

Ascension Episcopal School

Athletic Handbook

This handbook has been compiled as reference to the athletic policies, activities, and practices of Ascension Episcopal School. Parents and students are to read and use the handbook. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call the athletic directors 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.

Upper School Campus
Sugar Mill Pond Campus
1800 Chemin Metairie
Youngsville, La 70592
337.856.0043

Middle School Campus
Downtown Campus
1030 Johnston Street
Lafayette, LA 70501
337.233.9748

Adopted: 11/16/10



ASCENSION EPISCOPAL SCHOOL
BLUE GATORS

WWW.AESGATORS.org

Eric Mouton, Upper School Athletic Director

UPPER SCHOOL MEMBERS OF
THE LOUISIANA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

David Chaney, Middle School Athletic Director

MIDDLE SCHOOL MEMBERS OF
THE ACADIANA MIDDLE SCHOOL LEAGUE

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Athletic Department follows the basic mission and founding tenets of the school:

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.

Ascension recognizes the importance of athletic competition in the lives of students. Athletes learn valuable life lessons in a structured and safe environment. Ascension is committed to athletic excellence through sound instruction, maximum participation, and good sportsmanship at every stage of the school's athletic program.

The primary goal of the AES athletic program is to advance the educational philosophy of the school in the arena of developmental and competitive athletics. The program is designed to assure that all athletes will learn the proper skills of the sport and receive the best possible coaching throughout their years of participation. While we acknowledge that not all students are suited to four years of high school athletics, it is our hope that each upper school athlete will want to play the sport until graduation.

Athletics are an important part of the educational program at Ascension Episcopal School and are designed to teach fundamentals and techniques of each sport in a progressive planned sequence. Through the years, competitive athletics have provided our athletes with valuable opportunities to work, grow, learn, mature, and have fun. Life lessons such as sportsmanship, teamwork, dedication, and responsibility will be taught and stressed at each divisional level. In order to enhance and support these basic principles, the athletic department will develop programs which will teach positive lessons of sportsmanship, respect for one's opponent, respect for the rules, and the ability to win and lose with grace. We will instill perseverance, responsibility, integrity, commitment, leadership, and respect in our student athletes. Each student athlete will learn the importance of teamwork, team discipline, competition, and the joy of contest.

Lower School

Students in grades K-4 have several opportunities throughout the year to attend Ascension sports clinics. Boys and girls currently enrolled at Ascension have the opportunity to select from a variety of clinics, including cheerleading, volleyball, football, and basketball. Each clinic is designed to teach lower school students the fundamentals, while allowing them to meet the AES coaching staff and upper school athletes.

In addition to sport clinics, students in grades 1-4 are able to participate in after school leagues formed by the middle school athletic director and coaches. Through intramural leagues, students are introduced to friendly competition while learning about teamwork and sportsmanship and maintaining an active lifestyle at school.

Middle School

Students in grades 5-8 are allowed to participate on school sponsored teams. As a school that strives to offer our students a program that fosters self-confidence, cooperation, and sportsmanship, Ascension will field as many teams and involve as many students as possible. As athletes progress in development, the focus to be more competitive increases.

Although the goal of the middle school program is to allow all athletes to receive quality playing time, thus helping to create a positive overall experience, the program does not enforce standards of equal playing time. Quality playing time is defined as the opportunity to make a contribution in a game or match, while the outcome has yet to be determined. Athletes who attend all practices, listen to coaches, and put forth every effort, will be allowed to participate in games, regardless of ability. At the same time, athletes who possess above average skills and meet the same criteria listed above may be allowed to play a more substantial role. Quality playing time may differ from sport to sport and cannot be defined in quantified terms (i.e.: number of points, minutes, or games played).

Upper School

Students in grades 9-12 are allowed to participate on school sponsored teams. Teams are formed based on skill evaluation and readiness to compete at the varsity level. Wins are important in varsity athletics but do not stand alone in determining the success of a season. Building team unity, instilling a strong work ethic, and inspiring a sense of pride that develops over the course of the season are all factors in determining success at the varsity level.

Participation

The pressure of athletic organizations outside of school to focus on a single sport is detrimental to the purpose of AES athletics. The school realizes that many athletes participate in sports outside of AES. Each athlete must understand the importance of the primary commitment made to their AES teammates and coaches and should make every effort to attend all practices, games, and team functions. Meaningful participation by student athletes, with the ultimate objective of forming highly competitive teams in order to achieve success, is a goal of AES athletics.

SAFETY AND RISK

At Ascension Episcopal School, the welfare of our students is a primary concern of our athletic program. Toward this end, the AES coaching staff endeavors in every way possible to protect the safety and health of our student athletes. These efforts include careful supervision by qualified staff, as well as the levying and enforcement of regulations and/or restrictions as needed to accomplish this goal. However, the nature of athletic competition is such that injuries can and do occur. Parents and students must acknowledge that participation in any athletic program exposes the athlete to the risk of injury, including but not limited to, sprains, fractures, ligament/cartilage damage, and/or concussions which could result in a temporary or permanent, partial, or complete impairment in the use of the athlete's limbs as well as brain damage, paralysis, or even death. Having been so cautioned and warned, any athlete who participates in the Ascension Episcopal

School Athletic Program, as well as his or her parents, enters into the program with full knowledge and understanding of the risk of injury.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Coaches, athletes, and parents are expected to behave in a sportsman-like fashion at all times whether they are involved in their own athletic activity or watching another. Sportsmanship includes respect for self, teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and spectators. AES must establish very high standards for our athletes to live up to daily if they are to gain the most from their athletic experience. A constant display of sportsmanlike attitudes and behaviors on the part of all stakeholders will help the school to portray its commitment to Christian ideals.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As a member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA), AES bases eligibility for athletic participation on the policies of the LHSAA handbook in addition to the following school policies.

Code of Conduct

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential to maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration. Parents' positive support of our athletes, coaches, policies, and events is imperative to our success.

Athletes' Code of Conduct

Participation in athletics is a privilege. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts unbecoming of an Ascension athlete, such as but not limited to violations of law, vandalism, theft, disrespect, any violation of Ascension's behavior policy that leads to suspension or anything that tarnishes the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic program, are unacceptable.

With participation come added responsibilities:

- Commitment to working toward a goal of top physical fitness and sportsmanship
- Agreement to remain free from tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs or controlled substance during the sport seasons and understanding that this pledge extends to seven days per week
- For middle school students, pledge to abide by the Middle School Honor Code as stated in the Middle School Student-Parent Handbook
- For upper school students, pledge to abide by the Upper School Honor Code and Student Conduct Policies as stated in the Upper School Student-Parent Handbook
- Pledge to play within the league rules, model good sportsmanship, keep all team rules and policies, and help one's teammates adhere to the same

- If a student should have a problem or need help fulfilling this contract, the coaches and school administrators will be available to help.

Parents' Code of Conduct

Parents play an important role in their children's sport experience. Any parent guilty of improper conduct at any game or practice may be asked to leave the sports facility and may be suspended from the following game. Repeat violations may result in multiple game suspension, or the loss of privilege of attending games for the remainder of the season.

School Absences

A student who is absent for more than half of the school day is not permitted to represent the school in any extracurricular activity on that day without clearance from the appropriate division head. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that their athletes are aware of this rule. School-sponsored field trips are not considered absences.

Practices

All middle and upper school practices will be scheduled through the athletic director's office to allow maximum practice time for all sports that share the same facility. Other sports that do not share facilities will be scheduled by the head coach with approval of the athletic director. Practice schedules will be given out by the athletic director or head coach of each sport before the season begins, if possible. Each head coach will try his or her best to adhere to the distributed schedule. Some schedules may have to be completed on a weekly basis and emailed from the athletic director or head coach. If changes must be made, the players' parents will be notified by email and the athletes will be told at school.

Upper school sports must follow the dates set by the LHSAA calendar regarding limits on practice dates. Summer practices will also be called, and all athletes are required to be present when not on summer vacation. Upper school athletes practice and play games on some holidays. Students and parents are asked to check with the head coach to see when those games and practices will take place before planning a trip.

It is the responsibility of each athlete to notify the coach in advance of any practice he or she will be unable to attend for any reason. This will allow the coach to structure the practice based on the number of players in attendance. Continual misses without communication may result in less playing time or dismissal from the team. Players who are unable to participate in practice because of injuries are still expected to be present at practices and games. It is important that all athletes are present to build a competitive athletic program.

Games and Scheduling

Upper school scheduling is to be done by each head coach and approved by the athletic director in compliance with LHSAA guidelines. In most cases, game times should not cause students to miss class. If an event is scheduled at a location that requires an absence from school or an overnight stay, the athletic director and division head must approve the event.

Scheduling for middle school will be done by the athletic director. Finalized schedules will be given to each head coach for distribution at the beginning-of-the-season meetings.

Middle School Athletes on Upper School Teams

Athletes in grades 5-8 should, if possible, play at their respective age levels. Academic loads, peer pressure, and social differences should not be ignored because an athlete is physically gifted. If a team is available at a particular age group, then the athlete should practice and play at his or her age level. If the sport is not offered at the appropriate age level or other exceptional conditions exist, then participation at the higher level will be at the discretion of the athlete's parents, athletic director(s), division head(s), and coach(es) involved. The student athlete and parents must realize that participation in the AES athletic program is a privilege. The athlete must meet all academic and behavioral standards as well as the requirements of each individual sport coach.

Uniforms

It is the players' responsibility to make sure they have all uniforms and are properly equipped for each game. Failure to do so may result in penalties, enforced by the head coach, which may include less playing time or suspension.

Athletes are financially responsible for all school-issued uniforms. Each player must maintain his or her uniform and return it in the same condition that it was issued. Failure to return the complete uniform will result in a bill for items lost or damaged.

Participation Fees

Upper and middle school participation fees are subject to review and will be published prior to the registration period for each sport.

Procedure for Addressing a Concern

Procedures for addressing concerns are the same for both middle and upper school athletes. If the concern starts with the athlete, the athlete must talk to the coach first. If there is not a resolution, the parents should call the coach and request a meeting. If there is still not a resolution, parents should contact the athletic director and request a meeting.

It is important not to discuss concerns with a coach before or after a practice or game. A separate, private meeting time should be scheduled.

Club Sports

Games and practices of AES team sports should have first priority over all teams, competitions or events outside of AES. Potential conflicts must be addressed before the beginning of the season to avoid any misunderstanding. The head coach of each varsity sport is responsible for the resolution of any conflicts in his or her program. The amount of flexibility is up to each program to determine.

Athletic Booster Association

An Athletic Booster Association shall be maintained by the Board of Trustees in order to support athletics in the school community by promoting and fostering school spirit, encouraging support and participation by parents, and raising funds through membership dues, concessions, gates and annual fundraisers. All athletic program or individual team fundraising must have the prior approval of the head of school, athletic director, and development office. All funds generated by the Athletic Booster Association are recorded in the school's accounts and are under direct control of the school.

The mission, bylaws, and operational guidelines of the Athletic Booster Association shall support and may not conflict with the mission and bylaws of Ascension Episcopal School or The Episcopal Church of the Ascension.

Gifts

In the event that an individual approaches a coach with the desire to make a monetary gift to a particular sports program and/or give an item to a particular sport, the coach will refer the person to the athletic director. The athletic director will first discuss the proposal with the appropriate division head and then contact the development director.

Required Forms

Middle school athletes are required to provide the school with items 1-4 below, along with the applicable fee. Upper school athletes must complete all required forms and return them to the head coach of the first sport played. Athletes will not be allowed to participate until all paperwork is on file in the athletic director's office.

1. LHSAA Medical History Form (filled out yearly)
2. LHSAA Physical Form (filled out yearly). Physicals are offered at AES in early August for a nominal fee.
3. Copy of birth certificate
4. Copy of insurance card or some verification of proof of insurance
5. Signed Athletic Participation/Parental Permission Form (filled out yearly)
6. Signed Substance Abuse/Misuse Form (filled out once)
7. Previous year report card (athletic director will get from registrar)
8. Copy of transcript (athletic director will get from registrar)
9. Email address
10. Athletic fee

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS

Guidelines

- Place teams in leagues and tournaments that lead to success.
- Schedule adequate practice time that does not interfere with studies.
- Limit the number of practices and/or games per week to three.
- Provide the necessary equipment to be successful, including training aids.

- Schedule team events/activities away from the court/field such as movie nights and ice cream parties.
- Hire qualified coaches who possess the characteristics desired in individuals who work with children (hard-working, fair, honest, friendly).
- Name a Director of Coaching for most sports to facilitate the transition of middle school to upper school athletics (volleyball, basketball, baseball, and soccer).
- Encourage community involvement, including charity work.
- Recognize athletes through pep rallies and award ceremonies.
- Educate parents on the benefits of a no-cut policy at the middle school level.
- Require fifth grade parents and parents of new middle school students to attend one of two meetings at the beginning of the school year, in order for their child to be allowed to participate in AES sports. An explanation of the AES philosophy, including policies, purpose, and expectations will be presented at such meetings.
- Provide services such as study hall and bus transportation to the playing field for parents to help eliminate some of the burden of their child's participation in school sports.

Middle School Eligibility

In the event that an athlete's grades fall below a "C" average, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in school sports until grades improve and participation is approved by the middle school division head.

Middle School Athletes' Code of Conduct Violations and Consequences

Because of the serious nature of this code, a middle school athlete charged with a violation must appear before a committee consisting of his or her supervising coach, the middle school athletic director, the middle school division head, and the middle school dean of students. Penalties will depend on the seriousness of the offense. Additional school penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the school's administration.

Transportation

Middle school teams will meet at the site of the game at the time set by the head coach. A list of middle schools and directions are provided on the website at www.aesgators.org, under Student Life, Athletics.

Middle School Season Dates and Teams Fielded

Fall Season: August - October

Volleyball:	girls only	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grade teams
Football:	boys only	5 th /6 th and 7 th /8 th grade teams
Cross Country:	boys/girls	one middle school team
Cheerleading		

Winter Season: November - January

Basketball:	boys/girls	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grade teams
Soccer:	boys/girls	Junior league team of 5 th , 6 th , and 7 th grade students.
Cheerleading		

Spring Season: February - March

Baseball:	boys only	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grade teams
Softball:	girls only	5 th /6 th and 7 th /8 th grade teams
Track & Field:	boys/girls	one middle school team
Golf:	coed	one middle school team
Tennis:	boys/girls	one middle school team
Swimming:	boys/girls	one middle school team
Cheerleading		

UPPER SCHOOL SPORTS

All students who sign up for freshman through varsity athletics will be placed on a roster unless issues of safety, supervision, space, equipment or facilities make it prohibitive.

Guidelines

US Varsity Team

- Teach life lessons.
- Form competitive teams based on skill evaluation and readiness to compete at the varsity level.
- Have players compete for playing time, in practice and in games, for roster spots on the varsity team. Varsity teams will consist of an adequate number of players to compete at the varsity level.
- Have players compete in practice and games. The coach will play the best athlete in order to try to win games. Playing time is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the coaches.
- Wins are important in varsity athletics but do not stand alone in determining the success of a season. Building team unity, instilling a strong work ethic, and inspiring a sense of pride that develops over the course of the season are all factors in determining success at the varsity level.

Sub-varsity Teams- Freshman and Junior Varsity

- Sub-varsity teams will be formed and will include those students who do not make the varsity team or who need more development before playing at the varsity level.
- Sub-varsity teams allow playing time in practice and in games over the course of the season to foster improvement and readiness for varsity competition during the high school years.
- Sub-varsity teams emphasize development of fundamental skills of the sport, game strategies, and team unity as well as team pride.

Upper School Eligibility

Upper school eligibility requirements set forth by the LHSAA are as follows:

1. Any student living in the AES school zone (Comeaux High School Zone) will be eligible to participate in athletics as a freshman.
2. Any student who attended AES in the 8th grade will be eligible to participate in athletics as a freshman.

3. If a student lives outside of the AES school zone or does not attend AES in the 8th grade, he or she will be ineligible for Varsity athletics but may play Sub-Varsity.
4. All first-time freshmen will be academically eligible until mid-term. At mid-term, a freshman must have passed six classes and have at least a “C” average to retain eligibility.
5. All sophomores, juniors, and seniors will be eligible at the beginning of the year if they have passed six classes the previous year and have at least a “C” Average.
6. At mid-term, all athletes must have passed six classes and have at least a “C” average to remain eligible.

Upper School Athletes’ Code of Conduct Violations and Consequences

Because of the serious nature of this code, an upper school athlete charged with a violation must appear before a committee consisting of his or her supervising coach, the athletic director, the appropriate division head, and the dean of students. Penalties will depend on the seriousness of the offense and may include the actions listed below. Additional school penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the school’s administration. Violations to the Athletes’ Code of Conduct are cumulative during a student’s participation in athletics at the upper school level.

First Violation:

- Loss of all leadership positions such as, but not limited to, team captain for that sport season
- Minimum one-game suspension up to 20% of the season, based on the extent of the offense (to be determined by committee). Penalties will carry over the next sport played including the next school year if necessary.
- Any athlete who is suspended from school will serve an automatic one-game suspension, effective with the next immediate playing date. It will be up to the individual coach’s discretion to suspend the athlete for more than one contest if he or she is suspended from school for more than one day.

Second Violation:

- Loss of all leadership positions such as, but not limited to, team captain for remainder of the school year.
- Minimum of a two-game suspension up to 50% of the season, based on the extent of the offense (to be determined by committee). Penalties will carry over the next sport played including the next school year if necessary.
- Athlete and parents must agree to an assessment and education program under the direction of the head of upper school in order to continue athletic participation.

Third Violation:

- The student athlete found in a third violation shall be denied athletic participation for the remainder of his or her high school career. After one calendar year from the determination of guilt, the athlete can make an appeal to the Athletic Department for reinstatement contingent on substantiated improvement and compliance with the school’s policies.

Varsity Letter Jackets

Each athlete earning a varsity letter will have the option of ordering a letterman's jacket from the school appointed vendor. The head coach for each sport will set the criteria for lettering. A vendor representative will come twice a year to size athletes, once after the fall athletic season and again after the spring athletic season on a date set by the athletic director. Each athlete is responsible for paying for his/her own letter jacket at the time the order is placed. Athletes are also responsible for the letter bars each additional year they letter. The athletic department will pay for patches to go on the letter jackets. "Team Championship" and "Individual Honors" are included in the patches to be purchased by the athletic department.

Varsity and Sub-varsity Season Dates

Season start and end dates are governed by the LHSAA calendar. For specific dates, please refer to the LHSAA Handbook. Please note that all upper school athletes (male and female) are required to participate in the off-season strength and conditioning program during the months of June and July.

Football

1ST Practice: 1st Monday in August
End of Season: Early December
Holiday: There will be practice on Labor Day

Volleyball

1st Practice: Early August
End of Season: Early November
Holiday: There will be practice on Labor Day

Cross Country

1ST Practice: Early August
End of Season: Mid-November
Holiday: No Practice

Swimming

1ST Practice: Mid-August
End of Season: Mid-November
Holiday: No holiday activity

Basketball

1ST Practice: Late October
End of Season: Early March
Holiday: Practices and games during the Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.

Soccer

1ST Practice: Late October
 End of Season: Late February
 Holiday: There may be practices and games during the Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.

Baseball

1ST Practice: Late January
 End of Season: Early May
 Holiday: Practices and games over the Mardi Gras and Easter Breaks.

Softball

1ST Practice: Late January
 End of Season: Early May
 Holiday: Practices and games over the Mardi Gras and Easter Breaks.

Track

1ST Practice: Mid-January
 End of Season: Early May
 Holiday: No holiday activity

Tennis

1ST Practice: Late January
 End of Season: Early May
 Holiday: No holiday activity

Golf

1st Practice: Late February
 End of Season: Early May
 Holiday: No holiday activity

Cheerleading

Cheer Camp(s): Summer
 1st Practice: Early August
 End of Season: Early March
 Holiday: Games during Thanksgiving and Christmas Break.

ADDENDA

Student-Parent Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement Form
LHSAA Medical Form
LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract
Athletic Participation/Parental Permission Form

**Ascension Episcopal School
Athletic Handbook
2011-12**

I acknowledge that I have read the 2011-12 Ascension Episcopal School Athletic Handbook and agree to abide by the policies stated.

Student Name (Please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name (Please print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

2011-12 Participation Fees

Upper school participation fees are as follows:

\$100 first sport; \$75 second sport; no charge for any additional sport

Middle school participation fees are as follows:

Football - \$115; Volleyball - \$75; Cross Country - \$50; Basketball - \$75; Soccer - \$75

Baseball - \$75; Tennis - \$50; Golf - \$50; Track - \$50; Swimming - \$50 Cheerleading - \$75