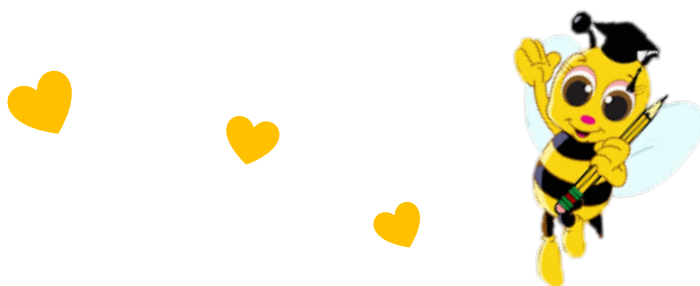


Saint Thomas

the Apostle Catholic School

dynamic education centered in Christ  do small things with great love



Hornets' Nest Handbook

License Number — DC410017420



Mission

A dynamic education centered in Christ.

Vision

A leading innovative Catholic school that invites students to love and serve Christ and engage culture with a saintly passion.

Hornets' Nest Philosophy

At Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, we follow a Catholic framework and incorporate Catholic values and faith in all we do. We believe that:

- play is a child's work and that learning occurs during developmentally appropriate, child centered activities.
- children learn concepts best when they are meaningful and relevant to them.
- meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving which allows individual growth and development of a positive self-image.
- providing a secure and nurturing environment allows children to learn, grow and develop at their own rate.

License Number – DC410017420

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School Contact Information

School Address: 1429 Wilcox Park Dr. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Phone: (616) 458-4228

Website: www.stthomasgr.org

Principal: Ryan Corcoran ryancorcoran@stthomasgr.org

Hornets' Nest Director: Veronica Perdue veronicaperdue@stthomasgr.org

Hornets' Nest Coordinator: Sarah Ensing sarahensing@stthomasgr.org

Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers: Angelique Nowak, Bobbi Lopez, Samantha Fair

Admission Policy

Children are admitted to Saint Thomas the Apostle Hornets' Nest after-care programs after completing and submitting the following requirements:

- Registration Form
- Registration with SchoolAdmin
- Payment to school of \$125pp/\$250 per family registration fee
- Child Information Card
- Health Appraisal (completed by your child's physician)
- Record of immunizations or Health Department waiver (the child's health waiver must come from the Health Department)
- Licensing Notebook and Hornets' Nest Handbook Notification
- Concussion Awareness Form
- Medical Administration Form (optional)

These guidelines have been developed for the protection and wellbeing of each child. Failure to provide the items listed above will result in the child's enrollment being delayed or canceled. We accept new registrations throughout the year, provided space is available.

Licensing Notebook

The licensing notebook contains all the licensing inspection, special investigation reports and related corrective plans. This notebook is available during business hours for parent viewing. Please refer to the State of Michigan website if you have further questions about the licensing process at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Hornets' Nest Program Location

1429 Wilcox Park Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

(616) 458-4228

The Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School Hornets' Nest program is located within the School. Students are dismissed from their classrooms at the end of the day and meet in the Ministry Center with the Hornets' Nest director and childcare providers. Weather permitting, Wilcox Park and the blacktop behind the school are used for outside activity.

Hornets' Nest Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday, 3:20-5:30pm

Hornets' Nest Schedule

Hornets' Nest is open after school, every full school day, August through June.

- 3:20pm Sign in and welcome. Change into non-uniform clothes (optional). Clothing must follow the Saint Thomas non-uniform guidelines. Check for belongings.
- 3:30pm Circle time, including prayer, "best part of your day" activity and snack.
- 3:40-3:45pm Clean up and get ready to go outside.
- 3:45-4:15pm Outside/Gross motor time – Brains process while bodies move. Wilcox Park, the flower park, and the Saint Thomas blacktop offer diverse areas to run, climb, play, imagine and more. Childcare providers determine the outdoor location – rain or temperatures below zero mean students will be inside for inside activities (board games, art projects). We also may play in or outside of the school gym.
- 4:15-4:45pm Homework or down time for EVERYONE! If students do not have homework, they may choose from quiet games, arts or a service project. Access to laptops to complete IXL (online math program) or work on other homework is available and supervised.
- Assistance with homework from Hornets' Nest director/childcare provider is available if requested by a student.
 - When a student finishes homework, a Hornets' Nest childcare provider will check to see that work is finished by comparing it to assignments listed in the student planner.
 - Students pack up all belongings to get ready to go home.
 - Clean up tables and organize the Ministry Center.
- 4:45-5:30pm Optional gross motor time or games, crafts and group activities.

School Calendar Visit www.stthomasgr.org/parents/school-calendar/ to see our School Calendar.

Pick-up Procedures

Students may be picked up any time before 5:30pm. Please park in the lot directly next to our Ministry Center entrance and use the Ministry Center entrance, labeled G. Ring the doorbell, and a Hornets' Nest care provider will open the door.

- Students are not allowed to open the door for ANYONE.
- Children will need to be signed out of Hornets' Nest every day.

Communications Plan

We believe a successful after-school care program is contingent on parent involvement and communication. You will receive a Hornets' Nest newsletter monthly to let you know what is going on. Periodically, we will send home other notes via email regarding activities being offered.

The school uses remind.com to communicate information to families such as school closings due to inclement weather. Please make sure to sign up for these important text reminders! To receive messages via text, text @sainth to 81010.

Attendance

In the event your child will be absent from school or Hornets' Nest, please email Veronica Perdue (veronicaperdue@stthomasgr.org) or call (616) 458-4228 by 8am the day of the absence.

Student Attire

Students can change into non-uniform clothes, but this is optional. Clothing must follow the Saint Thomas non-uniform guidelines. Appropriate clothing for outdoor play must be provided by parents. During winter, this would include a coat, snow pants, boots, hat, and mittens. To ensure the safety of your child while they run, climb and walk, appropriate shoes are necessary. This includes shoes with a back, such as a tennis shoe. Sandals may be worn but they must have the heel strap.

Discipline Policy

Saint Thomas the Apostle Hornets' Nest director/childcare providers use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Our objective is to help the child learn. We give each child freedom and encouragement to express individuality as long as it does not intrude on or endanger the freedom of others, especially on the freedom of his/her peers to receive instruction.

As a Catholic School, Saint Thomas "works with and teaches children of varying competencies, personalities, and temperaments to be living members of the Body of Christ---to be (a community of faith) within the Church." To this end, we teach our children as Christians and future leaders to be the hero in each moment by letting their light shine. #BeTheLight

Snack Policy – We are a peanut-free environment!

Our snack is provided by West Catholic. If your child requires extras or a different snack, please provide one. You will receive notifications of any food allergies at the start of the year. Please understand that we cannot allow “trading” of snacks between students because of food allergies.

Allergen Policy and Healthy Snack Management

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School recognizes the increased prevalence of student food allergies including but not limited to nuts, peanut butter, dairy, gluten, and eggs. Research shows that poor snacking habits can negatively affect a child’s academic performance. As a result, we have developed an allergen and healthy snack management policy to eliminate accidental exposure to any possible allergens *and* promote healthy eating habits.

Saint Thomas faculty and parents share a common goal of supporting the link between healthy eating, physical activity, and improved academic achievement for our students. We recognize the gravity and threat a student with a food allergy faces. Using food as a reward undermines nutrition education and encourages over-consumption of foods high in added sugar and fat. Research shows that obesity and Type 2 diabetes are linked to diets high in sugar and fat.

Saint Thomas believes the focus on allergy management and healthy eating go hand in hand in providing prevention, education, and communication.

Rationale: Saint Thomas recognizes the importance of celebrating birthdays, accomplishments, and milestones within the classroom. Traditionally, food has been an important part of these events. To promote good nutritional practices and provide the safest and healthiest environment for ALL children, we ask parents to provide non-edible class treats. Saint Thomas school and teachers are happy to suggest a few non-food treats for birthday celebrations that comply with this policy.

Action Plan: (Parent Information)

1. Saint Thomas will inform parents, verbally and in writing, when there is a student with food allergies in the classroom to avoid known products with allergens at all times, including all special classroom activities and celebrations.
2. Classrooms that have a student with severe food allergies will post a notice of the specific allergens that could potentially cause a life-threatening reaction.
3. Saint Thomas lunch service will avoid the use of nuts and peanut butter in the preparation of food. There will be an allergen free table in the lunchroom that allows students to enjoy a safer eating environment while at the same time allowing those without allergies to eat food that may contain allergens such as peanut butter.
4. Saint Thomas will initiate disciplinary consequences for any student that intimidates or intentionally exposes an allergic student to a known allergen.

Procedures for Management: (Student Information)

1. Posting outside classrooms of students with severe/life threatening allergies
2. Teachers will instruct students to wash hands and clean surfaces at the beginning of the school day, after meals in the lunchroom, and after snacks in the classroom when there is a student with food allergies in the classroom to avoid contamination by contact.
3. School Personnel are instructed in the use of an Epi pen and what symptoms to watch for in the event of an allergic reaction.

Birthday Celebrations at school:

1. Saint Thomas acknowledges student birthdays and milestones at Chapel. With the announcement of their name, students are recognized and the entire school applauds their very own special day.
2. If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom, please do so with non-food items such as pencils, stickers, notepads, or a donation of a game or book to the classroom or school library.
3. Any food items sent for the class will be distributed at the end of the school day and taken home by each student for parent approval.

Health and Medications

If your child has a communicable disease or any contagious health problem that will affect the health of the staff and other children in the program, please do not send him/her to school. Your child may return once they are no longer contagious and fever free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer.

If your child suddenly becomes ill or symptoms of illness appear such as a fever of 100 or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea, you will be called and your child will need to be picked up immediately. If you are unreachable, your child's emergency contact will be notified and your child will be taken to the office to await pick up in a designated area for such purposes.

We follow the State of Michigan school medication recommendations. All medication, prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter), must be brought to the school office in its original container by a parent with appropriate authorization and a completed Parent Medication Consent Form must be on file in the school office. Parents should also inform the teacher with an email. No school staff member may dispense medication of any kind without written permission.

Student Illness and Medical Needs:

- **Fever:** If your child presents symptoms of a fever, they will be brought to the office. If the student has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, you will be called by the office to pick up your child. Your child must be fever free, without fever reducer, for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Vomiting/Diarrhea:** If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea a parent will be called to pick the child up immediately. Students must be free from vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Lice:** If we suspect lice, teachers do the initial hair check and then send the child to the office for confirmation. The office will call you to pick up your child if Lice is seen or suspected. Students may return to school when there is no evidence of lice and must be checked by the school office before they return to the classroom.
- **Injury:** If your child suffers any serious injury during the school hours, he/she will be assessed by the adult in charge and treated as necessary. We will complete an accident report and a copy will be sent home to notify you.

Accident/Injury

You will be notified by phone or email when an accident, injury, or illness occurs. If your child receives a head injury, you will be notified immediately. In the case of an accident or injury, adequate First Aid supplies are available. If the situation requires immediate medical attention, the staff will first call 911 and then notify you via phone. If the situation requires professional medical attention, we will complete an accident report. You will receive a copy of the accident report and a copy will be kept on file.

If a minor injury occurs, the adult in charge will attend to the injury as needed, applying ice, band aids, as well as comforting your child. We will complete an accident report. You will receive a copy of the accident report and a copy will be kept on file.

To help protect your child, all staff members have been trained to handle bodily fluids and are required to follow the proper procedures when dealing with bodily fluids.

All Hornets' Nest staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid.

Children are taught the importance of proper hand washing and are provided with the opportunity throughout the day to wash their hands when necessary.

Transitions

Students should not return to classrooms or lockers after they have checked into Hornets' Nest. They should make sure they have all necessary items (including planners) at the end of the school day. If students have forgotten an item, they must get permission from a Hornets' Nest childcare provider to retrieve it.

Emergency Information and Procedures

Name of Hornets' Nest: Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School
Address: 1429 Wilcox Park Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Phone: (616) 458-4228
Nearest Cross Streets: Fulton and Carlton, Enter off Carlton onto Grace Street
Point of Reference: Behind Holland Home on Fulton

Fire: Meet behind Church at Hornets' Nest designated line on fence.

At sound of fire alarm:

1. Hornets' Nest Director (D): Lead all the children to the above meeting place, taking child information cards and attendance to account for all children.
2. Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers (CP): Check the bathroom and classroom for children, grab the to-go bag and then follow to the above meeting place to help children calm and quiet.
3. D: Once all children and adults have been evacuated, proceed to the gym.
4. D: Contact parents using a cell phone.
5. D/CP: Assist parents in signing children out, then assure that all children have been picked up by parents or designated persons.

Tornado: Children will be taken down to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium (Basement of Ministry Center)

At sound of tornado alarm:

1. Hornets' Nest Director (D): Lead all children, taking child information cards and attendance records and cell phones to the above meeting place. Take attendance and account for all children.
2. Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers (CP): Check the bathroom and classroom for children, grab the to-go bag and then follow to the above meeting place to help children calm and quiet.
3. D: Once all children and adults have been accounted for, communicate that via text/cell phone so all know that everyone is secured safely.
4. CP: Wait for the all clear notice from the Director.
5. D/CP: Lead all children back to the classroom.

Serious injury, accident or illness

1. Hornets' Nest Director (D): Stay with the injured child, help the child stay calm and quiet, administer first aid/CPR as needed.
2. Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers (CP): Contact emergency personnel, if necessary. Contact the parent directly.
3. CP: Stay with the other children, reassure them and keep them occupied.
4. CP: After the child is appropriately cared for, file an accident report with the office. Send a copy home to the parent.

Crisis

Saint Thomas staff is trained on what to do in a crisis situation. Our priority is the safety of our students. Teachers will follow the trained protocol or instructions from authorities. If students are relocated, parents will be notified by email, text or phone. After 30 minutes, we will make phone calls to those parents whose children remain at the location. If a crisis occurs and the children remain at Saint Thomas, we will send home a letter or email with each child explaining the situation that occurred. Lock downs and/or shelter in place are practiced twice a year.

*If specific plans for students with special needs or chronic health conditions are required, alternate arrangements will be provided for staff.

Power outage

Director will announce a power outage and message parents to come pick up students.

1. Hornets' Nest Director (D): Release children to parents. Communicate with parents of children who are scheduled to arrive to inform them not to come. Post notice on the Hornets' Nest entrance door.
2. Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers (CP): Remain with children and occupy them while the Director releases children to parents.

Gas leak: Meet at the Aquinas Gym

Director will announce the need to evacuate the school.

1. Hornets' Nest Director (D): Lead all children, taking child information cards and attendance records and cell phones to the above meeting place. Take attendance to account for all children.
2. Hornets' Nest Childcare Providers (CP): Check the bathroom and classroom for children. Grab the to-go bag and then follow to the above meeting place to help keep children calm and quiet.
3. D: Once all children and adults have been evacuated, proceed to the Aquinas Gym.
4. D: Contact parents using a cell phone.
5. D/CP: Assist parents in signing children out. Ensure that all children have been picked up by parents or designated people.

Water main break

In the event of a water main break or loss of water at school, the school will close. The Director along with emergency responders will determine if the children may shelter in place until parents can arrive for pick up. If evacuation is needed, fire emergency procedures will be followed.

Winter storm

Should a winter storm arrive while children are in school, the Principal will determine if the school will remain open. If the school closes, the Hornets' Nest Director will begin calling parents to notify them that the children need to be picked up as soon as possible

Hornets' Nest Immunization Information

Read and check all boxes that apply in the written statement below. If all information is accurate and on file with Saint Thomas the Apostle School, please sign and date at the bottom of the page:

- My child, _____, is in good health.
- My child, _____, is in good health with restrictions (please list restrictions in the lines below)

- My child's immunizations are up to date.
- My child's immunization record or appropriate waiver is on file in the school office.

Parents who choose NOT to immunize their preschooler must provide a signed immunization waiver for the child.

X _____

Date: _____

(Parent/Guardian)

Please sign and return this page to the Hornets' Nest Director.

Hornets' Nest Statement of Abuse and Neglect

Simply stated, abuse is mistreatment of another person. It can take many forms – physical, sexual, mental, neglect, and misappropriation. Abuse means the willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain or mental anguish. Willful means the individual must have acted deliberately, that he/she must have intended to inflict injury or harm.

Saint Thomas the Apostle's Hornets' Nest Program keeps on file a written statement that is signed and dated by all staff and volunteers at the time of their hiring or before volunteering indicating the following:

- The individual is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law.
- The individuals have been informed of Saint Thomas' policies on child abuse and neglect.
- The individual knows that all staff and volunteers are required by law to immediately report suspected abuse and neglect to children's protective services.

Staff Training Plan and Paperwork

- Complete a Department of Human Services Center Registry Check Authorization.
- Be fingerprinted through LiveScan.
- Be certified in First Aid and CPR.
- Complete health physical and TB screening and submit a medical form to the school office.
- Be aware of and enforce Child Care licensing rules.
- Take Blood Borne Pathogens Training.
- Be aware of and utilize, as is necessary, child abuse and neglect reporting procedures.
- Be aware of and practice emergency evacuation procedures. Procedures are posted in the classroom and should be reviewed/practiced with the children at least twice a year.

Ongoing Training Requirements

- Attend 16 hours of professional development opportunities annually in the areas of: child development, health, safety and nutrition, family and community engagement, management, teaching and learning, documentation and assessment, interactions and guidance, and professionalism.
- Renew CPR training annually. Renew First Aid training every two years.

Hornets' Nest Enrollment/Withdrawal Information and Fees

2024-25

Hornets' Nest is available from 3:30-5:30pm during the school year. For program closing dates (school holidays, vacation, parent/teacher conferences and teacher in-service closings), please refer to the Saint Thomas School calendar.

Note: Hornets' Nest is NOT open on half days or snow days.

- Students must be picked up by 5:30pm every day.
- Parents will be charged \$1 per child for each minute they are late.

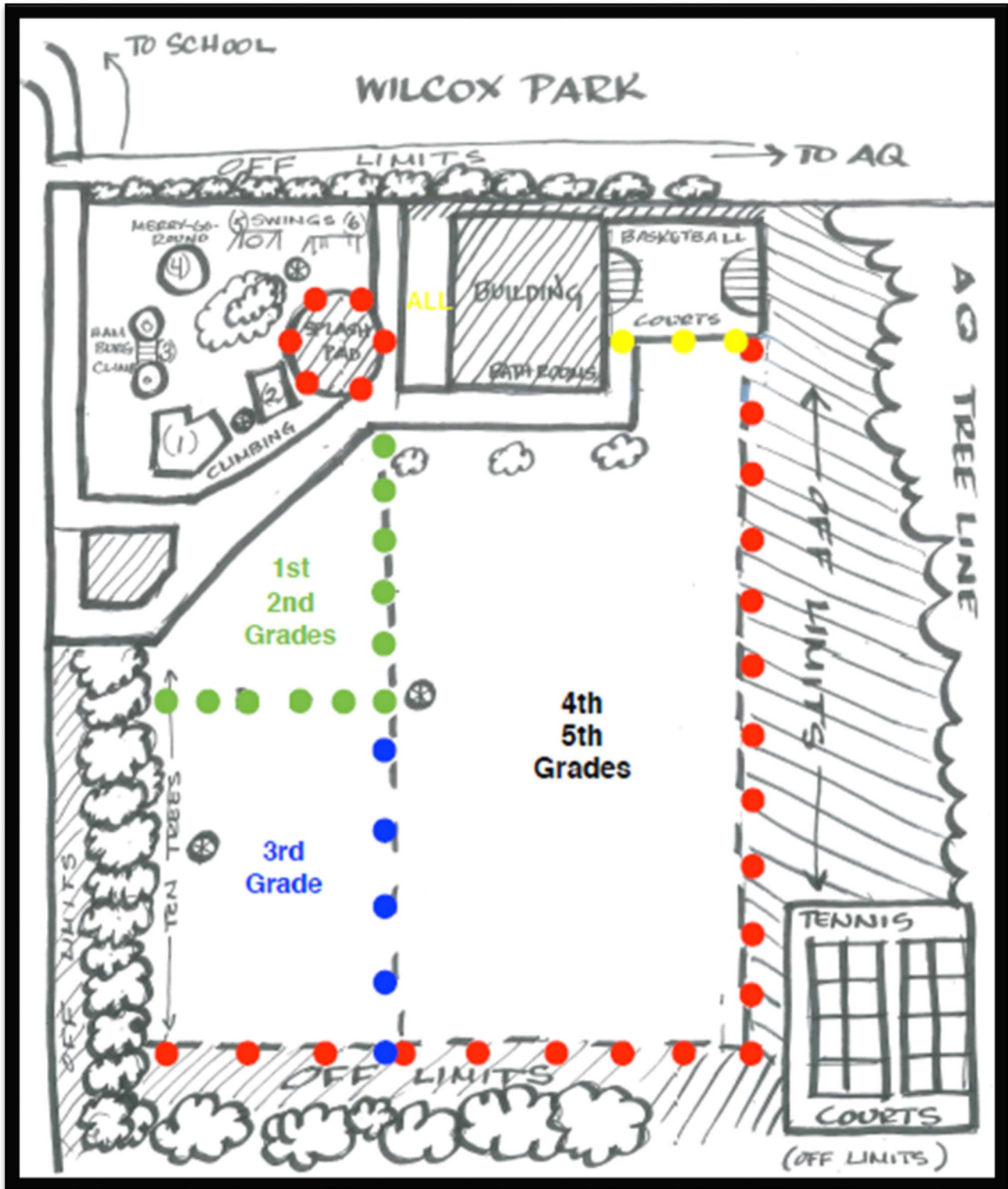
Hornets' Nest Rates 2024-2025	
Hornet's Nest – 1 student	\$540 x days per week
Hornet's Nest – 2 students	\$740 x days per week
Hornet's Nest – 3 students	\$940 x days per week
Hornet's Nest – 4 students	\$1,140 x days per week
Hornet's Nest – 5 students	\$1,340 x days per week

- Payment plan: Hornets' Nest is billed via SchoolAdmin in the same manner as school tuition.
- Parents withdrawing before the start of the school year will have their first SchoolAdmin Hornets' Nest tuition refunded. There is NO refund once school has begun.
- Registration fees are non-refundable.

If a student is starting after the beginning of the year, please note that we make changes at the quarter and tuition will be pro-rated.

Hornets' Nest Wilcox Park Rules

1. Off-limit areas at Wilcox Park
 - a. Splash pad and splash pad controls
 - b. Fountain grass and all plant areas
 - c. All fences
 - d. Building, including bathrooms and behind the building
 - e. Tennis courts
 - f. Picnic tables
 - g. Beyond the 10th tree along Youell Avenue
 - h. Beyond the basketball courts toward Aquinas
 - i. Street side of all trees
2. Rules for equipment
 - a. Large climbing structure (1) – includes Monkey bars
 - i. Students may not climb or sit above the slide
 - ii. Students may not be on the top of the structure
 - b. Small climbing structure (2)
 - i. Students may not climb on the outside of the slide
 - ii. Students may not be on top of the structure
 - c. Hamburger structure (3)
 - i. Students may not climb or sit on top of the hamburgers
 - d. Merry-go-round (4)
 - i. No more than 10 students
 - ii. Only 2 students at a time pushing
 - iii. Students may not go underneath the structure
 - iv. Students may not hang off the structure
 - e. Large swings (5)
 - i. Two students may swing at one time
 - ii. One or two students pushing
 - iii. Rides are 60 seconds long when there is a line for the swings
 - f. Swing set (6)
 - i. Students may not use the baby swings
3. Weather information
 - a. If students are on the playground and thunder is heard, Hornets' Nest childcare providers must bring all students back to the school immediately.
 - b. If it is just drizzling, Hornets' Nest childcare providers will use their discretion whether to bring students back to school.
4. Wilcox Park visitors/safety
 - a. A photo registry of sex offenders living and working in our area is attached. Please make sure to review.
 - b. The police have advised us to let them know if we see any of these individuals.
 - c. All students should be visible and accounted for at all times at the park.



Sign off for Receipt of Hornets' Nest Handbook

Hornets' Nest students are expected to follow the school rules. Students are expected to be respectful to the Hornets' Nest childcare providers. Students who break the Hornets' Nest rules may be suspended from the program for up to a week. If a student breaks the rules three times, he/she will be dismissed from the Hornets' Nest program for the remainder of the school year.

Basic rules

1. Students need to listen to and follow the rules of the Hornets' Nest childcare providers. Respect is important for a peaceful and safe environment.
2. Students should not return to classrooms or lockers after they have checked into Hornets' Nest. They should make sure they have all necessary items (including planners) at the end of the school day. If students have forgotten an item, they must get permission from a Hornets' Nest childcare provider to retrieve it.
3. Students working on laptops must do their homework first. Once homework is done, students may visit school-approved websites. Students who go to unapproved sites will lose the technology privilege for one month. If a student visits an unapproved site a second time, he/she will lose the technology privilege for the remainder of the year and may be suspended from the program for 1-5 days.
4. Students must have their homework reviewed for completeness by a Hornets' Nest childcare provider before beginning their free time. The childcare provider will sign the planner if all work is complete.
5. The Ministry Center is a respected space. Students will maintain an appropriate noise level as determined by the Hornets' Nest childcare providers. The areas outside of the Ministry Center (hallways, stairwell, and entryway) are quiet/silent at all times.
6. The same rules that apply during school recess at Wilcox Park are enforced during Hornets' Nest.

My child/ren and I have reviewed this contract and understand our responsibility and the consequences if these rules and procedures are not followed.

Parent(s) signature _____ Date _____

Student(s) signatures _____ Date _____

Please return this form to the Hornets' Nest staff before starting the program.