

Week 1-

Dear Montessori Families,

Welcome! The joy and excitement our students brought to the phase-in days and meet-the-teacher events were truly contagious. It is such a blessing to witness their eagerness as we begin this new school year. This enthusiasm reaffirms our commitment to creating a nurturing environment where children grow in partnership with families.

As part of this journey, students will begin learning to pray the Rosary before rest time. We encourage you to talk with your child about the Rosary's beauty and meaning and to pray together as a family over the weekend. Our partnership with the domestic church is central to what we do, and practicing genuflection and reverence over the weekend may help prepare your child for both school and church life. Each child will receive a Rosary blessed by Father Sal, inviting the loving intercession of St. Joseph and our Blessed Mother, Mary.

In a few weeks, we will begin our community snack, or "morning tea." Please let us know of any dietary needs for your child and show them where their morning snack is packed separately from lunch so they can make these choices independently.

We also ask that your child bring a **labeled, full water bottle** each day. In our classroom, we place great value on grace, courtesy, and respectful communication. Simple habits such as making eye contact when greeting teachers and peers help strengthen our community and teach lifelong respect.

Bathroom Etiquette

With 18 children sharing a small space, good habits keep our classroom clean and healthy. Please take time to review these steps with your child:

- Close the lid after lifting it.
- Flush the toilet after use.
- Clean up any mess they may make.
- Wash hands thoroughly.

Returning Families:

Please ask your child to join in welcoming new friends and helping them feel at home. Their example of kindness and leadership helps set the tone for the entire classroom.

New Families:

Over the coming week, children will learn our classroom routines including how to carry work to the table with two hands, push in their chair, and work peacefully alongside their peers.

For our youngest learners, toileting is a key step toward independence. STAA's policy is that if a child has three toileting incidents in a week, attendance will pause until they are consistently independent in this area. This allows all children to engage fully in classroom activities with confidence. Please reach out if you'd like to learn specific ways to support self-care at home.

We are grateful for your partnership in helping each child develop independence, confidence, and responsibility. If there is anything important about your child's needs or routines that would help us support them better, please let us know.

May St. Joseph and our Blessed Mother, Mary, bless our school family abundantly. I look forward to a joyful and faith-filled 2025–2026 school year at St. Thomas Aquinas Academy. I will endeavor to respond to messages within 48 hours even on the weekends, and sooner when needs are more urgent.

In joyful learning,
Mary McDermott