be worn.

Beginning with the third grading period, fifth graders will make the transition to the Upper School dress code to prepare them for Middle School. During fourth quarter, consequences begin for being out of dress code.

- All Lower School students:

- Appropriate footwear must be worn by all grade levels; no “Heelys” are allowed on campus.
- All students must wear tennis shoes for P.E.
- When choosing shoes, keep in mind that students in grades three through five use stairways on a regular basis and plan accordingly.

Upper School

- Boys:

- Clothing:

- All boys in grades six through twelve are to wear collared shirts.
- Thomas Sumter t-shirts are permitted on Fridays to promote school spirit.
- All shirts must be tucked in with the exception of sweatshirts, jackets, and sweaters.
- Shorts and jeans may be worn with the following stipulations:
 - Shorts must be no more than two inches above the knee.
 - Shorts or jeans with holes, frays, or patches may not be worn.
 - No athletic shorts or cut-off shorts may be worn.
 - All shorts and trousers must fit properly, and belts must be worn with those having belt loops.
 - Sagging pants or those judged to have excessively wide legs may not be worn. This includes pajama style/warm-up style pants.

- Hair:

- Boys’ hair must remain off their eyebrows, off their collars, and no longer than the top of their ears.
- Rattails, ponytails, and unusual hair colors and extreme contrasting colors or "punk" haircuts are not permitted.
- Facial hair of any form is not acceptable.
- Sideburns may extend only to the middle of the earlobe.

- Earrings may never be worn on campus or at any school-sponsored event on or off campus.

- Girls:

- Clothing:

- Skirts/shorts/jeans
 - Skirts must be finger-tip length plus three inches or longer.
 - The slit of a skirt or dress may not extend above fingertip length.
 - Leggings may be worn if the outfit worn with the leggings would be in dress code on its own.
 - Shorts/jeans are permitted with the same restrictions as noted above for boys.
 - No pajama pants may be worn.
- Tops
 - Tops are to show zero cleavage.
 - No extremely tight-fitting pants or blouses may be worn.
 - Tops may not expose the midriff, including when the girl raises her arm above her head or leans forward.
 - No transparent blouses, low cut blouses, or backless clothing may be worn. Also, no off-the-shoulder tops may be worn.
 - No tank tops or spaghetti straps may be worn, but sleeveless tops with at least a three-inch (3") shoulder strap are acceptable.
 - Thomas Sumter t-shirts are permitted on Fridays to promote school spirit. T-shirts must be tucked in.

- Undergarments
 - Undergarments must be worn at all times.
 - Bra straps may not be seen with any garment.
- Earrings may be worn only in the lower ear lobe.
 - Hair:
 - Girls' hair styles must be conservative.
 - Unusual hair colors are not permitted.
- Boys and Girls:
 - For both male and female students, the following will apply:
 - No visible body piercing (with the exception of earrings for girls) or tattoos are permitted.
 - There will be no heavy chains or dog collar-style studded accessories.
 - No jewelry of any kind may be worn by our athletes during athletic contests or practices unless approved by the coaches.
 - Hats are not allowed on campus during the school day. Caps or hats of any type are not allowed at an inside school event during or after school hours unless approved as special exceptions by the administration.
 - No rubber or plastic athletic slides or flip-flops may be worn.
 - No bedroom shoes or slippers may be worn.
 - Leather or fabric flip-flops cannot be worn on dress-up school days.
 - No article of clothing may be frayed, have holes, or be cut-off.
 - The gothic look and baggy pants are considered extreme fashions at TSA and are not allowed. This includes trench coats, long chains, clothing with skull/bones, and monotone black attire.
 - Shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies must either be a solid color, have a TSA logo, or are imprinted with an appropriate design for TSA standards. Logos cannot depict any gothic (see above), violent, racial, sexual, drug, or alcoholic themes.
 - If a sweatshirt, sweater, or hoodie is worn, the clothing worn underneath must still meet dress code.

Beyond the stipulations listed, the final judgment of acceptable attire and personal appearance is at the discretion of the school administration. The dress code will be monitored throughout the year to determine any changes deemed necessary.

Students judged to be in violation of the dress code will be detained from classes until the violation is corrected and are subject to disciplinary action. Students will receive an unexcused tardy or absence in any class or classes missed due to dress code violations.

Parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing when their child breaks the dress code.

IX. PARENT SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Thomas Sumter Academy PTO is an active organization and a valuable asset on “the Hill.” Volunteers spend many hours helping to make this school the best it can be. Volunteer duties vary from tutoring to fundraising to providing assistance to teachers.

TSA BOOSTER CLUB

The TSA Booster Club is composed of parents, faculty, and friends of TSA. They are dedicated to helping provide the best athletic program possible on “the Hill.” Their numerous undertakings include home concessions stands, game programs, and athletic award banquets. The revenue raised through their many fundraising efforts is used to better the athletic program with updated equipment, uniforms, and facility improvements.

X. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council is an integral part of the student life of Thomas Sumter Academy in grades six through twelve. One of the main purposes of this organization is to provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills.

Student Council officers have many responsibilities that require them to guide a class of thirty or more students to accomplish the goals set before them in a fun and orderly way.

The officers are responsible for planning activities that will help them raise the money needed to sponsor the prom their junior year. While this may not seem like a daunting task, having students work together to raise in excess of \$3,000 and then plan and execute an event for over one hundred people is a major undertaking. In addition to working toward this overall goal, the officers help plan and conduct Homecoming festivities, the annual "Spirit Week" activities, school dances, a school-wide drive to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America, student government elections, General Assemblies, and more!

Being elected to serve on the Student Council is an honor and privilege; however, most importantly, it is a great responsibility. The officers and their advisors put in many hours above the call of duty to ensure that the atmosphere of Thomas Sumter is one where school spirit and morale are high, and every student has the opportunity to answer the call to be one's best.

STUDENT CLUBS

Anchor Club

The Anchor Club at Thomas Sumter Academy is a service organization to the school and community. This club tries to generate fellowship and stimulate interest by having service projects and fundraisers throughout the school year. In Anchor Club, girls learn to plan, organize, execute, and accept responsibility. Any eleventh or twelfth grade girl may join. The Sumter Chapter of Pilot International sponsors the club.

Art Club

The TSA Art Club is an opportunity for high school students to participate within the art community. Members demonstrate their artistic talent through participation in the Fall Festival, Christmas with the Arts, Tuomey's tree decorating, the National Accessibility Art Show, Shenanigan's, and various fundraising opportunities for the art department.

Fellowship Of Christian Athletes

The FCA at Thomas Sumter Academy welcomes students in grades seven through twelve who participate in sports or who support athletic activities on "the Hill." The meetings begin with refreshments, prayer, praise, music, and a program. The programs are varied and may include skits, testimonies, movies, or games.

This organization gives TSA students a chance to encourage and be encouraged by fellow believers who share a desire to follow Jesus. The FCA assists in organizing TSA's chapel programs. Well-known speakers and singers, along with TSA's own talented students, present chapel programs that bring glory and honor to the name of Jesus in fresh and exciting ways. God is certainly at work through the young people who are leading and participating in this organization.

First Priority

First Priority is a time to build fellowship with other students on our campus who are committed to reaching TSA and our community for Christ. First Priority meets weekly for lunch, devotion, music, and fun.

Spanish Club

The Spanish Club is comprised of students currently or formerly enrolled in Spanish classes. Activities during the year are planned for enrichment. The faculty member teaching the Spanish classes is the advisor.

Key Club

The Thomas Sumter Academy Key Club is a service organization for high school students, organized and sponsored by the Sumter Kiwanis Club. The club's motto, "Caring - Our Way of Life," is realized through work in the home, school, and community. Membership in the Academy's Key Club is limited to young men and women who consistently demonstrate leadership potential through service to others and academic achievement.

Math Club

The Math Club meets every other Tuesday for a working lunch math session. Students may bring a sack lunch from home to eat during the meeting. Meetings consist of one or two problems. Members are encouraged to bring problems for the sessions. All upper school students may participate. Members of the club have priority for all math competitions during the year.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society of Thomas Sumter Academy is an organization that promotes appropriate recognition for students who demonstrate outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Membership is an honor and a commitment.

To be eligible for membership, the candidate must be a sophomore or junior, have been in attendance at the school the equivalent of one semester, and have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.0. Candidates are further evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character. Final selection is made by a faculty council.

If a member fails to maintain Society standards, the student is informed in writing of the nature of the violation and given a specific time period to make the correction. If the student does not make the improvement in the specified time, he or she is then dismissed and is ineligible for future membership. Any violator receiving an out-of-school suspension for any reason will be permanently dismissed from the Honor Society.

The TSA Chapter undertakes various service projects in the school and the community each year. In addition to the school and community projects, members are required to complete twenty hours of individual service annually.

PUBLICATIONS

Literary Magazine

Our school literary magazine *Generally Speaking* is a collaborative effort in the areas of literature and art to present a creative outlet for all students of the academy. It allows our student body to showcase its God-given talent at various levels of ability and provides a venue for publication as well.

Student Newspaper

The student newspaper is a monthly publication produced by the Journalism class with the primary function of informing and entertaining our TSA students, friends, and families. The newspaper is an outlet for creative and investigative writing, and experiences in the fields of journalistic writing, layout, and photography.

Yearbook

TSA's yearbook, *The General*, is published each spring by the Upper School yearbook staff. *The General* recaptures the significant events of the year and provides an accurate record of all aspects of life at Thomas Sumter Academy.

The staff selects the theme of the yearbook and strives to provide a student-oriented compilation of memories. Members of *The General* staff hone skills in the areas of photography, composition, layout, and computer design/graphics. Paid advertising, school portrait sales, and yearbook purchases finance *The General*.

FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT

In order to develop and nurture aesthetic potential, and to enhance learning by activities that require both right and left brain coordination, a complete fine arts program is available and is conducted in a modern facility containing a large music rehearsal room and an oak-floored and mirrored dance studio. In addition, an auditorium with curtained stage, theatrical lighting, and seating for approximately 325 is located in the main building of the campus. TSA students have won state and national awards in the areas of music and drama, and have traveled nationally and abroad for performances.

Choral Music

High School students audition for chorus, which is known as General Sound. The students perform locally, nationally, and internationally throughout the year, with performances culminating in the annual spring concert in May. This active group participates in many community affairs and is a tremendous asset to TSA.

All middle school students may participate and perform in Junior General Sound for the entire year. There are no auditions to be a part of this chorus.

Lower school students in kindergarten through grade five participate in a comprehensive and developmental music program that focuses on music notation, performance, and theory. All grades perform individually in seasonal and special events.

Visual Arts

Art training on "the Hill" encompasses more than producing art. Students gain knowledge and skills in the areas of art history, aesthetic awareness, and art criticism. Visual arts encourage the development of cognitive, higher order

thinking, and problem solving skills. Students gain these skills in art classes by learning to perceive, conceptualize, and produce art.

Art helps lower school children develop their ability to think in visual and verbal terms. They attend art classes on a weekly basis throughout the school year. Middle school students may spend a year exploring a variety of artists and media to expand their visual language and technical skills.

Upper School students are offered year-long art courses that encompass a wide array of opportunities to examine various aspects of the arts that challenge the ability levels of each individual student.

Student artwork is displayed throughout the TSA campus, the community, and media sources. Students' artwork is often selected for entry into various contests and exhibitions. TSA artists are also encouraged to attend local art showings and museum exhibits. The primary goal, however, of the Visual Arts department is to produce students who can think, interpret, and reflect upon what they have learned.

Dance

TSA is one of the few schools in the Southeast boasting an in-house dance program held in a modern dance facility and taught by professional dance instructors. Children in 3's through grade twelve receive dance instruction in the areas of creative dance, tap, ballet, Pointe, jazz, modern, and improvisation. Group lessons are offered during the regular school day as a part of TSA's Fine Arts curriculum. Students in grades nine through twelve may elect to take dance for a fine arts or physical education credit toward graduation. These classes meet on a daily basis and are for the most serious of TSA's many talented students. A dance recital is presented by all dance students at year's end with smaller performances scheduled throughout the year on and off campus.

Drama

The high school drama program allows students the opportunity to explore many aspects of the performing arts. Drama students participate in the SCISA One-Act-Play competition each year, as well as several full-length productions throughout the year.

Continued on "the Hill" this year is the drama program for seventh and eighth grade students.

XI. TSA ATHLETICS

TSA's athletic program is an integral part of the Academy's effort to develop well-rounded students. Athletics play a big part in the school's overall pride and spirit. All students are encouraged to participate in athletic events either as a participant or a spectator. A qualified coaching staff is dedicated to teaching the fundamentals for success on and off the athletic fields. TSA students are not charged admission to on-campus regular season events.

The following four requirements must be met before any athlete can participate or play in a game:

- Submit a completed SCISA physical examination
- Submit a completed SCISA agreement for participation form
- Pay a \$50 family athletic fee (one per family)
- Meet SCISA eligibility rules

Strength & Conditioning Program

A seventh period class has been established for varsity athletes to be able to lift weights and participate in speed and agility exercises. Most of our varsity coaches have been placed in this class to assist in this training. All other athletes participate in this type of training during their PE classes. Special attention is given to each age level starting with middle school. TSA puts a strong emphasis on taking athletes and making them stronger, faster, and fit.

Team Travel

All athletic team members must travel on the school bus to and from away events when school transportation is used. Athletes may go home with their parents or guardians if the coach has been notified. Athletes may not go home with anyone who is not their parent or guardian. Special situations should be directed to the Athletic Director or Head of School.

Athletic Eligibility

Eligibility will be determined by SCISA rules, which state the following:

- A student must pass at least four core subjects or any five courses each nine-week grading period.

- A student must have received credit for at least four one-credit core courses or any five one-credit courses from the previous year to be eligible for the first nine-week grading period.
- A maximum of two summer school credits will be accepted.
- A student must receive credit for more than fifty percent of his/her courses in order for summer school to make the athlete eligible for the fall.
- Students have eight consecutive semesters of eligibility from the time they enter ninth grade.
- **Additionally at TSA:** Athletes must maintain a 2.0 GPA each quarter to be eligible.

SCISA Code Of Conduct

- Section I:
 - Athletes, coaches, and fans shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable and sportsmanlike manner, reflecting full and true credit to the school they represent.
- Section II:
 - An athlete, coach, or fan will be in violation of Section I upon any one or more of the following:
 - By making any degrading remark about any official, coach, or athlete during or after a game, either on or off the field/floor of play.
 - By arguing with an official(s) or going through motions indicating dislike/disdain for a decision.
 - By making any degrading remarks or criticism of any official, coach, athlete, or school to any news media.
 - By using any foul, abusive, or profane language at any time.
 - By hitting, shoving, or striking any official, coach, athlete, or fan at any time (or attempting to do so).
 - By being ejected from any contest.
 - By using and/or displaying alcoholic beverages, tobacco (including smokeless types), or other controlled substances (strictly prohibited at any SCISA event).
 - By detaining an official following the contest to request a ruling or explanation of actions taken by the official.

Ejection of Players and Coaches

- The penalty for a disqualification of a player or coach is as follows:
 - First Offense:
 - A fine up to \$100* and an official warning. If the disqualification is for unsportsmanlike conduct, it will also carry a one-game suspension.
 - Second Offense:
 - A fine of up to \$200* and suspension until an appearance before the Athletic Committee.
 - Third Offense:
 - Termination of Athletic Eligibility/Coaching Privilege. These offenses are cumulative over the student's career. Disqualification of a coach will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

*Any student or coach receiving a fine will be responsible for payment of same. The school will not pay fines for either students or coaches.

TSA'S ATHLETIC TEAMS FOR 2009-2010

- Fall Teams:
 - Football: grades five through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Volleyball: grades six through twelve (Varsity)
 - Girls Tennis: grades five through twelve (JV, Varsity)
 - Cross Country: grades six through twelve (Varsity)
 - Swimming: grades six through twelve (Varsity)
 - Cheerleading: grades five through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
- Winter Teams:
 - Boys Basketball: grades six through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Girls Basketball: grades six through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Cheerleading: grades five through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Youth Basketball: grades one through six
 - Clay Pigeon Shooting: grades six through twelve (Varsity)

- Spring Teams:
 - Baseball: grades six through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Softball: grades six through twelve (B-team, JV, Varsity)
 - Boys Tennis: grades five through twelve (Varsity)
 - Golf: grades five through twelve (Varsity)
 - Soccer: grades eight through twelve (Varsity)
 - Track: grades five through twelve (Varsity)

TSA Acknowledgement Form

I have read the Technology Access information provided in the Thomas Sumter Academy handbook. I fully understand the rules to using technology on campus, and I fully understand and accept the ramifications if there is misuse.

I have read the Thomas Sumter Academy Student Handbook and agree to abide by the rules stated therein, and I fully understand the consequences if I do not.
(Only one form returned per family is required.)

Parent Name (Print)

_____/____/09
Parent Signature

Student Name (Print) Grade

_____/____/09
Student Signature

Student Name (Print) Grade

_____/____/09
Student Signature

Student Name (Print) Grade

_____/____/09
Student Signature

Student Name (Print) Grade

_____/____/09
Student Signature