



# Parent/Student Handbook

Revised 7/2018

# **THOMAS HART ACADEMY STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK Revised 7/2018**

Established in 1970, Thomas Hart Academy is an independent, coeducational, non-discriminatory day school enrolling approximately 170 students in grades K3-8.

Thomas Hart Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, socioeconomic status, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin.

## **Mission**

Thomas Hart Academy is committed to the academic and emotional well-being of its students by focusing on the individual child and fostering a love of learning within a safe, nurturing environment.

## **South Carolina Independent School Association**

Thomas Hart Academy is a member of and accredited by the South Carolina Independent School Association and strongly supports the association's regulations in academics.

## **Daily Schedule**

<b>7:00-7:30</b>	<b>Early Bird Drop Off (library)</b>
7:30	School doors open to students
7:55	First bell for homeroom
8:00	Second bell for homeroom (tardy bell)
8:00-8:05	Homeroom
8:05-8:50	1 <sup>st</sup> period
8:50-9:35	2 <sup>nd</sup> period
9:35-9:45	Break (grades 6-8)
9:45-10:50	3 <sup>rd</sup> period
10:50-11:35	4 <sup>th</sup> period
11:35-12:20	5 <sup>th</sup> period (lunch for grades K's-3)
12:20-1:05	6 <sup>th</sup> period (lunch for grades 4-8)
1:05-1:50	7 <sup>th</sup> period
1:50-2:30	8 <sup>th</sup> period (kindergarten dismissed at 2:30)
2:30-2:50	MS Tutorial
2:50	Dismissal for grades 1-8

## **Arrival and Departure**

- a. The school buildings open at 7:30. The school cannot accept responsibility for students arriving prior to that time. Early Bird drop off begins at 7:00am in the library.
- b. School ends at 2:50 (2:30 for kindergarten), and students are expected to be off campus by 3:00 unless attending a school function or prior arrangements have been made with a teacher, coach, club sponsor, or the school office. Students who have not been picked up by 3:00 will report to the After School Program/Homework Hour. A charge will be assessed.
- c. If a student needs to leave school before the end of the school day, a written note from the parent must be turned in to the office that morning. The note should state the time of departure, the name of the person picking up the student, and the date/time the student will return to school
- d. All students must be signed-out when leaving for early dismissal and signed-in upon return. The parent or authorized person must report to the office when signing a student out and when signing the student back into school again.

All students are reminded that they are responsible for checking with teachers or calling a classmate to get missed class or homework assignments.

## **Attendance, Absences, and Tardies**

Class attendance and punctuality are essential to academic growth which should be a top priority for Thomas Hart students, parents, and faculty. Students are expected to arrive on campus early enough to be in homeroom period by 8:00 and remain on campus until 2:50.

### **Tardies**

- a. Arriving on time at the beginning of the day and to each class throughout the day encourages an atmosphere of responsibility and respect.
- b. Parents are required to sign-in their children in the office if they are tardy to school. If a late arrival is due to a family emergency, please indicate such when the student is signed-in.

- c. A student who arrives late to first period (after 8:00) must report directly to the office to receive a “pass to class.” Tardy students will not be admitted to class without the proper pass.
- d. **The school will allow 4 tardies to school each 9-week quarter. Commencing with the 5<sup>th</sup> tardy each quarter, the family will be assessed a \$5 late fee for each tardy during the remainder of the quarter.**
- e. Tardy charges will be billed on the day each marking period ends, except the last quarter charges will be billed two weeks prior to the last day of school.

### Absences

- a. School policy allows a total of 15 absences during the school year. These do not include any absence that is school related such as field trips, SCISA competitions, athletic events, and the like. If fifteen absences are exceeded, time will be made up after school hours. This consequence applies to students in grades 1-8. Eighth graders who are taking a course for high school credit may not exceed 10 class absences or credit for the course(s) may be denied. If ten absences are exceeded, the time missed must be made up on a minute for minute basis outside of school hours.
- b. Parents are asked to call the office by 9:00 if their child(children) will be absent during any part of the day. Arrangements can be made at this time to pick-up class assignments that may be missed during the day.
- c. For every absence over the allotted 15, the student may be required to attend Saturday study hall from 8:00-10:00 in the morning where school work will be done. This consequence applies to grades 1-8.
- d. It is advised that a written note from a physician be submitted to the office whenever a child is absent due to illness. These notes will be considered in the event of extenuating circumstances when “severe and extensive illnesses” occur. The goal of the attendance policy is not to punish students but to reinforce the importance of classroom attendance. Parents have a genuine responsibility to emphasize the importance of school attendance to their children.
- e. Students must be counted present at school on the day of any athletic or extracurricular event in order to participate. (ie; school dances, lock in, etc.)
- f. One educational trip per year with parents or a guardian will be excused if the trip does not exceed five days. The school must be notified one week in advance. Written excuses stating the reasons for the absence are required.

## Grading Practices

- a. Classes in the following disciplines are considered core classes: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Latin, and Computer Applications.
- b. The following classes are considered to be specialty classes: Art, Physical Education, Music, Library, Spanish, and Computer.
- c. The academic year is divided into four, nine-week grading periods. Grades will be calculated and sent to parents at the end of each grading period.

The following grading scales will be used for core classes:

K3-K5:            Written anecdotal comments and age appropriate checklists will be distributed twice a year (mid and end of year)

Grade 1:        Written anecdotal comments and the following scale:  
                  E +/E/E- : Excellent  
                  S+/S/S- : Satisfactory  
                  N : Needs Improvement  
                  U : Unsatisfactory

Grades 2-8:	A	90 – 100	Excellent Achievement
	B	80 – 89	Above Average Achievement
	C	70 – 79	Satisfactory Achievement
	D	60 – 69	Improvement Needed
	F	below 60	Unsatisfactory Achievement

The following marks will be used for specialty classes:

E – Excellent	Always participates, always cooperates, exceeds teacher expectations
S – Satisfactory	Usually participates, usually cooperates, often exceeds teacher expectations
N – Needs Improvement	Inconsistent participation and cooperation
U – Unsatisfactory	Unacceptable participation and cooperation

## Reporting Periods

- a. Interim Reports – Interim grade reports for all classes will be issued to students in grades 2-8 at the halfway point of each nine-week grading period. The purpose of the interims is to inform parents of the academic progress of their children. There are no interim reports in kindergarten or first grade.

- b. Report Cards – In grades 1-8, parents will receive report cards at the completion of each nine-week grading period. The final report card will include a first semester average (the average of the first and second quarter grades) and the second semester average (the average of the third and fourth quarter grades). The year-end average will be the average of the first and second semester grades. At the end of the year, report cards will be held by the school until all financial obligations are satisfied.

## **Tests and Quizzes for Middle School**

- a. Test days - Teachers will coordinate the testing of students so that no more than two major tests in core classes will be given on the same day. Quizzes and project due dates may fall on any day regardless of tests being given.
- b. Examinations – Students in grades 7 and 8 will take semester examinations in December and again in May. The December exams will cover material studied during the first semester while the May exams will cover primarily second semester material. The December exam will count 20% of the first semester grade; the May exam will count 20% of the second semester grade. The sixth graders will take December and May exams. However these exam grades will be counted as 1 to 2 test grades as determined by each teacher towards the semester average. The exam period will be ninety minutes in length. Students will be given extra time if necessary. A student in the eighth grade may exempt a May final examination, if four days prior to the exam, he has maintained a 96 average or higher in that course for the entire year.
- c. Standardized Testing – The Stanford Ten Achievement Test and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test will be administered in March to students in grades 1-8. Grade 8 students will be given the option of taking the PSAT in October.

## **Homework**

Homework is considered an integral component of our academic program. It is expected that students will complete a reasonable amount of homework to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Homework will be assigned by the classroom teachers and will be kept to an age/grade appropriate level.

- a. Assigned homework will be checked by teachers. Parents will be notified if children are not completing homework assignments.

- b. Homework for grades 1-8 will be posted on the school's website (mytha.net). Go to the "Hornet Links" and click on the Events, Activities and Assignment link.
- c. If a student is absent from class, homework assignments, class handouts, and textbooks will be assembled and placed in the office for pick-up by the child's parents at the end of the day. Students will have 3 days to make up missed work.

## **Recognition of Academic Excellence**

Students in grades 2-8 will be recognized for excellence in each grading period and for end-of-the-year grades.

- a. Co-Principal's Honor Roll – To be eligible for the Co-Principal's Honor Roll, a student must have an end of year average of 90 or higher in all core classes and all specialty grades of "Excellent."
- b. Faculty Honor Roll – To be eligible for the Faculty Honor Roll, a student must have an end of year average of 85 with no grade lower than an 80 in all core classes and no specialty grade lower than "Satisfactory."
- c. Year-End Honors – Failure to attain a particular honor roll category for one or more grading periods does not necessarily preclude a student from receiving recognition for any honor roll category at the Final Awards Assembly as long as the following requirements are met: Co-Principals Honors are awarded to students who achieve an overall average of 90 or higher in the core subjects. Faculty Honors are awarded to those students with an overall average of 85.
- d. Valedictorian and Salutatorian - The two eighth grade students who have the highest GPA's, including weighted courses, will be selected as the Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the graduating class.
- e. Academic Marshals - Seventh grade students with the highest GPA's will be selected as Marshals for the eighth grade graduation.
- f. Procedures for determining Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Class Marshals are specified in the complete Faculty Handbook kept in the office.
- g. Parents of transfers are reminded that those students transferring after 6th grade will not be assigned rank in the class order for the academic honors of Marshal, Valedictorian, and Salutatorian. Additionally, students that transfer during their eighth grade year will not be assigned class rank.

## Acceptance of New Students

Any student new to Thomas Hart Academy in preschool through 1<sup>st</sup> grade will be assessed by the lead teacher of that grade to determine if the child is being appropriately placed based on the child's abilities and maturity. This will ensure that the needs of the new student and enrolled students are best met.

New students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> must provide transcripts/permanent records from their previous school. The records, grades, and test scores will be reviewed by the Academic Advisor and/or Co-Principals to determine acceptance.

The Academic Advisor and/or Co-Principals may also participate in the determination of acceptance of any student into Thomas Hart Academy. **All students are accepted on a 2 week probationary period.**

## Retention of Students

a. In addition to academic progress, other factors such as age, maturity level, emotional growth, and confidence significantly impact student readiness.

Student placement will be determined through year-long conversations involving parent, teacher, and if appropriate, administration. There should be no surprises as to placement at the end of the year.

b. If a student in grades 3-8 fails one subject, his promotion to the next grade is partly contingent on satisfactory completion of a summer program. In many cases, poor academic performance is more a factor of maturity or learning differences than intellectual ability. In all situations involving academically struggling students, the school and parents will work closely together to determine the best course of action.

c. If two subjects are failed, the student will not be promoted to the next grade at Thomas Hart Academy. The grade must be repeated or the student will need to enroll at another school. If the decision is to enroll in another school, the student's transcript will be forwarded to the school that the parents request. The receiving school will make the decision about grade placement for the transferring student.

## Tuesday Folders and Communication

Student papers and announcements for the week will be sent home in Tuesday folders. Parents are asked to sign all graded papers and return them in the folders by Thursday. Also, announcements, reminders, calendar changes etc. are posted on the school's website ([www.mytha.net](http://www.mytha.net)). A THA e-mail will be sent on Tuesday



evenings. School closings/cancellations or emergencies will be broadcast on the THA Info Line, THA Facebook page, parent emails and Remind 101.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

A combination of conferences, phone calls, interim reports, and report cards are means of communicating student progress. Conferences may be scheduled by parents or teachers as needed. To ensure adequate time and preparation for conferences, an appointment should be made in advance with the teacher or through the office. It is best for conferences to be scheduled during a teacher's planning period or after school.

## **Athletic Eligibility**

There is no grade requirement that a student must maintain in order to be eligible for participation in athletics at Thomas Hart. However, when a student's teacher(s) or parents feel that the student is not applying himself academically, the teacher(s) or parent may request a conference with the Athletic Director. At the conference, those involved will devise a plan to help the student improve his school work. The plan may involve extra help sessions afterschool, withholding participation in ball games until improvement is shown, setting a deadline for academic improvement, etc. The only exception to the above practice is participation in SCISA "open tournaments." If a Thomas Hart student participates in any of these events, then SCISA athletic eligibility standards must be met. A student making a failing grade in a core class may not participate in the "open tournament."

## **Discipline Advisory Committee:**

A standing advisory committee comprised of four faculty members that will meet at the discretion of the Co-Principals to review and advise on matters of misbehavior and other school concerns. This group is considered to be a third party.

## **DISCIPLINE CODE**

### **STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

The administration, faculty and staff assume that students at Thomas Hart Academy are mature and responsible for their own proper behavior at school and that all matters of discipline can be handled in a calm and reasonable manner. They are expected to conduct themselves with courtesy, honesty and respect for themselves and others at all times. In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, certain standards of behavior are necessary. Each student is under the direct control of all classroom teachers and their substitutes. Standard procedures for disciplinary infractions will be enforced fairly, promptly and equitably to every

student. In order for you to know what standards of behavior are expected, students should be familiar with all rules and regulations in the THA Student Handbook. The rules enumerated below outline the general expectations of the school, but violations of the spirit as well as the letter of the policies will be taken into account when an apparent violation of the rules has taken place. The following are guidelines of the discipline policy and are not all inclusive.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Thomas Hart students are expected to act with integrity relative to schoolwork.

**Expectations**

- Students are expected to be honest with respect to academic work and should never, in any context, present someone else's work as their own, or utilize any form of help on a graded exercise intended as individual work which is not expressly approved by the teacher. Students must understand and avoid plagiarism in all forms, including use of information from the Internet, and using it as their own work.

**Consequences**

- Dishonesty or cheating of any kind on exams, test, quizzes, written assignments, or any graded assignment assigned by the teacher as individual work will result in a student being subject to disciplinary actions. At minimum, the student will receive a zero for the work and may be referred to the Co-Principals for further disciplinary actions.

**General Disciplinary Response:** Each classroom teacher is responsible for establishing and maintaining his/her own system of discipline and classroom management. The procedures will be clearly communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the school year. All students will be treated with the dignity and respect that children deserve. Thomas Hart Academy does not believe in corporal punishment, nor will children be given extra homework as a consequence of misbehavior. Inappropriate behavior often presents an opportunity for learning to occur. In all situations, the teacher will discuss the inappropriate behavior with the student. Depending upon the nature of the offense, different responses may occur. All responses to inappropriate behavior will be handled by the classroom teacher and/or Co-Principals.

**Responses to inappropriate behavior in Preschool:**

Appropriate consequences to minor infractions may include removal from the group for a period of time, loss of free time, loss of privileges, walking laps or wall time at recess.

**Responses to inappropriate behavior in grades 1-3:**

Depending upon the nature, frequency, and intensity of the offense consequences to minor infractions may include removal from the group for a period of time, loss

of free time, loss of privileges, walking laps or wall time at recess. For a major infraction a discipline referral sheet will be completed by the classroom teacher. Appropriate consequences for a major infraction may also include lunch detention or recess detention.

### **Responses to inappropriate behavior in grades 4-8:**

Depending upon the nature, frequency, and intensity of the offense consequences to minor infractions may include removal from the group for a period of time, loss of free time, loss of privileges, walking laps or wall time at recess. For a major infraction a discipline referral sheet will be completed by the classroom teacher. Appropriate consequences for a major infraction may also include lunch detention or recess detention, after school detention, Saturday detention, in school suspension, overnight suspension, out of school suspension, and possible expulsion.

## **Discipline Referrals**

A student will receive a discipline referral for any disrespectful, rebellious, or disruptive behavior **that is deemed beyond classroom management control**. Discipline referrals serve as a record of the student's conduct and as a communication tool to parents that their help is needed to correct their child's behavior. Discipline referrals may also be assigned at the discretion of the administration in certain irregular cases. Students who receive 9 or more discipline referrals during a single academic year will be placed on behavioral probation the following year and will not be allowed to accumulate more than 6 detentions in that school year prior to expulsion.

### **Explanation of Terms**

**Behavior Policy-** Believing that the primary aim of THA education will be compromised without the appropriate behavioral patterns being present in the classroom and on the campus, the following behavioral policy will be applied.

**In School Suspension-**The student will complete all assignments away from the classroom setting. The student may not participate in any extra-curricular activities during the suspension. Parents will be notified when a student is assigned In School Suspension, and may be offered an alternative campus beautification project.

**Out of School Suspension-**The student will not be allowed on school grounds during school hours. A grade of zero will be given on all work missed. The student may not attend any school activities.

**Overnight Suspension-**The student will be suspended out-of-school effective at the end of the day on which the violation occurred and will continue until a parent accompanies the student back to school. Reinstatement will consist of a conference with an administrator. If the conference is held before any class or

extra-curricular activities the next day, the student will not suffer any loss of credit/participation. **NOTE:** Phone calls or letters will not be accepted.

**Campus Beautification Project**-The student will be assigned to work on a predetermined project on school grounds for a predetermined amount of time.

**After School Detention**-The student will be assigned to After School Detention for certain violations: Detention will last for 30 minutes after school in a designated room. Teacher assigning the detention may submit work to be completed in that time frame. **Failure to report when assigned will result in an additional detention.**

**Saturday Detention**- A student will be assigned to a 1 hour Saturday detention for certain violations. It will be served on the THA campus. A Saturday detention also results in a \$40 supervisory fee to compensate 2 faculty members to supervise. This will be billed to the family's account when the detention is assigned.

**Hearing**-The student will be suspended out-of-school pending an administrative hearing presided over by the Discipline Advisory Committee. The student and parent(s) will be allowed to address the committee concerning the violation that caused the suspension. The course of disciplinary action will be determined by the administration.

**Probation**-Strict behavioral guidelines that will be issued to the student and any deviation from this may lead to expulsion from school.

**Parent Conference**-Parents will be notified on a discipline referral slip to call the appropriate administration. It is the parent's responsibility to call by the end of the following school day.

**Expulsion Policy**-Expulsion means the complete denial of school services. A student who is dismissed from school is no longer allowed to attend classes, receive academic credit, or participate in any activities sponsored by Thomas Hart Academy. If procedures for expulsion are initiated, the parent of the student shall be notified in writing of the time and the place of an administrative hearing. A decision shall be rendered within five school days of the hearing. The student may be suspended from school and from all activities during the time of the expulsion procedures. The right to appeal the decision of the hearing committee to the Board of Directors is reserved to either party in accordance with the provisions of this policy. A dismissed student's transcript will reflect grades earned in his/her last completed semester. In addition, to facilitate matriculation to another institution or program, THA will provide current averages in classes taken during the semester in which expulsion occurred. A student who is dismissed within 20 days of the end of the semester may at the Co-Principal's discretion, take final exams separately from the rest of the students. Tuition will be expected pursuant to the contract.

**Important Notes:**

The discipline code is not exhaustive. The administration has the right to take other action when deemed appropriate.

- Occurrences more than the listed number may result in a hearing.
- An accumulation of any of the categories of offenses will result in an in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or an administrative hearing.
- All teachers and staff members have authority over students.
- Any student participating in any extra-curricular activity may lose eligibility in that activity upon the first administrative hearing except for accumulation of Category 4 offenses.
- Penalties and punishments include any on campus, in transit to and from any school event and off campus school events.

**Guidelines for number of Discipline Referrals:**

NOTE: Actions listed under categories of discipline offenses may supersede this list.

- 1-6: After school detention for 30 minutes
- 7: 60 minute Saturday detention and Parent conference
- 8: 60 minute Saturday detention
- 9: In school suspension and Parent conference
- 10: 1 day of out-of-school suspension
- 11: 2 days of out-school suspension and Parent conference
- 12: Discipline Advisory Committee review and possible expulsion

**DISCIPLINE OFFENSES:****Category 1**

1. Invasion of privacy of the opposite sex.
  2. Possession/use of dangerous weapons.
  3. Setting/calling in a false fire/bomb alarm.
  4. Obscene language/gesture(s)-student to staff (physical, verbal or written abuse)
- Action:** Out-of-school suspension pending an administrative hearing.

**Category 2**

1. Disrespect includes disrespect to a staff member.
2. Failure to attend class and leaving school grounds without administrative approval
3. Lying/falsifying information
4. Invasion of privacy
5. Possession/use of fireworks
6. Obscene language/gesture(s)-student to student including bullying behavior, humiliation, persecution, threats, and confrontations

7. Physical abuse (fighting)
8. Gambling
9. Possession of vulgar material or items.
10. Incompatibility-defined as flagrant or consistent defiance of the basic routine of the school.

**Action:** 1st time: 1 hour of campus beautification and 1 day lunch detention

2nd time: 2 days In-of-school suspension

3rd time: 2 days Out-of-school suspension/pending an administrative hearing.

**Bullying:** Any behaviors directly targeting an individual with threatening words, gestures, or actions such as humiliation, persecution, isolation, and cyberbullying in any form of technology will not be tolerated at Thomas Hart Academy. Any act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or property damage, or demeans a student or group of students, including acts which cause substantial disruption in or interference with the orderly operation of the school. Acts of bullying as above defined will be dealt with accordingly by the school. A contact with an in school counselor, or outside counseling service, at the discretion of the administration, may be recommended.

### **Category 3**

Violations of category three rules will normally result in suspension, although particularly flagrant violations and repeated violations may result in expulsion. Other provisions of penalty may include monetary restitutions to the school, campus beautification project, letters of apology, loss of leadership positions, forfeit of membership on a school team, probation, etc.

➤ **Cheating:** - (test) or the intent to cheat (example: providing answers to another student; using notes handwritten or typed; notes written on hand, arm, leg or any body part; or notes for use at a later time.) (projects) Using any information or providing information to another student, regardless of how it is obtained, for fraudulent purposes, plagiarism, or falsifying data and presenting it as one's own work or research.

**Action for cheating on a test or project:**

**1st time:** Zero on the test and 1 hour campus beautification.

**2nd time:** Zero on the test; Out-of-school suspension, 2-3 days, dismissal from Honor Society/Beta Club and any Officer positions for that school year, exclusion from academic honors and awards for the length of that school year.

**3rd time:** Zero on the test; Administrative hearing.

➤ **Failure to follow a direct request**

**Action:**

**1<sup>st</sup> time:** 30 minute detention

**2<sup>nd</sup> time:** Overnight suspension

**3<sup>rd</sup> time:** Administrative hearing

➤ **Vandalism (major)**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Restitution/administrative hearing

➤ **Vandalism (minor)**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Restitution/2 hours campus beautification

2<sup>nd</sup> time: Restitution/Overnight suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> time: Restitution/administrative hearing

- **Irresponsible use of technology**-This includes using school computers or computer devices to visit inappropriate Internet sites, download materials, send e-mail, delete or alter software and settings or sabotage school computers and networks or to defame the school's reputation or that of any member (faculty, student, parent, etc) of the school community.

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Restitution/administrative hearing

➤ **Stealing (major)**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Restitution/administrative hearing

➤ **Stealing (minor)**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Restitution/30 minute detention

2<sup>nd</sup> time: Restitution/overnight suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> time: Restitution/out-of-school suspension/ administrative hearing

- **Possession or use of tobacco products and or tobacco paraphernalia on school grounds or at a school function.**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: 30 minute detention

2<sup>nd</sup> time: Out of school suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> time: Administrative hearing

- **Drinking or under the influence, possession, purchase, distribution or transport of an alcoholic beverage on school grounds or at any school function.**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Out of School suspension and Administrative hearing

- **Under the influence or having possession of, purchase, distribution or transport illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, or illegally obtained prescription drugs on school grounds or at any school function.**

**Action:**

1<sup>st</sup> time: Administrative hearing/Expulsion (notify law enforcement)

➤ **Convicted of being under the influence or having possession of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia.**

**Action:**

1st time: Expulsion

**RIGHT TO SEARCH:** School officials have the authority to search and seize inappropriate items from lockers, book-bags, etc, or from the person 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. This right is reserved to protect the student body at large and will be employed with discretion.

**Category 4**

- In an unauthorized area
  - Disrupting class
  - Failure to follow directions
  - Verbal abuse of students and/or school personnel
  - Inappropriate behavior
  - Possession or sale of unauthorized material
  - Dress code violation.
- \*Hats are not to be worn in the building.  
\*Students may be required to remain in office until clothing is corrected.

**Action:**

1st time: Warning

2nd time: 1 day lunch detention

3rd time: 2 days lunch detention and 1 hour of campus beautification

4th time: 3 days lunch detention and 2 hours campus beautification

5th time: 1 day out-of-school suspension

**Category 5-Academic Discipline**

In order to ensure that each student at Thomas Hart Academy is conforming to the Academy's philosophy of preparing its students for productive lives and the opportunity to succeed in high school following graduation, the following school academic policy will be applied:

**“Not Ready to Learn”**-Any student that comes to school without materials or without homework assignments shall be considered **Not Ready to Learn** and will be subject to the following:

1<sup>st</sup> time-Warning -Parents will be called and informed of student **Not Ready to Learn**.

2<sup>nd</sup> time-1 day lunch detention

3<sup>rd</sup> time-Overnight Suspension

4<sup>th</sup> time-Out-of-school suspension



5<sup>th</sup> time-The student will report each morning to the Co-Principals with materials and homework as well as in the afternoons with assignments written down and initialed. (Any student that does not comply with this may be recommended for expulsion.)

## **Potty Training Policy**

All 3 and 4 year-old children enrolling in the school's preschool program should be potty-trained when he or she enters Thomas Hart Academy. This means a child can clean him/herself as well. Learning to wipe is part of potty-training, as well as being able to pull clothes up and down when using the restroom. Beginning pre-school is a major transition for children, and we want all children to feel successful in all endeavors, including potty-training.

The teachers understand that accidents occasionally happen, and they will be handled on an individual basis. Each child will keep a spare set of clothes in the classroom in case of an accident. If accidents occur, teachers will assist the child in the changing of clothes. Soiled clothes will be sent home. Teachers will notify parents of on-going problems through e-mails and/or phone calls. If a child has repeated accidents while at school that hinder the progress of the classroom a conference between teachers, parents and administrators will occur. It may be necessary to keep a child home or make other arrangements until he/she demonstrates independence in this area.

## **Medications at School**

- a. All medications must be kept in the school office. Students are not permitted to keep medication in the classroom or on their persons.
- b. In order for the school to give medications during school hours, written consent from the parent/guardian must be on file in the school office. If the child will be taking medication all year or for several months, the parent's written consent must be on the school's Medication Information and Consent Form. Medication that will only be given for a few days or weeks (antibiotics, antihistamines, cough medication, etc.) needs only a handwritten parent note. The handwritten consent needs to include the date, child's name, medication, dosage, time and number of days to be given.
- c. Prescription medication must come to school in a labeled prescription container. The label must include the date, child's name, medication, dosage, time, number of times to be given, and the physician's name. Over-the-counter medications are to be kept in the original container. Medication that comes to school in an envelope, baggie, or improperly marked container will not be administered.

- d. A physician's signature is required on the appropriate form if a child takes any "controlled substance." Controlled substances are kept under lock and key, and a log is kept every time this medication is dispensed.

## **Campus Safety**

- a. Access to School Buildings – The school buildings will be open at 7:30 each morning. The library will be open at 7:00am for Early Bird drop off.
- b. Emergency Drills – Emergency drills will be conducted throughout the school year to ensure that students and staff are familiar with procedures. Drills to be practiced include fire and severe weather, emergency evacuation, and intruder alert and lock downs. A booklet of procedures and directions is posted in each classroom and other places where children congregate during the day.
- c. The school is secured by a controlled access system.

## **Student Departure During School Hours**

- a. During the School Day – For your child's safety, a parent or a designated adult is required to sign in and out those students who arrive or depart school at times outside the normal schedule. The sign-in/out sheet is located in the school office.
- b. After School – A change in the regular routine of how a child gets home requires communication from the parent or guardian. The parent or guardian needs to designate, in writing, the name of the individual authorized to pick-up the student. Students will not be released to anyone other than the parent or guardian or those individuals designated on the student's "emergency form."

## **School Closure**

In the event of a school closing or delay related to weather or other natural occurrences all information will be announced via THA Info-line, on local television and radio, posted on the school's website, school Facebook page and Remind 101 text message from teachers.

## Pick-Up/Drop-Off of Students

- a. All kindergarten students who are single car riders will be ready for pick-up at doors on the non-gym side of the main building at 2:30. Kindergarten students who carpool will be walked by a teacher to the gym side of the main building where they will be ready for pick-up at 2:50.
- b. All single car riders (not including kindergarten) will be picked-up at the doors on the non-gym side end of the main building. Carpool students will be picked-up on the gym side of the main building at 2:50.
- c. All preschool-5K students should be dropped off on the non-gym side of the main building. Students in 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade should be dropped off on the gym side of the main building. All middle school students (grades 6-8) should be dropped off in front of the gymnasium.

### **The main entrance is not to be used as a drop off point for students in the morning unless accompanied by an adult.**

- d. If a parent wishes to walk his child into school, they should park their car in the parking lot before doing so. Please do not park in the drop off line.
- e. In order to help avoid long car lines parents whose riders have not yet arrived at the pick-up areas will be asked to park their car and their child will be escorted to them.
- f. If parents walk into school to pick up children, they may depart through the front entrance. All other students, including eighth graders, must be picked-up at the regular pick-up lines.
- g. Any child not picked-up by 3:00 will be escorted to the After School Program or Homework Hour. Parents will be charged according to the fee schedule.
- h. **If parents enter the building to pick-up their children prior to the dismissal of school, they are to remain in the front hallway by the office in the parent waiting area and not stand outside of the classroom doors. Parents should monitor their children until they leave the school campus.**

## Visitors

- a. Parents are invited to visit classes but only with prior arrangement with the teacher or office. Parents should not interrupt class proceedings. If a parent needs

to drop off something or give his child a message, it must go through the office so as not to interfere with the learning environment in the classroom.

- b. Students from other schools are not allowed to visit friends at THA during school hours without permission from the Co-Principals.

## **Dress Code**

The purpose of dress regulations is to help each student set and achieve a standard for his/her personal appearance that is appropriate within the accepted standards of Thomas Hart. Students are expected to demonstrate pride in their personal appearance for it reflects individually on them and collectively on the school attended. If, in the judgment of the administration, a student is dressed inappropriately, the student will be required to change clothes before returning to class. Additional disciplinary measures may be taken if the situation continues to be a problem. The following guidelines are not intended to cover every possible circumstance which could be applicable under the dress code. However, at some point practical reasoning must be exercised. Students or parents, who have questions about the mode of dress not addressed herein, are advised to contact the school office. It also must be noted that, as a general rule, the rules become more stringent as the students become older. In particular, students in grades 4-8 are held to higher standards.

- Students may wear attractive, neat and presentable shorts. Cut-off shorts are not allowed. Shorts, skirts and dresses must be no shorter than the end of the fingertips of the student (standing upright with arms at their sides).
- Hats may not be worn in the buildings during school hours. Headgear worn as part of a religious obligation or medical reason is an exception.
- Strapless dresses, halter tops, and tops that reveal cleavage or the midriff when the arms are raised are not permitted.
- Low-rise pants will be worn in such a way that no skin is exposed. An undershirt or camisole must be worn.
- Clothing shall not promote alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, nor may its words or graphics contain vulgarity, sexual innuendo, or anything promoting discrimination against gender, race, religion, or age.
- Torn clothing and clothing with holes are not permitted.
- Clothing designed for the beach is not appropriate.
- All shirts must have straps of at least one inch in width (two fingers width). Girls in 3<sup>k</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade may wear tops or dresses with thinner straps.
- Students attending physical education classes must have appropriated dress and footwear. Shorts must follow the fingertip rule. All students in grades 6-8 will be required to wear a designated physical education uniform.

## **Food and Drink**

Water is allowed to be consumed in the classrooms during the school day. Food may be eaten in the classrooms during “breaks.” In all other situations, teachers will make decisions they feel appropriate for their classes. Soft drinks will not be available to students during regular school hours. As a general rule, students are not allowed in the faculty lounge. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of a faculty member.

## **Lunch**

Students may bring their lunch or participate in the school’s lunch program. Thomas Hart’s goal is to engage vendors that provide quality food that the students enjoy. You will receive a monthly calendar that includes the lunch options. The form must be filled out and turned into the office by the deadline stated. If the form is not turned in on time your child will be provided an emergency lunch for that day.

Student use of microwaves are permitted in grades 3 and up only.

## **Cell Phones**

Cell phones may be brought to school but must be out-of-sight during school hours unless teachers are using the technology in their classrooms. First offense, cell phones will be confiscated for that school day and returned at the end of the school day. Second offense, cell phones will be confiscated for two school days if they are used, become visible, or ring during school hours and will only be returned to the student’s parent. Third offense, cell phones will be confiscated for one week and parents will be notified.

## **Textbooks**

All students are responsible for taking care of school textbooks. If a student loses a textbook, he will be assessed a replacement fee. Students whose books are damaged beyond normal wear and tear will be assessed a damage fee. **Report cards will be held at the end of the school year until all fines have been paid.** It is suggested that all textbooks be covered and labeled with the student’s name on the inside cover.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a fundamental part of the educational program at THA. They are encouraged as a means of supporting the curriculum and philosophy of the school. Field trips should support and relate to activities taking place in the classroom, be educational in the broad sense of the word, or be team-building in nature.

Field trips are organized and conducted for the benefit of children. While we depend on the assistance of parents to help with logistics and ensure the safety of children, we hope to limit the number of parents in grades 4-8 attending a field trip who have not been selected as the “designated chaperones.” The school believes in encouraging parents to allow their children to experience field trips without their direct supervision. In an effort to provide safe transportation for field trips, all chaperones are required to have the following information on file in the school office before being allowed to drive children on field trips:

- a. Copy of current driver’s license
- b. Copy of automobile insurance
- c. A statement from the Division of Motor Vehicles attesting to a safe driving record
- d. A SLED check\*
- e. Child Protection Program form\*
- f. Read and sign the chaperone agreement form\*

**\*These documents are required for all adults interacting with THA students.**

**Final chaperone decisions may be left up to the discretion of the sponsoring teacher and/or Co-Principals.**

## **Child Passenger Restraint Regulations**

In transporting children on field trips, Thomas Hart will adhere to the following guidelines set forth in the South Carolina Passenger Restraint Law.

- a. Children 1-5 years old weighing 20-40 pounds must be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat.
- b. Children 1-5 years old weighing 40-80 pounds must be secured in a belt-positioning booster seat. The belt-positioning booster seat must be used with both lap and shoulder belts. A booster seat must not be used with a lap belt alone.
- c. Children under the age of 6 are not required to be in booster seats if they weigh more than 80 pounds or if they can sit with their backs against the car’s seat and bend their legs over the edge without slouching. These children may be restrained in adult safety belts.
- d. Children under 6 may not sit in the front passenger seat. However, this restriction does not apply if the vehicle has no rear seats or if all other rear passenger seats are occupied by children less than 6 years old.

- g. Transportation of children with an insufficient number of restraint devices: If all the seating with restraint devices are occupied by children under the age of 6 years, a child may be transported in the front seat, and the driver of the motor vehicle is not in violation of the provisions of this article, but priority must be given to children under the age of six years, according to their ages.

Parents of children requiring “safety seats” must provide these seats whenever their children are participating on school sponsored field trips.

## **Activities**

- a. Student Government – The SGA consists of students in grades 3-8 elected by their peers to serve in a variety of representative capacities.
- b. Yearbook Staff – The yearbook staff, under the direction of their adviser, is responsible for the publication of the school yearbook.
- c. Fellowship of Christian Athletes – The FCA is an organization which offers opportunities for students to develop a sense of the value of service to others.
- d. Junior Beta Club – The Junior Beta Club is a student service organization. Jr. Beta Club requirements are as follows: Jr. Beta eligibility is determined by the previous year's grades and overall exemplary conduct. You must have an overall A (90) average (not necessarily an A in each class). Grades will be monitored at the end of each quarter and if you do not have an A average, you will be placed on academic probation. If your grades are not pulled up by the end of the following quarter, you will be suspended from Beta. Members on probation may still attend meetings and functions, but may not attend convention. Suspended members may not attend any club meetings or functions. A suspended member may be reinstated if his or her grades are pulled up to an A average, which will be re-evaluated at the end of each quarter. For 8th grade Jr. Beta members, final grades will be checked right before graduation. Only members in good standing (with an overall A average) may wear the Jr. Beta honor cord at graduation.
- e. Morning Buzz – If available, the Morning Buzz offers students in grades 6-8 the opportunity to broadcast the “morning news” at the beginning of the school day on closed circuit television.
- f. South Carolina Independent School Association – SCISA offers Thomas Hart students opportunities to compete against their counterparts from other SCISA schools in a variety of activities such as Math Meet, vocal contests, literary events, Spelling Bee, Quiz Bowl, Chess Meet. In some events, students compete for positions on the THA teams and travel to other schools for competitions.

g. Community and School Service – To promote community responsibility and to foster a sense of pride in the school, students in all grades are encouraged to volunteer at school or in the community. Students who perform ten hours of service during the year will be recognized for their efforts at the year-end Awards Assembly.

- Five hours of community service above the Service Projects are a graduation requirement for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Service hours will be tracked through the office. Proper paperwork by the student is required for the hours to be eligible.
- Five hours of community service are required of all seventh graders. Service hours will be tracked through the office. Proper paperwork by the student is required for the hours to be eligible.

## **Athletics**

Thomas Hart offers a number of athletic programs in which all students are invited to participate. Thomas Hart strongly believes that young people derive many benefits from participation in formal athletic activities. Our school athletics program encourages physical fitness, teamwork, development of knowledge and skills in a particular sport, and pursuit of excellence. Appropriate sportsmanship is expected of all student athletes, parents and coaches. Removal from the sport or activity may occur if deemed necessary by the athletic director and Co-Principals. Sports offered at THA may include but are not limited to:

- a. Fall – soccer: grades 1-3 coed, grades 4-6 coed, volleyball: grades 6-8 girls, tennis: grades 6-8 girls, cross country: grades 5-8
- b. Winter – basketball clinic: grades 1-3 coed, cheerleading, basketball: grades 4-6 coed, grades 6-8 girls, grades 6-8 boys, coed volleyball: grades 6-8
- c. Spring – track: grades 4-8 coed, tennis: grades 6-8 boys, coed soccer: grades 6-8, baseball/co-ed softball: grades 5-8

Students need to be present at school on the day of any athletic event in order to be eligible to participate in any games or sporting events.

## **Miscellaneous**

- a. All articles of clothing, lunch boxes, baseball gloves, and other personal items should be marked clearly with the student's name. All unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity at the start of each month if not labeled with their name.



- b. Terrific Kids' Assemblies are usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month. Those students selected as Terrific Kids have had an all-around successful month in all phases of school life. Each student receives a signed certificate, a THA pencil and bumper sticker, and a gift certificate to McDonald's. By the end of the school year, each child will be recognized as a Terrific Kid.
- c. If your child's health changes in a significant way, please notify the office immediately so that we can make adjustments as necessary.

## **Use of Gmail**

- Students at Thomas Hart Academy in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> will receive gmail accounts to use for school communication with classmates and teachers. The accounts will be set up by the school. These email accounts are not monitored by school authorities on a regular basis. Any gmail account may be closed by the school for inappropriate use and disciplinary action may be taken.
- Any gmail account of a student no longer at THA will be closed by the school.
- Any gmail account of a graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grader will be closed 30 days after graduation.
- Usernames and passwords for your child are available upon request.

## **Request of School Records**

- Any request of school documentation must be by a legal parent or guardian
- Any request of school documentation by a third party must be accompanied by handwritten consent by the legal parent or guardian.
- Any request of school documentation by an attorney must be accompanied by a subpoena.

Please sign below and return to your homeroom teacher

We have read, discussed and understand the policies in this handbook

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_