

# Welcome to the UPPER SCHOOL



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# ESSENTIALS OVERVIEW

Thank you for attending the Rising 3rd Grade Parent Meeting. For those who could not attend, here is a short recap for your information. Look for more details about next school year in the Back to School Guide emailed later this summer.



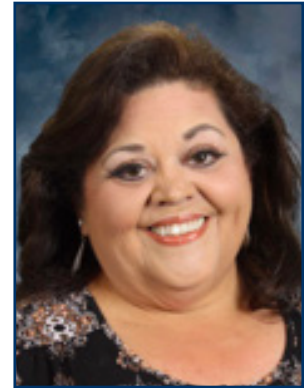
**3A**  
Leslie Avery



**3B**  
Christy Holy



**3C**  
Jennifer Nettle



**3D**  
Rebecca Reynolds

## School Resources Contact Information

**Patrick Magee, Ed. D.**  
President  
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**Shannon Storey**  
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**Jennifer Watts, M. Ed.**  
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Educational Diagnostician  
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**Andrew Price**  
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**Leslie Reeves, M. Ed.**  
Assistant Principal  
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**Zack Courtney, M. Ed. CALT**  
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**Amy Miller, MA, LPC**  
Upper School  
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**Candy Kappes**  
Front Desk Receptionist  
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## Recorded Session

The Zoom session was recorded. If you missed the meeting, you can receive a recording of the session by emailing Rachel Wright at [rwright@staschool.org](mailto:rwright@staschool.org). Questions submitted through the chat bar are also listed below in FAQs.

## Agenda

### **Jen Watts**, Principal of the Upper School **Welcome and Prayer**

Introduction of 3rd Grade Teaching Team

- Leslie Avery 3A
- Christie Holy 3B
- Jennifer Nettle 3C
- Rebecca Reynolds 3D

**Leslie Reeves**, Assistant Principal,  
Curriculum – Overview of 3rd Grade

**Cynthia Redden**, Learning Specialist –  
Overview of Student Resources

### **Jen Watts**

What Parents Need to Know for  
Upper School – see FAQs



## FAQs

### **Can we meet our teacher before the first day of school?**

Once class lists are set, we will send out a Sign Up Genius registration for timeslots for the student and his or her parents to meet your teacher and see your classroom. The dates are tentatively set for Monday, August 10 and Tuesday, August 11.

### **Will online apps like First in Math be available through the summer?**

Online applications like First in Math will be available through July. Also, summer supplemental packets and reading assignments can be found on the [Distance Learning Moodle](#) page.

### **What will the first day of school look like for my 3rd grader?**

We are working on a plan for all 3rd grade students to meet together and walk to their class with their teachers. The first day is a half day, so each class will take a tour of the Upper School, be assigned a locker, and get acquainted with their teacher and surroundings.

### **What do I need to do before school starts next year?**

If your child has a severe allergy or needs medications during the day, please contact Renee Pinkston before school starts to coordinate medication drop off and forms. Contact Nurse Pinkston at [rpinkston@staschool.org](mailto:rpinkston@staschool.org).

If your child has a diagnosed learning difference, Cynthia Redden will be contacting you within the first several weeks of school to discuss accommodations and his or her IAP. Zack Courtney, our Reading Specialist will be working with students with dyslexia. You can contact him at [zcourtney@staschool.org](mailto:zcourtney@staschool.org).

If you have social/emotional concerns for your child, please reach out to Amy Miller, the Upper School Counselor at [amiller@staschool.org](mailto:amiller@staschool.org).

### **How does carpool work at the Upper School?**

**Morning Drop-Off:** The school opens as early as 7:30 AM for students to be dropped off. Third grade students may be dropped off either at the north or south lot after 7:30 AM. Please do not leave your child at school before 7:30 AM. All Upper School students will need to be in their classrooms by 7:55 AM to avoid being tardy.

Pick up will always be in the front lot for third and fourth grade students, as well as any siblings and carpool buddies. Upper School dismisses at 3:16 PM each day. Walkers or bike riders are dismissed from the cafeteria after carpool has started, no earlier than 3:25 PM. In bad weather, parents will receive notification via text by 2:30 PM if walkers/bike riders will be dismissed in carpool line only.

Detailed maps and any changes to carpool due to COVID-19 protocol will be included in the Back to School Guide.

### **Can my child walk home from school?**

Students are permitted to walk off campus at dismissal time only if they have a walker authorization form on file. The option for you to give permission for your child to walk was included in your online enrollment packet. (If you checked this box giving permission, a hard copy is not necessary.) You can find a walker authorization form in the Parents Tab on our school website. Please remember, your student WILL NOT be permitted to leave campus by foot or bike without a form on file. It is always good to have one on file in the event of an impromptu playdate or an emergency where they need to walk with a friend.

Per principal request, the safest way to pick up your child after school is by using our secured, monitored carpool procedure. The first week may be slow but worth it for the safety of our students. STA does not encourage walkers.

### **Where do I set up my child's lunch account?**

Please make sure your account with GWCTD (Guess Who's Coming to Dinner) is current. <http://gwctdcater.com/schools>. Lunches from outside vendors are not to be brought in due to our contract with our caterers. Please make a backup plan with your child if lunch is forgotten. **If you are new to STA, the GWCTD information to set up an account is in the Parents tab on the school website.**

### **Is August 12, 2020, the first day of school?**

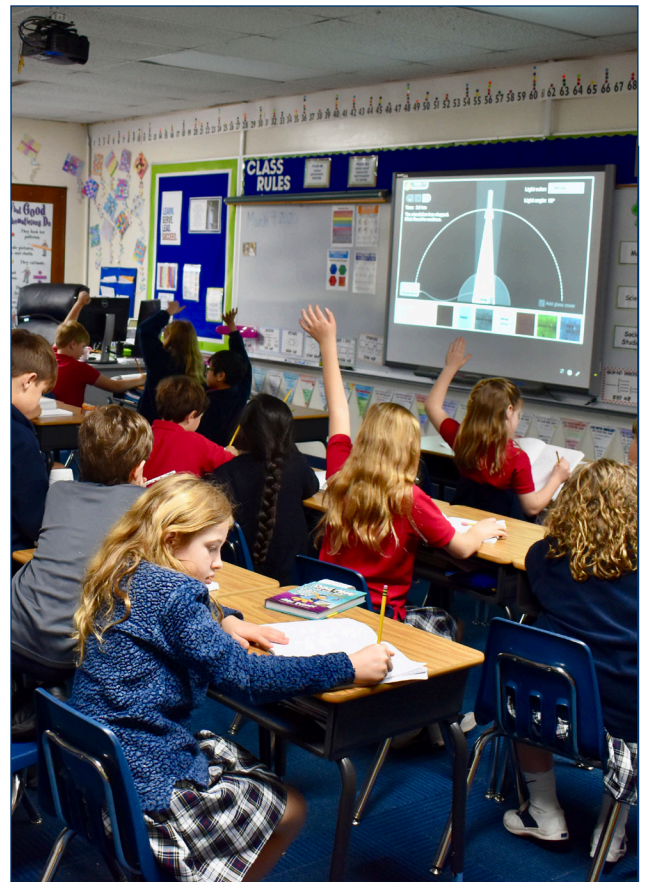
Yes. The first day of school will be an early dismissal day. Students at the Upper School will be released at 12 PM. There is no Extended Day on the first day of school.

### **Are the rules for visitors different at the Upper School?**

The big change is there are no individual birthday party celebrations. We celebrate in our own way at the US through recognition in morning announcements and in the classroom. Parents and visitors cannot join students for lunch or in the classroom. Due to COVID-19 the policy on visitors/volunteers will change and be communicated later in the summer.

### **What is the Uniform Dress Code at the Upper School?**

Third grade is a transition year for their dress code. Boys uniforms are the same as the Lower School. Girls can wear the skorts and jumpers from Lower School as long as they are no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. They may also wear the plaid skirt that most girls wear at the Upper School. Third grade does not change for PE.





### **What is a typical day like for a 3rd grade student?**

All students arrive at school before 7:55 AM. Each morning they go to their homeroom and watch the morning announcements on the SmartBoard produced by our 8th Grade Broadcast Journalism Class, and take part in the morning prayer and pledge.

Third grade students are self-contained and travel with their homeroom class to specials including art, music, PE, and the science lab. Lunch is at 11:12 AM followed by recess. Third grade students have access to the playground as well as the athletic field when the weather is nice. Third through fifth grade students typically attend Mass on Wednesdays immediately after the morning announcements.

### **What type of homework should we expect?**

Third grade students should expect to have between 45 minute to 1 hour of homework a night including 20 minutes of reading. All homework is posted on ParentsWeb for the week.

### **What are some of the pitfalls for students coming to the US for the first time?**

Coming to a new campus may be intimidating at first. The third grade teachers and administration take the first few weeks of school to help the students become very familiar with the campus. The students are also paired with 8th grade prayer partners to attend Mass and collaborate on other community service projects. This program is one of our favorites and provides a familiar face and warm smile for our 3rd grade angels and our 8th grade soon-to-be graduates.

### **Do our children need masks? (And other COVID-19 concerns)**

The faculty and task force are working through the summer to prepare the campus for reopening. More details about how the school day will look and what your child needs before August 12 will be sent as policy and procedures are created. The STA face coverings offered in the pre-order form are not mandatory uniform pieces but offered as an option for students and teachers. All Upper School students, faculty and staff will need to have some sort of face mask/covering for next school year.

**More information will be sent throughout the summer.  
Have a great summer, and we look forward to seeing you  
at the Upper School in August!**



**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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