

Ascension Episcopal School

2011-2012 Upper School Handbook Grades 9-12

This handbook has been compiled as a handy reference to the policies, activities and practices of Ascension Episcopal School. Parents and students are encouraged to read and use the handbook. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call the school office or visit the web site at www.aesgators.org. The school reserves the right to make changes to the information in this handbook at any time.

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MISSION and PHILOSOPHY

Mission

Ascension Episcopal School is committed to academic excellence in a Christian environment. Our goals are to provide each student with the opportunity to achieve high academic standards, to gain appreciation for the fine arts and to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, and physically.

We value:

- Developmentally appropriate values and goals
- Each student's individuality as a child of God
- A positive self-image
- Christian morals and teachings in the Episcopal tradition
- The ability to think creatively and critically
- A curriculum that maximizes each student's potential
- A teaching environment that is exciting, challenging, and fun
- The development of a healthy body
- The enjoyment of the fine arts
- A school community that fosters respect and open communication
- A safe, secure environment
- A diverse community
- A home and school partnership
- Parental support in word and deed

School Prayer

Heavenly Father, who has given us thy son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and friend, help us to understand his friendship and to do such things as would please Him. Bless us in our work and in our play. Make us gentle, generous, truthful, kind, and brave. Keep us in purity of heart and let the life of our school go on from strength to strength and have its place and meaning in thy kingdom. All of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Governance

Ascension Episcopal School is an unincorporated division of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension. The school has an eighteen (18) member Board of Trustees. They are the trustees, not administrators, of the school. The church vestry (governing body of the parish) ratifies the school board and delegates to it the oversight of the school.

Everything about the school - from worship to religious teaching to curriculum to co-curricular activities to administration - must be in accord with the mission of the church and is subject to the constitution and canons of the Episcopal Church. The school welcomes students who are not Episcopalians, but the diversity of our school cannot alter its mission or ownership. The Board of Trustees establishes policy and calls the Head of School to administer the school. The Head of School is the chief executive officer and is accountable to the board. Individual members of the Board of Trustees have no authority outside of board meetings to make decisions on behalf of the school.

Professional Memberships

Ascension Episcopal School is accredited by and a member of:

Independent Schools Association of the Southwest
Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools

Ascension Episcopal School has been granted approved status by the State of Louisiana.

Ascension Episcopal School is a member of the following organizations:

National Association of Episcopal Schools
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
National Association for the Education of Young Children
Association for Childhood Education International
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Council for Social Studies
National Science Teachers Association
National Middle School Association
Association for Childhood Education International
National Junior Honor Society

SCHOOL POLICIES

Nondiscriminatory Policy

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, or disability in violation of state or federal law or regulation in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Admissions

Students are selected for admission to the school on the basis of multiple criteria: academic readiness or qualification, developmental readiness, affiliation with the school or the Episcopal Church, diversity, gender balance, and appropriateness of the match between the family and the school. Testing is used as a tool to provide information to assist the assessment of each applicant. In all cases, the school retains the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether or not to select a student for admission or to re-enroll a student. The Admission Committee makes recommendations to the Head of School, who has ultimate authority and sole discretion in the decisions of whether or not to admit or re-enroll a student.

All persons are encouraged to apply. All information gathered during the admission process is confidential and the sole property of the school.

Applicants must meet the following age requirements:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Age</u>
Pre-K3	3 years old before Sept. 1
Pre-K4	4 years old before Sept. 1
Kindergarten	5 years old before Sept. 1
First Grade	6 years old before Sept. 1

Application

The first steps toward admission to Ascension Episcopal School are as follows:

- 1) Complete and return the student application form along with the application fee.
- 2) Submit previous school records, a copy of past and current report cards, and current classroom teacher evaluation along with other admission requirements listed on the application form. All forms can be downloaded from the website at www.aesgators.org.
- 3) Once these materials have been received in the school office, arrangements will be made for an admission test date.
- 4) Remember: Siblings of AES students must *also* have an application on file at the preschool in order to be considered for any preschool programs.

Wait Pool

It is important for prospective applicants to know that the wait pool is not numbered. If an opening at a grade level occurs, the administration will review all qualified applicants in the wait pool and make a selection. Applicants in the wait pool for the current year may need to be re-tested, and should update report card information to be considered the following year.

Withdrawals

In the event of withdrawal of enrollment for any reason (including withdrawal prior to the beginning of the school year), all remaining tuition and fees become immediately due and payable. Parents are asked to contact the Division Head in writing in the event of withdrawal of enrollment prior to the first day of school. In the event of withdrawal after the year has begun, parents are asked to contact the Division Head and the business office in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to withdrawal. The student must return all books and other school property prior to withdrawal. All fees, tuition, and late charges must be paid in full before the student's progress report or report card will be issued, as well as any school records released. Upon the School's receipt of the necessary written authorization from the parents, the School will forward the transcript directly to the student's new school.

Students with Learning Differences/Disabilities Policy

Ascension Episcopal School will consider students with mild learning differences or disabilities, under the following conditions:

- Students have a currently documented difference or disability, diagnosed by a professionally qualified and certified clinician (i.e., psychologist or psychiatrist). Family members may not provide such diagnoses.
- Students have a record of success in a traditional college-prep curriculum.
- Students' learning differences or disabilities do not surpass the professional capabilities of Ascension Episcopal School's traditionally trained faculty.

As stated, while Ascension Episcopal School does consider students with such learning differences or disabilities, we want to accept students whose learning needs we are confident we can accommodate. The school's policy is to offer *reasonable accommodations within a traditional college-preparatory program of studies*. Out of fairness to the entire school community, the school cannot accept students whose particular needs cannot be met by the faculty.

Students needing a significantly modified program of studies will have such modifications noted on their transcripts.

Because their special needs cannot be met, Ascension Episcopal School does not accept students with either behavioral or emotional disabilities.

Harassment Policy

Every student and school employee is entitled to a learning/working environment in which he/she feels safe, secure, and comfortable. The School will not tolerate physical, emotional, verbal, or visual harassment of a student or employee. Harassment can include, but is not limited to, comments, written materials, drawings, and gestures that may be taken as suggestive or demeaning. The complete Harassment Policy is on file in the main office.

Fundraising Policy

Any fundraising activity must have the prior approval of the Development Director and Head of School.

Health Policies / Medication

A health card with records of immunizations *must* be presented on or before the first day of school for a student entering preschool (grades Pre-K3 - K) or any new student to the school (grades 1-12). *Updated student immunization records are to be submitted to the school office as subsequent immunizations are administered.* Records from the health unit or pediatrician's office are acceptable.

It is the practice of the school to inform parents of any outbreaks of contagious diseases in the school. Parents are asked to keep children at home if they show any symptoms of childhood disease. The school reserves the right to send a child home if the student's own or other students' health may be affected. (Ex: conjunctivitis, head lice)

Parents shall be notified if there is a serious injury at school, if the student becomes ill, or is running a fever. If the school determines that a student is too sick to remain at school, a parent or their designee must come and get the child. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication prior to his or her return.

Medication cannot be administered to a student in the classroom. To receive a prescription and/or non-prescription medication during the school day, a student must have a parent's consent on file. Prescription drugs will be given only if they are sent in the *original* container and accompanied by a note from the parent stating the time of administration (student's name and dosage should already be on the label). If a student requires medication during school hours, the parent should submit a written request to the school office detailing the name of the drug, dosage, and time-interval medication is to be taken.

Medicine is not allowed to be in a student's lunch or book bag because of the risk of taking the wrong dosage or of another student taking it.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

The school is committed to providing modern technology that will support the academic program. Students are expected to use hardware and software resources responsibly. Each student and a parent/guardian will be required to sign and abide by the *Technology Acceptable Use Policy*. Honesty, decency and civility are expected, just as they are in all aspects of school affairs. Acceptable Use Policies are defined in the division specific portion of the handbook.

Ascension Episcopal School prohibits any advertisement, publication, or representation of AES without expressed written permission of the Head of School. This includes, but is not limited to, websites such as MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

By signing an enrollment contract, parents agree to pay all tuition and fees when due.

Application Fee

An application fee must accompany the application of a candidate for the school.

Testing Fee

Students are admitted to the lower, middle, and upper school grades on the basis of testing results. A testing fee is payable at the time of the testing appointment.

Registration Fee

Once a new applicant receives an acceptance letter, a non-refundable registration fee is due.

Currently enrolled students have an opportunity to re-enroll for the following school year in late January. The non-refundable registration is due at that time. *Parents will not be permitted to re-enroll their children for the next year unless current tuition and fees have been paid to date.*

Facility Fee

A one-time facility fee per student is due prior to entering first grade or upon entry level for students entering 1st through 12th grade.

Tuition

AES uses FACTS Tuition Management for collection of fees and tuition of its students. All parents must activate their account via instructions provided by FACTS in the initial invoice letter received in mid-June. All payments are to be remitted directly to FACTS via their website at www.online.factsmtg.com. Parents are able to pay-in-full by July 1 or budget their payments in semester or monthly installments.

Financial Policy

Per the contractual agreement signed each year for enrollment into Ascension Episcopal School, payments applicable to the student's grade level will be due the first of the month per payment option selected. Ancillary payments will be due within 30 days of the initial billing.

In the instance that an account becomes in arrears, the student and parent's account will be locked preventing the viewing of grades and receipt of report cards until the account is current. Enrollment in the next school year will be delayed and financial assistance applications will not be reviewed until the account is brought up to date.

Transcripts, standardized test scores, report cards, and withdrawal letters will not be released on accounts that still have balances remaining.

Financial Assistance

The Ascension Episcopal School Board of Trustees has established and maintains a Financial Assistance Program. Students from a variety of economic backgrounds have been able to attend Ascension because financial assistance was available. The school is hopeful that more parents and friends of Ascension will contribute to the Financial Assistance Fund so that the school can continue to provide assistance to deserving students. Financial Assistance donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and some employers have matching fund plans.

Application for financial assistance is made by the family once the child's account is current and after the child has been enrolled in Ascension Episcopal School. Parents obtain application forms during enrollment from the business office and submit them for analysis to School-Student Services. Assistance is awarded on the basis of financial need and prioritized by date, until all funds are depleted (generally by mid-May).

The AES Financial Assistance Committee considers these recommendations and awards assistance to students in good standing on the basis of financial need. All information and decisions are confidential.

After School Care, Transportation, and Hot Lunch

After school care, transportation, and hot lunches are optional. Registration and fees apply.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours

Preschool Hours: 8:30-2:00

Grades 1-7 Hours: 7:30-2:30

Grades 8-12 Hours: 8:30-3:40

Parent Teacher Association

The school benefits from an enthusiastic Parent-Teacher Association, actively engaged in all phases of school life. Opportunities for participation are varied and volunteer jobs are available for all.

The Parent-Teacher Association is charged with two functions: fundraising and volunteer service. This group is supportive of and important to our school. Parent participation and support is appreciated.

Parent Information Card

The Student/Parent Information Card is to be completed annually and turned in to the school office before the opening of school.

Visiting Policy

All visitors on campus must have prior permission and enter through a campus office, sign the visitor's log, and wear a visitor's badge. Any classroom observation must be arranged in advance with the appropriate division head.

Safety Drills

There will be monthly fire or tornado drills. Evacuation routes for both drills are posted in each room, and this process should be carried out in a quiet, calm, and purposeful manner.

Emergency School Closings

In cases of emergency when advance warning is possible (floods, hurricanes, etc.), the Head of School will decide if closing school or a delayed opening is warranted. Announcements will be given through the local media on the radio and television and also published at www.aesgators.org. Announcements will be delivered to parents via SchoolCast rapid notification system.

If school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, bus service will not be available and all students will remain on campus until satisfactory pick up arrangements are made. AES will always respect the parents' good judgment in anticipation of a severe weather situation by keeping their child at home or in requesting early dismissal for their child.

Uniforms and Dress Code

The dress code policy of Ascension Episcopal School has been established in order to provide an atmosphere in which all students can work efficiently and can grow in self-discipline. Each student is expected to abide by the guidelines set forth in the School's Uniform Policy and to follow the guidelines in a mature and responsible manner, which reflects favorably upon himself, his parents, his school and his community. *For a complete description of the Uniform Policies by division, please see the AES website under Parent Resources.*

School-Parent Communications and MyBackPack

The student/parent portal of our student information system, Senior Systems, is called MyBackPack. Each family has been issued an ID and password that allows access to this portal at <https://aesgators.seniormbp.com/SeniorApps/registration/loginCenter.faces>. The student/parent portal allows for:

- Verification and updating of family biographical information
- Viewing an online student/parent directory
- Viewing your child/children's attendance data
- Viewing your child/children's academic grades (grades 3-12 only)

To ensure that you receive important email communications from the school, please verify/update your email address in MyBackPack using your family's MBP account ID and password at <https://aesgators.seniormbp.com/SeniorApps/registration/loginCenter.faces>. Your email address will be used by the AES faculty and staff for electronic communications. *Please be sure this information is updated at all times.*

SchoolCast Communication

Ascension Episcopal School uses SchoolCast, a rapid notification system, across all AES campuses. When there is an emergency affecting one or more campuses due to weather, utilities, transportation, etc., a recorded message will be issued automatically to all home and parent cell phone numbers. Each family must verify and update their personal contact information online using their SchoolCast account ID and password at <https://www.schoolcast.com/login.aspx>.

Every Monday, *This Week at Ascension* is posted on the school website at www.aesgators.org. This newsletter contains information on school events for that week and in the near future. All suggestions for inclusion in *This Week at Ascension* must be turned in to the school office by the previous Thursday.

To stay informed, parents are encouraged to visit the school website at www.aesgators.org. To access protected areas of the website, use AES as the user name and ggtkb (gentle, generous, truthful, kind, and brave- attributes stated in the AES school prayer) for the password.

Every member of administration and faculty is assigned an email address. E-mail addresses conform to the following pattern: The person's [first initial followed by the last name @aesgators.com](#) Example: Reatha Albert is ralbert@aesgators.com

School Mascot

Ascension Episcopal School's mascot is the Blue Gator.

CONTACT INFORMATION

At a Glance

E-mail addresses follow this pattern: The person's [first initial followed by the last name @aesgators.com](#) Example: Reatha Albert is ralbert@aesgators.com

Downtown Campus Office (Main Office)	(337) 233-9748	Grades 1-4
Middle School Office	(337) 269-9277	Grades 5-7
River Ranch Preschool Office	(337) 984-6060	Pre-K - K
Sugar Mill Pond School Office	(337) 856-0043	Grades 8-12

For issues regarding...

Address change:	My Backpack or Reatha Albert
A specific class:	The student's teacher
Athletics:	The student's coach
Admission referrals:	Suzy Lynch Cummings, Preschool Lucy G. Begnaud, Lower School Christi Juneau, Middle School David Pitre, Upper School

Attendance:	Danielle Bienvenu (PS), Monica Tauzin (LS), Shelly Hebert (MS), Emily Boland (US)
Discipline:	The student's homeroom teacher (LS) or advisor (MS and US) then Dean of Student Life (MS and US) then the Division Head
Deans of Student Life:	Rusty Roden (grades 5 - 7) Camille Renard (grades 8 - 12)
Business Office:	Tracy Troxclair
Billing:	billing@aesgators.com
Development:	Stephanie November
Technology/My BackPack/SchoolCast:	Gayle Broussard
College Admissions:	Stephanie Fournet
Upper School Registrar:	Stacey Patin

UPPER SCHOOL SPECIFIC POLICIES

Parents are an integral part of the school-student-parent partnership necessary for a successful educational experience. As a student moves to the secondary level, he or she must assume more of the primary role, with parents taking on a support role. While the school welcomes and encourages parental input and involvement, the student must begin to approach teachers and coaches if there are issues or concerns, deal with his or her advisor regarding problems, and assume the consequences for problems that arise. Communication continues to be the greatest factor in a successful partnership.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours

School hours for grades 9-12 are 8:30 a.m. to 3:40 p.m., Monday through Friday. Parents/Guardians should be aware that the school is responsible for students only between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:40 p.m. each day unless students are involved in a supervised after-school activity. There is no supervision provided for students who arrive prior to 7:00 a.m.

Attendance Policy

The attendance policy has been established in order to provide an atmosphere in which all students can work efficiently and can grow in self-discipline. Parents should recognize that exemplary attendance and promptness directly correlate to commitment, dedication, cooperation, and understanding, and are important qualities that prepare students for future careers in the

professional world. This policy supports accreditation standards and complies with attendance requirements of the State Department of Education.

In order to comply with State requirements, the following policy will be followed: when a student has missed five days of school during a semester, the Dean of Student Life will contact the parents and speak with the student. If a student approaches ten (10) days of absences during a semester, the student and parents will meet with the Dean and the Head of Upper School to discuss the student's absences. A student who misses ten (10) days of school during the semester may, at the school's discretion and teacher recommendations, be required to repeat the courses for that semester. A student with excessive absences throughout the school year may have his/her re-enrollment contract for the next school year deferred pending review of the absences and concerns from teachers.

Appointments during the school day are strongly discouraged. If it is absolutely necessary for a student to leave early for an appointment, parents are expected to notify the school receptionist in advance by email, phone call, or note. Parents of non-driving students must sign the log before the student may be dismissed. Parents of students who drive themselves must provide either a written note or a direct phone confirmation (no voice mails) of the appointment.

Parents are encouraged to check the school calendar when making travel plans and schedule trips accordingly to avoid missing classes. Absence for any reason other than illness or death in the family should be reported to the upper school office prior to the absence.

In the case of illness, a parent should call the upper school office to report the absence before 8:00 am.

Tardiness

Upper school attendance is initially taken at 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive after the start time are considered tardy and must sign in at the upper school office. An "admit to class" pass will be issued to the students. A student is marked tardy if he/she arrives at school no more than 30 minutes late. A student who checks in after 12:00 p.m. is marked as attending a half-day. Class attendance is subsequently taken by the teachers period and monitored by the upper school office.

Absence from any class or from school without a valid excuse will be viewed as a cut class and will be handled through the disciplinary system and may result in a detention, academic penalty, and/or Saturday work detail.

The following count as an instructional day and are not considered an absence: Advance Placement exams, school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events, and verified college-visitation trips.

All decisions regarding absences or tardies rest with the school's administration.

Medication Policy

The upper school office must administer all medications. A student can receive a prescription and/or non-prescription medication during the school day only if a parent's consent is on file. Prescription drugs will be given only if they are sent in the *original* container and accompanied by a

note from the parent stating the time of administration (student's name and dosage should already be on the label).

Phone Use

Telephones are available for student use in the office. The phone will be available for students to call home about sports or other school activity cancellations. In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning and a sense of community, the Upper School policy regarding cell phones, "smart phones," and other personal computers is as follows: Cell phones and other personal electronic devices may be used during school hours only at approved times and in approved locations. Otherwise, all cell phones and electronic devices must be placed in students' lockers. Further, any use of a cell or "smart" phone, or other electronic device during a test or other graded classroom activity without prior specific permission of the classroom teacher or administrator will be considered as cheating. *Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.*

Use of social-network media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) is prohibited during the school day except during approved times and in approved locations.

First-offense violation of this acceptable-use policy will result in confiscation of the phone or device for a school day. Second-offense violation will result in confiscation for three school days. Habitual disregard or defiance will result in suspension. *All authorized uses of personal electronic devices during the school day are at the sole discretion of the school's administration.*

Lost and Found

All garments and articles brought to school should be clearly marked or labeled with the student's name. Any article found on the floor of the hallways, dressing rooms, or gym will be considered lost and may be placed in the Lost and Found. At the end of each month, items not claimed are given to a worthy charity.

Upper School Campus Emergency Dismissal

Certain emergency circumstances might lead the school to release all students quickly and safely to their homes. Emergency dismissal procedures will vary according to the nature of the situation. In such circumstances, information will be provided via SchoolCast. In an "Emergency Dismissal," the school wants to make sure that every student is released directly to parents or other authorized persons. In the case of student drivers, phone contact with a parent will be needed before the student may sign out at the upper school office.

Communication

A student's success at Ascension Episcopal School depends in large part upon open communication between the family and the school, requiring effort on the part of both parties. Parents should feel free to call the school concerning any matter dealing with students and the school. Teachers may be contacted by telephone or e-mail. When a question or problem arises, always attempt to discuss it with the person most directly involved. If an issue remains unresolved, parents should contact the upper school office to arrange an administrative conference. Parent-initiated telephone calls to teachers' homes are reserved for emergencies only.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Graduation Requirements

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Language	3 credits (in the same language)
History	4 credits
Science	4 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit
Religion	2 credits
Computer	.5 credits
Health and PE	2 credits
Community Service	60 hours (with a minimum of 15 per year)

Scheduling Process and Course Load

Students first meet with an academic advisor who will have recommendations from the students' current teachers. Students and advisors confer on the recommendations and make a preliminary decision about course choices, electives, etc. Students and advisors sign the schedule-request form, and the advisor then returns the form to the office. Once the schedule-request form is reviewed, it is sent to parents for their approval. A schedule includes five core courses, one elective, and either physical education or athletics. The school attempts to place each student in the appropriate level course. Although the school considers student/parent requests for certain courses, all final decisions regarding placement of students in courses rest solely with the administration, based upon student performance, course availability, and teacher recommendations. If a student is misplaced, every effort will be made to change the student's schedule to a more appropriate level. Seniors must carry a full load each semester, four of which must be in the core disciplines of English, history, mathematics, science, or world languages.

Academic Assistance

The faculty is committed to helping students to succeed. Teachers will be available on a regular basis for extra help. There is not a specific daily conference period, but students may seek help during study hall, during the lunch break, after school, or before school based on their teachers' schedules and availability. In addition to student-initiated request for assistance, teachers may require students to attend individual or group help sessions. Academic conferences will take priority over after-school activities if a student is in academic difficulty.

US GPA

Teachers in grades 9-12 assign numerical and letter grades for all courses according to the following scale. Grades will be recorded four times per year.

Grades 9-12
A 100-90
B 89-80
C 79-70
D 69-60
F 59-0

Upper School GPA Policy

Colleges and universities are increasingly diversifying their criteria for admissions. More post-secondary admissions officials are now focusing on the actual grades earned by students in the courses they take versus the use of weighted cumulative grade point average. There is little to no consistency among high schools in their weighting systems, making comparisons of reported GPAs difficult based on the numeric average alone; therefore, any cumulative grade point average indicated as “weighted” is usually recalculated by college and university admissions officials based on an unweighted 4.0 scale. Unweighted cumulative grade point averages, along with SAT and ACT scores, are used for evaluation of admission, as well as in the awarding of academic scholarships.

The yearly final average in upper-school courses is calculated on the four quarter and two semester exams, not on the average of the two semesters: Q1 + Q2 + Fall Semester Exam + Q3 + Q4 + Spring Semester Exam.

Upper School GPA reporting to standard state and national entities also necessitates GPA calculations on a 4.0 scale. The Louisiana State Department of Education, the Louisiana High School Athletic Association, and the National Honor Society all require submission of unweighted grade point averages.

However, at the secondary level weighting of grades is valuable because it reinforces and rewards the choice of Honors or Advanced Placement courses. Weighting of the grade point average also allows for ranking students who take advanced courses ahead of those who do not.

Policy

The upper school policy addresses both secondary and post-secondary concerns about GPA calculations. It applies weighting for Honors and AP courses as an incentive to students and also documents unweighted grade point averages on report cards and our official upper school transcripts.

Weighting of Numeric Grades

Each marking period (1st quarter, 2nd quarter, 1st semester exam, 3rd quarter, 4th quarter, and final exam) will have a bump applied to the marking period average. Honors courses will have a .025 bump applied. (e.g.: An average of 88 will be bumped to 90.2.) Advanced Placement courses will have a .05 bump applied. (e.g.: An average of 85 will be bumped to 89.25.)

Quality Point Scales

Unweighted An unweighted GPA will be reported on report cards and official transcripts as follows:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

Weighted- A weighted GPA will be calculated for internal use only, for the purpose of class ranking. Weighting will be as follows:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Honors Courses</u>	<u>Advanced Placement Courses</u>
A	5	6
B	4	5
C	3	4
D	1.5	2
F	0	0

Comments, Parent Conferences, Advisor Letters

Faculty members write narrative comments to accompany grades at the conclusion of the first and third quarter. Parents are invited and encouraged to contact teachers or advisors as needed.

Homework

Students should expect to receive an *average* of 30-45 minutes of homework per night in each class. If the homework load is consistently more than three hours, the student should speak first to the teachers, and then to either the Dean of Student Life or Head of Upper School.

Test Relief Policy

It is school policy that a student should have no more than two tests on any one day. *However, students must be responsible for maintaining their own testing calendars*, and when a teacher schedules what would be the third test for a student on a given day, the student should speak to the teacher about rescheduling the test. If that teacher has a compelling reason to keep the test on that day (for example, a laboratory practical exam or group project examination) the student should speak to his/her other teachers. If the situation remains unresolved, the student should speak to either the Dean of Student Life or Head of Upper School.

Examinations

Final examinations are given at the end of each semester. A student maintaining a 4.0 grade-point average throughout the school year in a specific course may, *at the discretion of the teacher*, be allowed to waive the spring-semester final exam (excluding national AP exams). Families should not make travel plans that will take students away during exam periods. Semester examinations are comprehensive and will count as 20 percent of the semester grade. Semester exam make-ups must be coordinated through the Upper School office.

Non-classroom Time

To prepare students for the routines and schedules of college and adult life, at times some students' schedules include free periods and unstructured time.

Illness/Absences and Missed Work

It is the responsibility of the upper school student to initiate the make-up process. In the case of an absence planned in advance, it is the student's responsibility to keep up with course assignments. For absences of three days or more, the parent or student may request assignments by contacting the teachers at their respective email addresses. Quizzes and tests must be made up according to the guidelines set by the teacher.

School Supplies and Textbooks

Upper school students' textbooks are included in tuition. Students are required to purchase all paperback novels for English courses. Students may decide which types of binders, assignment notebooks, and other supplies they prefer and purchase these supplies on their own. Teachers who require specific supplies will explain these requirements at the start of school.

Summer Reading Lists

All upper school students are assigned summer reading and will be tested at the beginning of the school year. A reading list, developed in consultation with the upper school faculty, will be available at the end of the school year and posted on the AES website.

STUDENT LIFE and ACTIVITIES

Chapel

Ascension Episcopal School is firmly rooted in its Episcopal identity and tradition. Chapel is at the center of our community life. Chapel is daily at Ascension, for students and faculty alike. Parents are welcome to attend Chapel at any time. Worship services are based on *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Community Service

The upper school attempts to foster an intrinsic sense of responsibility to the community in each of our students. By exposing students to required community service hours each year, it is our hope that they will carry these experiences beyond Ascension and see service to others as a key component of their personal development and identity. To fulfill the school's graduation requirements, students must complete 60 hours of community service as follows: at least 30 hours must be for community organizations not affiliated with AES and a minimum of 15 hours per year is required. Important note: While students are required to complete and document their service hours, the mission-based purpose and emphasis remains *service-to-others*, not merely accumulating hours. Additionally, the school will organize community service days for all students on the SMP campus.

Advisory Program

The advisory program is mission-based and integral to the upper school community at Ascension Episcopal School. Character development, community-building, and other aspects of an effective curriculum are just as important as the day-to-day instruction that occurs in the classroom. The strength of the relationship between students and faculty is one of the hallmarks of the Ascension experience, differentiating our school from many others. The ultimate goal for the advisory program is to ensure that students benefit from a meaningful mentoring program. Advisors will see advisees weekly. The advisor monitors the student's social and emotional wellness and academic progress. The advisor serves as a clearinghouse, resource, and contact point for parents. Students and parents are encouraged to share information and concerns with the advisor who can then inform teachers and administrators.

Personal Property and Lockers

The school should be an environment of mutual respect, and students and teachers rightfully expect that their possessions will not be harmed in any way or borrowed without the permission of the owner. Students must understand their personal responsibility in maintaining such an

environment by labeling their possessions, storing them in proper places, and keeping lockers closed.

The school is not responsible for personal property brought to school. If valuable equipment is needed for class, students should turn it in to the upper school office for safekeeping. Each student is assigned a locker. *Lockers are the property of Ascension Episcopal School, which reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. The office must approve any exterior adhesive in advance.*

Driving/Parking

Students with valid licenses may drive to school, after-school events, or weekend school events. Responsible driving will be expected at all times. Students must register all vehicles in advance with the upper school office. Students are to park in the designated lot. Students may not be in the parking lot or go to their cars during the school day without express permission of the upper school office. *Violations of driving/parking rules may lead to loss of campus driving privileges.*

Academic Counseling

Ascension Episcopal School has a college admissions office that will work with students and parents through the college planning and application process. The goal of the college counseling program is to help a student and family find the most appropriate matches and to assist the student in securing admission to these colleges and universities. More information on programs will be provided on an ongoing basis.

Illness at School

Students who are feeling ill may go to the office after receiving permission from their teacher. All prescription medication that is to be taken during the school day must be kept in the office, and students should report there for medication to be dispensed. If a student is ill, he/she may not leave school without being cleared by the upper school office. The student will not be allowed to leave the campus without the specific consent of the parent or guardian.

Student Organizations

Clubs and organizations are formed in response to student interest. The Ascension Upper School and its Student Government will consider approval for organizations whose mission and activities are congruent with the mission of the school. Clubs or organizations that by definition (race, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation) exclude any student will not be approved and may not meet on campus or receive school funding. Organizations that require excessive funding to carry out their activities cannot be approved. Prospective clubs must submit an application to the upper school office.

CONDUCT and DISCIPLINE

Upper School Honor Code

Ascension Episcopal Upper School education can be viewed from many perspectives: academic, athletic, artistic, or community service. Common to each perspective is a connection to what we call the Honor Code. The Honor Code emphasizes the importance of four fundamental values: trust, respect, responsibility, and fairness and one core value: honesty. We believe student adherence to an Honor Code of these five values will not only augment scholastic success, but also minimize mistakes that can be caused by the fear of failure. By making the values of the Honor

Code the very definition of our school environment, we assert that a perfect climate will be promoted for transforming our school's ideals of wisdom, honor, and service into daily practice.

All students sign the Honor Code book at the start of each school year.

"On my honor, I pledge that I will not lie, steal, or cheat. I will abide by this Honor Code as a member of Ascension Episcopal School."

Ascension Episcopal School defines Honor Code violations as:

Lying: Making a false representation of the truth.

Quibbling/Equivocating: Avoiding acknowledgment of the truth or speaking in a manner that attempts to deceive.

Cheating: Gaining or attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage by representing another's work as one's own, or aiding another student in this deception. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying from notes, books, or other materials, giving out information regarding tests and quizzes without the permission of the teacher or student, or aiding another student in such practices.

Copying: The direct use of another student's work to complete a test or assignment or to allow another student the use of one's own work for that purpose.

Plagiarism: The use of, or paraphrasing of, another's ideas or expressions in one's writing without properly acknowledging or citing the source. This includes material posted on the Internet.

Stealing: To take something that does not belong to one or to borrow something without consent.

Honor Code Policies

Any member of the Ascension Episcopal School community who suspects that a violation of the Honor Code has been committed should report the information to a faculty member, Dean of Student Life and Discipline, or Division Head. The Head of Upper School and Dean of Student Life and Discipline will investigate the allegations, and then decide whether to refer the matter to the Honor Council.

At its discretion, the upper school administration may convene an Honor Council, comprised of faculty and administration, to help determine appropriate discipline. Depending on the severity of the situation, consequences may include: receiving a zero on the assignment, test or project in question, suspension, academic probation, or expulsion. A severe violation will also be noted in the student's file. This notation will remain in the student's permanent file. Severe infractions that may result in expulsion from the school are considered in consultation with the Head of School.

A student who violates the Honor Code may be required to bring his/her parents to a meeting with the Upper School Head and Dean of Student Life prior to re-entry into school.

Student Conduct Policies

Ascension Episcopal School expects its students to be good citizens at all times, whether on or off campus. Students will benefit from AES's strong reputation and are expected to uphold and advance AES's good name. Ascension Episcopal School recognizes the primary role of the parents in raising their sons and daughters, but reserves the right to hold students accountable for actions that reflect badly on Ascension Episcopal School or that jeopardize the safety or wellbeing of other students. Parents are expected to monitor weekend events occurring away from campus to ensure the wellbeing of participants. The conduct guidelines of Ascension Episcopal School have been established in order to provide an intellectual, spiritual, and social atmosphere in which all students can work efficiently and grow in knowledge and self-discipline. Each student is expected to behave in a mature and responsible manner that reflects favorably upon the student, parents, school, and community.

The school has high standards of behavior, and students are expected to maintain these standards at all times. Students at the upper school level should be developing a sense of responsibility for their own academic and personal lives and an awareness of how their actions affect others, both students and teachers, in their community. The goal of any system of conduct is the development of self-discipline. However, it is necessary to create other systems and structures as self-discipline is developed. This section explains expectations and consequences.

Expectations

- Students attending Ascension Episcopal School are expected to behave courteously to peers and adults at all times. The school has high standards of behavior, and students are expected to maintain these standards.
- Students are expected to be respectful of all faculty, staff, clergy, substitute teachers, visitors, and other students. Full cooperation is expected from the parents in any disciplinary action.
- The school and the home must work together in the development of character and good citizenship. AES follows the assertive discipline philosophy, which involves the student knowing the rules, understanding the consequences for failure to follow the rules, and receiving proper warning for inappropriate behavior.
- All students and their parents are required to sign a form stating that they understand the disciplinary policy and accept the responsibility for the student's actions.

Public Display of Affection

Inappropriate public display of affection is not allowed at school.

Upper School Discipline Procedure

Inappropriate actions are divided into three categories: Class A, Class B, and Class C infractions. When an infraction occurs, a student will receive a behavior referral that defines the infraction and notifies the student of the consequence. Specific policies for behavior within the classroom will be covered in each teacher's classroom management plan. The Head of Upper School in consultation with the Head of School will make disciplinary decisions.

Class A infractions are minor infractions. Consequences may include detention, work detail, or reflective writing. Class A infractions include but are not limited to:

- Multiple dress code violations

- Chewing gum, littering, or eating in unauthorized areas
- Tardiness to class or required activity
- Handling or disruption by an electronic device during school hours. All devices will be confiscated until the next school day.
- Inappropriate horseplay
- Excessive noise or talking in class
- Inappropriate or hurtful language
- Leaving books or other belongings in wrong areas
- Insubordination
- Unauthorized presence in an off-limits area on the school's campus, including the school parking lot

Class B infractions are moderate to major infractions. Consequences may include morning detention or in-school suspension. Class B infractions include but are not limited to:

- Excessive and habitual tardies to school
- Five (5) or more minor offenses may result in a morning detention
- Disrespect
- Deliberate misuse of an electronic device during school hours
- Harassing behavior
- Fighting or physical violence
- Use of vulgar language
- Misuse of school equipment
- Bullying
- Three or more morning detentions may result in an in-school suspension

Class C infractions are severe infractions and are handled at the discretion of the Head of Upper School and Dean of Student Life and Discipline. Consequences may include suspension or expulsion. Class C infractions include but are not limited to:

- Behavior that discredits Ascension Episcopal School
- Jeopardizing the safety or well-being of a member of the community
- Bullying or harassment of any type
- Possession or use of drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol at school, on the campus, or at a school event on or off campus
- Possession or use of firearms, knives, or other dangerous weapons
- Sexual impropriety or sexual harassment
- Creating a fire hazard or tampering with fire or other safety equipment
- Insubordination or disrespectful behavior
- An accumulation of minor disciplinary infractions
- Destruction of personal or school property
- Dishonesty, either academic or personal
- Theft of personal or school property

School detentions – Supervised school detentions will be served before or after school. The detention may include a work detail. After three detentions, a student will serve a Saturday morning detention from 8:00-11:00 a.m. During Saturday work detention, under supervision students will be assigned work chores on the campus. For all detentions, students are to be on time or face additional disciplinary consequences.

Morning detentions - All morning detentions will begin at 7:40 a.m. and will last until 8:20 a.m. The students should report to room 127 at the proper time. The detentions will be monitored by an assigned faculty member (or Dean of Student Life and Discipline) and consist of a writing assignment, written in silence, pertaining to the particular infraction. At times, detention will consist of a work detail. Being late or skipping a detention will result in additional consequences, including suspension, at the Dean's discretion.

In-school suspension – In-school suspensions are designed to allow students to continue all course work for which they are not in class. Students will be responsible for all assignments and tests given during this time. The suspension will be served in the school office or other assigned area. On the day/days of the suspension students may not participate in any extracurricular activities.

Out-of-school suspension - Out of school suspension is to be served away from the school setting. The student must be prepared to take all quizzes and tests upon returning to school. It is the student's responsibility to acquire all material covered during the suspension. On the day/days of the suspension the student may not participate in any extracurricular activities.

Field Trips - The school reserves the right to withhold field trips and off-campus privileges.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy

While in school, on campus at any time, at school events, on or off campus, or while dressed in clothing that denotes you are a student of Ascension Episcopal School, students will face serious disciplinary action including dismissal for possession, distribution or use of alcohol, tobacco products, drugs, or drug paraphernalia. Inappropriate use of prescription medication or over-the-counter drugs may also warrant disciplinary action.

The quantity and/or particular kind of illegal substance is of little significance; minimal possession or minimal consumption is a violation, just as are possession or consumption of larger quantities. A school function is any activity in which the name of Ascension is used, whether the activity is on or off campus. The school may use an alcohol detector at all school functions. Ascension has the right to require a student suspected of using a controlled substance or alcohol to be evaluated at any time by a physician, medical technician, or law enforcement officer, or to submit to laboratory tests, breath tests, or other tests at the sole discretion of school authorities.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Upper School

The School is committed to providing modern technology that will support the academic program. Students are expected to use hardware and software resources responsibly.

Technology hardware includes, but is not limited to, computers, printers, scanners, digital cameras and video cameras, copiers, cell phones, MP3 players, and projectors.

Each student and a parent/guardian will be required to sign this contract indicating the student agrees to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy. Honesty, decency, and civility are expected, just as they are in all aspects of school affairs.

I pledge to follow the guidelines below while using technology at Ascension Episcopal School:

- I will not intentionally visit a website that is inappropriate. This includes, but is not limited to, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites, and pornography sites. I will exit a website and notify an adult if I accidentally encounter materials that violate the rules of appropriate use.
- I will accept, and not attempt to bypass, the school's filtering/blocking of inappropriate websites.
- I acknowledge that technological resources are available primarily for academic purposes.
- Tampering with computer security systems and/or applications will be considered vandalism, destruction, and defacement of school property and is subject to severe disciplinary actions.
- I will refrain from making excessive noise that is distracting to other users.
- I will protect the right to privacy for others and myself by not accessing others' accounts or sharing passwords, even with friends.
- I will never give out personal information, send a picture of myself with identification, or meet anyone in person that I meet through the Internet without AES faculty or parental supervision.
- I will never interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware.
- I will use good judgment in using technology and will not have food or drinks near any equipment.
- I will not waste limited resources such as disk space by storing unnecessary files, printing capacity by unnecessary printing of documents, or network bandwidth by unwarranted video streaming.
- I will always treat people with respect.
- I understand that cyberbullying through technology such as websites, email, cell phones, texting, and chat rooms may result in legal action.
- I will not reply to any messages that are threatening or potentially dangerous.
- I will not violate copyright laws.
- I acknowledge that the IT Department has the ability and right to monitor my technology usage.
- I acknowledge that I will be held accountable for my actions and that violations will be dealt with in accordance with the school's discipline policy as outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Ascension Episcopal School prohibits any advertisement, publication, or representation of AES without expressed written permission of the Head of School. This includes, but is not limited to websites such as MySpace, Facebook, blogs, Twitter, YouTube, and any other electronic activity that erodes the reputation or violates the core values of AES.

UNIFORMS and DRESS CODE

In addition to the Upper School Uniform Policy, found on the AES website under Parent Resources, Upper School Uniform Policy, the following dress code is in effect:

- All decisions regarding uniforms and grooming rest with the Head of Upper School or Dean of Student Life and Discipline.

- No facial hair for male students.
- Male students' hair must be neatly groomed. Shaggy bangs over the eyes and excessive length in the back are not acceptable.
- All uniform pieces should be labeled with the student's name.
- Students must always be neatly dressed in appropriate attire. Students dressed inappropriately will be subject to consequences and may be sent home to change.
- Students are required to arrive at school properly attired.
- Except for the girls' oxford shirts, all shirts must be tucked in.
- Oversized, sagging pants are not acceptable.
- Skirts and/or walking shorts are to be an appropriate length.
- Shoes must be closed heel and toe.
- Excessive body writing is prohibited.
- Visible tattoos are not allowed.
- Torn, tattered, or worn out uniform clothing is not acceptable.
- Dress uniform for boys and girls is the oxford or pinpoint woven shirt. (Knit shirts not permitted for dress uniform.)
- Lands' End and Absolutely Irresistible are the official uniform providers. All items may be ordered from www.landsend.com/school and select Ascension Episcopal School for uniform options. Absolutely Irresistible is located at 141 James Comeaux Road.

**Ascension Episcopal School
Student-Parent Handbook
2011-2012**

I acknowledge that I have read the 2011-2012 Ascension Episcopal School Student-Parent Handbook and the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and agree to abide by the policies stated.

Student Name (Please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name (Please print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____