

ASCENSION SCHOOL PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK 2008-2009

The Ascension School Handbook is published to give parents will have a ready reference to information on the daily operation of the school. The following policies have been approved by the Ascension School Board. All parents and students need to read the information contained in this handbook to note changes and clarifications.

Important Notice: Parents and students are required to sign the handbook form at the back of the handbook before school begins. Please return the signed form with registration materials by August 11, 2008. The principal and School Board retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents and students will be notified promptly of any changes. The administration reserves the right to the appropriateness of any action if doubt arises.

Church of the Ascension Catholic School
4600 Lynnbrook Drive
Louisville, KY 40220
(502) 451-2535
Fax# 451-2535
www.ascension-parish.com

Pastor, Father Gary Padgett
Principal, Mary Jo Ellis

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

As a vital ministry of the Church of the Ascension, our school's mission is to recognize the uniqueness of all students in a caring, disciplined environment that exemplifies Christ's command to serve one another. Ascension School fosters excellence in academics and promotes spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth of the whole child.

VISION STATEMENT

Ascension strives to:

- Foster a Catholic Community that models Jesus' teaching at home, at school, and in our community.
- Ensure an academic program of excellence that challenges each student to achieve his/her maximum potential.
- Expand student involvement in global issues, technology, foreign language, and cultural programs.

PHILOSOPHY

The community of Ascension is committed to providing a school program that is clearly Catholic in character, aims for excellence in academics, and recognizes the uniqueness of all students. The faculty, supported by the parish staff, School Board, and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), recognizes that students must be prepared to meet challenges of an ever-changing world and to live cooperatively as critical thinkers and problem solvers in a global society. Love of God, human dignity, justice, ecumenism, service to others, stewardship, and excellence are among the values lived.

ACCREDITATION

Ascension School completed the accreditation process through the Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission in the fall of 2005. In June of 2006 we received confirmation that we met the standards for certification. Our accreditation status remains effective through June 30, 2011.

HISTORY

Ascension is a close-knit community – a church and a school located adjacent to St. Regis Park in the east end of Louisville. The school first opened its doors in 1965 to meet the growing needs of the parish and to provide a quality Catholic education that focuses on the whole child.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To develop in students, through formal and informal religious experiences, a conscious, active faith, respect for life, and sense of moral and spiritual values.
2. To assist students in the development of a good self-image, love for one another, and an awareness of their roles as students in a Catholic School.
3. To help students to be accepting of individual differences and open to new relationships.
4. To provide processes and structures for faculty to cooperate with parents, the children's primary educators, in conjunction with the church and service organizations.
5. To provide a quality education fostering growth of the whole child in a spirit of mutual trust, understanding, and respect.
6. To guide each child toward maturity with the ability to think clearly and critically, to make informed and reasonable decisions, and to accept responsibility for these decisions.

ADMISSION POLICY

Ascension School admits students, according to the following admissions criteria, of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. It does not discriminate on the basis of religion, sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and programs. All admissions are probationary for the first 6 weeks after which time progress will be reevaluated to ensure Ascension can meet the needs of the student. Enrollment is open to students grades Jr. Kindergarten-7th using the Archdiocesan guidelines. These guidelines are kept in the school office. Students new to Ascension in grades K-7 will take an assessment and/or present report cards and test data as part of the application process. Students are accepted into the 8th grade year on a case by case basis. The Jr. Kindergarten has a separate handbook for parents and students.

Age Requirements

All Kindergarten students must be five years old and first graders must be six years old by October 1. A valid birth certificate must be on file in the school office for all students when school begins in August.

Priority for First Time Admission

1. Prospective students who:
 - a. already have siblings already in school or
 - b. are in an Ascension parish family
 No distinction is made between 1a and 1b.
2. Prospective students of Catholic families who are members of other parishes.
3. Prospective students of families who are non-Catholic.
4. Students transferring into Ascension from another school will be accepted on a probationary period for six weeks. If after six weeks, an assessment of a student's progress indicates that an alternative placement is necessary, parents will be notified to discuss the best options for the student.
5. Parents with a Special Needs student must provide copies of documentation of past educational experiences and assessments prior to admission. Failure to do so may result in student's withdrawal from Ascension.

In the event that there are more applicants than available openings in a given grade level, admission to Ascension will be based first on a record of active stewardship in the parish followed by length of membership in the parish. A lottery may also be used if it is not possible to distinguish among applicants in any other way.

Admission of Special Needs Students

Prior to admitting a student with a diagnosed learning difference, the Principal, in consultation with the Special Needs Teacher and Counselor, must consider:

1. the severity and degree of the learning difference
2. the level of support needed from special services or any special equipment the student may require
3. the number of students with learning differences currently enrolled in an assigned class—It is recommended by the Archdiocese that no more than 10-15% of students with learning differences be enrolled in any one classroom.
4. the number of teachers and staff who are trained to work with mild-moderate learning differences

Applications for re-enrollment forms are sent home in January. Students will maintain priority for re-enrollment if all parish commitments are made and all fees are paid and application with the registration fees are returned by January 31. Applications returned after January 31 must include a \$50 late fee to hold a student's place.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

Our school day begins at 7:55 A.M. Students must arrive in time to go to their lockers, gather materials for their first class, and be seated for announcements at 7:55 A.M. For the convenience of our working parents, the school provides early morning supervision beginning each day at 7:10 A.M. in the school cafeteria. Parents should drop off their children at the cafeteria entrance. **At no time should parents drop students off before the cafeteria is open. Students are never to be left unattended outside of the closed school. Parents should watch to see that their children have opened the door to the school before leaving.** Students who arrive after 7:40 A.M. should be dropped off in the main parking lot near the school office. Parents should follow the traffic pattern in the parking lot and directions of the supervising teachers and the student patrols.

The cafeteria manager will provide supervision for a fee of \$2.50 for students who arrive between 6:45 A.M. and 7:10 A.M. Families who are interested in this service should contact the principal or the cafeteria manager. Students who arrive prior to 7:10 A.M. and have not paid for supervision will be assessed a supervision fee that must be paid before report cards will be released.

When a student is absent, parents should call the school office by 8:30 A.M. Parents should give the reason for the absence, the number of expected days absent, any requests for homework, and send a written note to the homeroom teacher when the child returns to school stating the reason for the absence. For your convenience 451-2535 ext. 19 is available 24 hours a day. Teachers send homework assignments after a student has missed more than one day. It is not always possible to send homework on the first day of an absence.

Students must be in school three hours in order to receive ½ day credit and six hours to receive a full day's credit. Students coming from a doctor or dentist appointment must bring a note from the doctor or dentist stating the appointment time in order for the appointment to be considered excused. **Please try to schedule these outside class time.**

Bicycles

Extreme care must be taken by both bicycle riders as well as our driving parents. Bicycle riders should walk their bikes once they arrive on school property. Bicycles should be parked in the racks provided outside the primary wing.

Bus Service

Ascension School contracts with Morrow Bus Co. to provide transportation for our students. For the safety and comfort of all, the following guidelines must be followed:

- It is important for students to arrive at the bus stop five minutes before it is time for the bus.

- Schedules do not permit waiting for late students.
- Students need to stand back from the road until the bus stops completely and the door is open.
- If students must cross the street to board the bus, they must wait until the bus stops and the driver signals them to cross.
- Since all seats may be occupied (sometimes three to a seat) and books and other objects cannot be piled in the aisle, only those things which can be held in a student's lap will be allowed on the bus.
- Parents should make other arrangements to transport large boxes, cases or projects.
- Pets and animals are not permitted on the bus at any time.
- Guests may not ride the bus. Only registered bus riders are permitted.
- While on the bus, students are expected to be respectful to the bus driver, other students, pedestrians, and riders in other vehicles.
- They are expected to speak in a moderate voice and to refrain from using obscene language.
- They may not eat or chew gum on the bus.
- Students and parents will be responsible for any vandalism or destruction of property on the bus.
- Infractions of school bus rules may result in immediate loss of bus riding privileges at the discretion of the principal.
- If there are enough students interested in the afternoon run to make the bus too crowded, we will have 2 bus runs. Details will be distributed to parents at the beginning of the year.

Changes in Transportation

Students will return home by the mode of transportation indicated in the School Registration Packet. Exceptions to this MUST always be accompanied by a written note signed by the parent/guardian. Verbal messages, via students, will NEVER be regarded as valid permission from a parent/guardian, and we cannot accept emails as permission for changes in means of transportation.

In cases of emergency that require a change of transportation, the parent/guardian must contact the school office prior to 2:00 P.M. because end of the day announcements will be made at 2:00 P.M. for last minute dismissal changes

Dismissal

The order for dismissal is as follows:

Bus 1, if applicable,	2:34
Car Riders	2:37
Walkers	2:37
Kid's Time	2:37

Bus 2 – when first bus returns

The afternoon pick-up uses the parking lot between the gym and church office. Drivers form rows of cars according to the cone markers. In order to allow sufficient space for late arrivals and to accommodate all cars, five cars should line up in each column. Car engines should be turned off until all students are in cars. Teachers signal when each line of cars is dismissed. If a student exits the building late, the parent/driver should exit the parking lot, circle around, and reenter with the late arrivals.

It is important that drivers be alert for the safety of walkers at all times. Students are to be dropped off and picked up according to the school traffic plan. Parents who do not follow this plan create a hazard for all children, including their own. If it is noted that parents are not picking children up according to the dismissal patterns, students will be sent to the office for dismissal.

The supervision of students ends with the completion of dismissal, unless the student is involved in a school-sponsored activity. It is expected that all other students will be picked up by 3:00 P.M. K-6 students left after 3:00 will be sent to Kid's Time and will be charged \$17.00 for the afternoon. If the \$30.00 registration fee has not been paid, parents will be responsible for paying this as well. Students in 7th and 8th grade will come to the office and will also pay a \$5.00 fee for each 5 minutes until the parents arrive. We thank you in advance for your promptness in picking up your children. Teachers and office staff often have meetings after school and are not free to supervise students.

Coaches should arrive by 2:45 to supervise students for after-school activities. Students will not be allowed in the gym or to begin practices until the coaches arrive.

Early Dismissal

When students must be dismissed early, a written note should be sent to the classroom teacher. Students departing prior to regular dismissal must be signed out in the school office by an authorized adult. Only adults who have been previously designated as "authorized" may pick up students prior to dismissal. When students return to school, they must check in at the school office before returning to the classroom.

Emergency Dismissal

Ascension School will rarely dismiss during the school day without providing prior notice to parents. If an unusual situation develops, parents will be contacted through the phone tree and/or email. Monitoring of children will be provided until all children have left the building safely with a parent or a person formally designated on the release form signed by a parent.

Inclement Weather

The Superintendent of Catholic schools makes the decision to close schools due to inclement weather. The announcement is made on television or radio. Please listen carefully, since it is possible that the Catholic schools may be open even though Jefferson County public schools are closed.

On occasion, it may be necessary to begin school on a delayed schedule. The cafeteria will open to students at 9:10 A. M. When the school opening is delayed, Ascension begins class at 9:55 A.M. with supervision of students in classrooms beginning at 9:40 A.M. The school will close at the regular time. NOTE: The cafeteria will not provide breakfast when we are on a delayed schedule.

Tardies

Though students may have entered the building by 7:55, they will be counted tardy if not in their seats and ready to begin by 7:55. Parents must accompany their children into the school once the tardy flag is displayed outside by the school office. Parents will be required to sign the tardy book and explain the reason for the absence. Three unexcused late arrivals will be allowed each trimester. A fee of \$5.00 per car pool will be charged for each subsequent late arrival. Money collected from tardy fees will be donated to charity. If continued tardiness persists, the parents and children will have to meet with the principal. Continual lateness is a form of educational neglect. Students who come to the cafeteria in the mornings must leave the cafeteria in time to be seated in their homerooms ready for class by 7:55.

COMMUNICATION

Ascension School welcomes your questions and concerns about school programs or your children's progress. Please contact the school office to schedule an appointment when you wish to speak to a teacher or administrator. Scheduling appointments allows teachers time to take care of necessary morning check-in procedures, such as lunch count, attendance, etc. In the afternoons teachers are supervising students, and this is a difficult time for them to speak to you privately about your concerns. You may also send a note or email teachers with concerns. Since teachers are working directly with students during the day, it may be after school when they contact you about concerns. If you have not heard from a teacher after 48 hours, please try again. Sometimes incorrect email addresses do not bounce back to you and the teacher has not received your message. Tuesday Thoughts is posted weekly online.

CURRICULUM

Ascension School follows state and Archdiocesan guidelines, and curriculum from the Education Office of the Archdiocese of Louisville. In accordance with state and Archdiocesan guidelines, Ascension is in school 6 ½ hours each day and 175 days per year.

The primary purpose of Ascension School is to provide an environment where church and family values may be integrated with an academic curriculum. Religion is the most important subject in the school. Students learn knowledge of the faith while living in a community which affirms their families' values. Students pray daily and are encouraged to participate in outreach projects. Sacraments are very important at Ascension School. Students prepare for First Eucharist in Grade 2 and Reconciliation in Grade 4. In addition to classroom instruction for Confirmation, students in Grade 8 receive formation through Parish Formation activities and extensions. All students attend weekly liturgy and receive the sacrament of Reconciliation twice a year. Religious knowledge and attitudes are tested each year in Grades 5 and 8.

The program of studies includes language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, music, art, physical education, Spanish, and computer and reference skills. All teachers are certified for their positions. The school is also blessed with special area teachers who provide specialized instruction.

Field Trips

Fields trips are educational opportunities that correlate to the classroom curriculum. Field trips are planned by the classroom teachers and must be approved by the school principal. These are a privilege, and students must exhibit the same responsible behavior on trips that is expected at school. Students who consistently fail to complete class work or homework or who demonstrate inappropriate behavior will not be permitted to participate in field trips and will be given alternate assignments to complete in school as part of the grade. Any students who opt out of a class field trip will be required to be present in school and complete an alternate assignment as part of their grade. Students who miss the trip due to illness will also be required to complete a make up assignment.

Written permission from parents is required for all field trips. (See appendix.) Students who do not have a written form must remain at school to work on an independent report and will be supervised by another classroom teacher.

Chaperones who accompany teachers and students on field trips are expected to supervise students and help them gain the most they can academically from the trip. Alcohol is prohibited while accompanying students on trips whether parents ride the bus or drive separately.

If a student in the 7th or 8th grade receives a U in any subject for the grading period of any trimester, the student will be ineligible to go on major field trips such as to the aquarium or to Washington. Support measures are in place to ensure that all students succeed so it is

important for students to demonstrate a desire to learn by completing assignments and projects on time.

Guidance Counselor

The school has the services of a guidance counselor who works Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. She provides both individual as well as small group counseling. She also teaches regularly in the classroom, provides programs on life skills, bullying, internet safety, Good Touch/Bad Touch, and coordinates drug and alcohol programs in the school. The guidance counselor is always happy to assist families with educational or adjustment problems. Please feel free to contact her if you or your children need assistance.

Homework

Homework is an important part of instruction at Ascension. Students usually have homework during the week; occasionally, they may have homework on weekends. Following Archdiocesan standards, the following homework times are suggested:

Kindergarten	Occasionally
Grades 1 & 2	30 minutes
Grades 3 & 4	45 minutes
Grades 5 & 6	60 minutes
Grades 7 & 8	75 minutes

Parents who are concerned about “too much” or “too little” homework should first contact the classroom teacher to attempt to resolve the problem. On occasions, when it is not possible for a student to complete a homework assignment, the parent should send a note to the classroom teacher explaining why the assignment was not completed.

Missing assignments for students in grades 3-8 will be posted daily in agenda books and parents should check these regularly to keep track of students’ progress. Students consistently missing assignments will meet with parents, teacher, and principal to assess consequences for late work and the possibility of homework class.

Long range projects and writing assignments are given to strengthen students’ proficiency and help them apply what they are learning. When these are given, there is an expectation that the work can be completed by the student in the allotted time.

All projects or long term writing assignments must be turned in on time to receive full credit and/or to participate in extended activities such as field trips.

Assignments not turned in receive a zero. Our goal is that parents work with the teachers to obtain the best learning environment for the student. Homework is an organizational skill and is intended to help students become stronger in the academics.

Honor Roll

Ascension School has instituted an Honor Roll for grades 4 – 8 to recognize outstanding effort and achievement. The following guidelines are used to determine Honor Roll candidates (Please note the addition to the Principal’s List.):

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Principal’s List | All A’s, 80% or above in behavior and effort in all areas, including behavior in Church and respect toward staff and other students |
| First Honors | A’s and <u>no more than two</u> B’s, 80% or above in behavior and effort in all areas, including behavior in Church and respect toward staff and other students |
| Second Honors | A’s and/or any number B’s, 80% or better in behavior and effort in all areas, including behavior in Church and respect toward staff and other students |

Library/Media Center

The Library/Media Center makes it possible for students and teachers to have easy access to a wealth of information through books and other resources. Students are encouraged to use the Library/Media Center for independent, small group and class study. The Librarian collaborates with the classroom teachers to teach essential library and research skills that are incorporated into students’ writing. Students have access to a comprehensive collection of materials to support research, to encourage pleasure reading, and to aid other educational endeavors.

The library depends on its volunteers and continued support of the parents and parish to continue the present level of library services.

Make-up Work/Vacation

Ascension’s policy is for students to make up work after they return from a family trip or other personal days. Teachers do not always know how much material will be covered in a given time period, so making up the work later ensures that all assignments are accurate.

Please send a note informing the school of the days that your child will be away. Older students (5th grade and above) need to ask a responsible friend to keep track of missed work since homeroom teachers will not know the assignments in other classes. Self-contained classroom teachers will help the student get the missed work, but please be aware that it is the responsibility of the parent and the student to make sure assignments are completed.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year at Ascension. Letter grades are used for all subjects.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences are scheduled in the middle of the first two trimesters to alert parents to their children's progress. A written notice is sent home in the middle of the third trimester. Parents who are concerned about their children's progress should contact the homeroom teacher or the individual teacher in middle school. Teachers welcome these calls to discuss concerns or clarify assignments.

Please note that **all** outstanding fees must be paid before report cards will be released each trimester. This includes Library, Cafeteria, Kids' Time, book fees, tardies, late pickup fees, etc. Outstanding fees will result in the students' grades being blocked online until fees are paid.

Students who fail a core subject (math, social studies, reading, English, science) will be required to attend 20 hours of summer school or with an approved tutor for each failed subject before advancing to the next grade. Proof of attendance and mastery must be submitted to the guidance counselor. In addition, students who fail three of the five major subjects may not pass to the next grade.

The following code is a general guide to grading for the Archdiocese:

A	100% - 93%
B	92% - 84%
C	83% - 75%
D	74% - 70%
U	69% or less

Special Needs Teacher

Ascension has a certified special needs teacher who works four days a week—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. She coordinates individual testing of students, works with parents and classroom teachers to write 504 plans for students with diagnosed disabilities or strategy plans for students who need additional assistance, and provides individual and small group assistance as time permits. She is a valuable resource to both parents and teachers.

Testing

Students in kindergarten take the Metropolitan Readiness Test in late spring. Results help parents and teachers determine a student's readiness for first grade.

The Terra Nova Achievement Test is the standardized test that is administered each spring to students in Grades 1-7. While only Grades 3, 5, and 7 are mandated by the Archdiocese, Ascension includes non-mandated grades because we believe that assessment of academic achievement is one of the ways we can measure success. The results are reported to parents as soon as the school has received the scores and had a chance to evaluate the results. The Administration and teachers make curriculum decisions based on the results of these tests. These tests also help parents observe their children's progress over time.

All eighth grade students will take an achievement test in September and results will be shared with parents by late October. Most will also take a high school placement test at the Catholic high school of their choice. Parents and students receive these test results directly from the high school.

GENERAL POLICIES

Classroom Interruptions

It is essential that all classroom time be dedicated to instruction. We do not interrupt classes to take lunches or forgotten books to classes. If forgotten items are brought to school, a note will be placed in the teacher's mailbox. The teacher will collect the item at a break or at lunch. Students will not be allowed to call home for forgotten items.

Custodial Rights

In cases of divorce, parents of students are required to furnish the school with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. This legal record will enable us to fulfill our responsibilities while protecting the rights of all involved.

Ascension School is required to follow the law regarding the rights of non-custodial parents. A non-custodial parent whose child is enrolled at Ascension has the right by law to see academic and disciplinary records and to talk to school officials regarding the child's progress and attendance. Ascension officials are not required to contact the custodial parent if such information is requested by the non-custodial parent.

In special cases when a court order states that the non-custodial parent has no right to information about his/her child, the custodial parent must present a copy of the document to school officials to be kept on file.

It is the responsibility of parents to keep the school informed of special family arrangements with regard to custody of the child. Parents should not assume that school officials are aware of court orders regarding custody and visitation rights.

Electronic Devices/Toys

Use of personal electronic devices, (i.e. cell phones, ipods, CD players, gaming devices, etc.) during the school day, is prohibited. These must be kept in backpacks, not purses, in the off position from 7:10 am - 3:00 pm. Students should not bring toys or other games to school. Items found in student's possession at inappropriate times or with inappropriate graffiti will be forfeited until the end of the school year.

Students who need to use the phone during the day must come to the office.

- **First infraction with a cell phone ringing in the backpack** – Teachers will send phone to the office to be picked up by the parent at the end of the day.
- **Second infraction with a cell phone ringing in the backpack** – Teachers will send phone to the office to be picked up by the student at the end of the school year.
- **First infraction with a cell phone or an electronic device in a pocket, in the bathroom, in the locker, in a purse, or in the student's possession in any other way** – Teachers will send the device to the office to be picked up by student at the end of the school year.
- **Use of cell phones or other electronic devices used during testing of any kind is prohibited**– Teachers will send device to the office to be picked up by student at the end of the school year and student will receive a zero on the test.
- The school cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of such items.

Reporting Child Abuse

State law (KRS 620.030(2)) requires school officials who suspect the physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect of a child to report their suspicions to Child Protective Services. Ascension officials and staff will immediately report any suspicions of abuse or neglect to the proper agency for investigation.

School officials must permit agents from Child Protective Services to interview a child at school. School officials will not notify parents/guardians that a child is being interviewed by CPS; the agency and police take this responsibility. A school official may remain with the child during the interview if the child requests it.

School Fees

School fees cover all instructional and administrative costs of the school, except payroll and building maintenance. These costs are covered by tuition and stewardship. The fees are due when the packets are returned in August. Fees include costs for book rentals and consumables, paper, duplicating costs, art, library, and computer fees. In addition, the fees pay for some sacramental costs, hearing screening, and in-school performances.

Kroger and Scrip cards may be used to defray a large portion of the pre-registration and book bill fees. Please call our office or the parish office for more information.

All school fees, including tuition, must be paid on time and in full in order to receive report cards and to walk for graduation.

Homeroom teachers collect rented books in May. The books must be returned in as good a condition as they were received, allowing for some wear and tear. Students will be charged for excessive damage or lost textbooks.

Shadowing

Students will receive information for shadowing guidelines from teachers at the beginning of the year. Please note the following specifics that help in this process.

Students are allowed 6 days over a two year period to shadow. These days are intended to be on days when Ascension is not in session (e.g. days off after conferences, school holidays, etc.) Only one or two days for 8th Grade students will be allowed when school is in session and only when every effort has been made to schedule when school is out. Students are responsible for all missed work but should not schedule shadowing visits on days when major tests are scheduled. **As shadowing days at the high schools fill up quickly, you may want to schedule visits as soon as you review the calendar and note the days we are out of school.**

Shadowing begins in mid September for 8th grade students. **Visits to a school students visited as 7th graders will count as unexcused when scheduled on a day Ascension is in session.**

7th grade students may shadow only between January and late April (except March 9-20, Terra Nova testing dates) and only on days when school is not in session. 7th grade students missing school to shadow will be expected to turn in missing work the next day. These visits will not be excused if scheduled on days when tests are scheduled.

Student Records

The school voluntarily abides by the Buckley Amendment which provides guidelines for parent inspection of permanent records, information to be released to non-custodial parents, transfer of school records between educational agencies, and release of information for research purposes.

Permanent Records

A permanent record of the educational history of each student who has attended a school in the Archdiocese shall be maintained. No notation of clinical reports or comments about the personal life of the student shall be part of the permanent record.

Permanent record folders shall include:

1. standardized test scores;
2. permanent record cards with year end grades and attendance;
3. other pertinent academic information.

Transfer of Records

Students who have attended a school in the Archdiocese or who are transferring from another system will be admitted and given such standing as their official record warrants.

If a student transfers to another school, the records will be released to the receiving school after the parent has signed consent forms to transfer the records, all financial obligations have been met, and evidence of completion of failed core subjects has been submitted. As a general rule, a child shall not be accepted into another Catholic Archdiocesan school unless financial responsibilities in the previous school/parish have been satisfied, and the parents have signed an agreement to meet these responsibilities.

Telephone

Students may use the office telephone only with teacher permission and only in emergencies. Forgotten materials do not constitute an emergency. Messages for students from parents will be sent through teachers.

Arrangements for after-school activities should be made before students leave home in the morning.

Tuition

Ascension runs its school as part of the parish mission to “teach and share our faith.” The school is both a responsibility and a benefit to the entire parish community. In May of 2006 the Parish leadership deemed it necessary to move to a tuition model to fund our school.

Active, participating families regularly participate in liturgical life of the Parish, are committed to Stewardship of Time, Talent, and Treasure as witnessed by completing the annual Stewardship Commitment Card, and live up to their commitment.

Tuition rates are recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the Parish Council. You must be current with tuition payments as agreed upon in the tuition agreement form. Failure to comply with this contract could result in removal from school.

GRIEVANCES

(taken from the Archdiocesan Handbook # 5560)

Authority as exercised in the Catholic school system depends in a large measure upon a spirit of willing cooperation among administrators, staff, and students. However, honest disagreements can, and sometimes do, occur between persons at various levels. For those instances when persons involved cannot reach an agreement that is mutually satisfactory, there is a grievance procedure we follow.

The normal procedure for resolving serious grievances is:

PARISH LEVELS

1. Student/Parent
2. Staff person/Teacher
3. Principal (Pastor may be consulted at this point to evaluate whether the issue may go to the School Board.)
4. School Board (Chairperson selects two members of the Board with approval of pastor to form a committee of 3 to serve as a hearing committee. The purpose of this committee is to review procedures to ensure that due process has been followed.)
5. Pastor

ARCHDIOCESAN LEVELS

6. Office of Lifelong Formation and Education/Superintendent
 7. Due Process Board of Archdiocese of Louisville
 8. Archbishop
- It is assumed that all personnel involved in a complaint situation will be attempting to find the simplest, most effective way to resolve differences.
 - Normally, disagreements or complaints should be discussed and resolved at the level closest to the disputed question. When either party involved chooses to appeal a decision to the next higher level, such appeal should be made in writing within a reasonable time frame (10 days to 2 weeks). If, at any level, a formal hearing

- process is sought, all persons involved must agree to full disclosure of all pertinent information to the board or committee that is conducting the hearing. The hearing body is bound to maintain confidentiality concerning all information received.
- At the parish level, the pastor retains the right to intervene with authority at any stage of a complaint or grievance, provided such intervention seems more likely to bring a just and speedy resolution to the problem.
 - At any point, the Office of Lifelong Formation and Education is willing to offer counsel and advice, and may act as facilitator, but will not authoritatively intervene unless a breach of policy or official procedure has occurred.

SCHOOL SAFETY

One of our most important concerns is providing a safe environment for our students. We follow Archdiocesan guidelines on safety procedures and have a safety manual which is reviewed annually with teachers and with our School Board.

All visitors must use the entrance near the school office, report to the office, and wear a badge while in the building. We expect school staff to stop any visitor who is not wearing a badge. Also, we tell students that they should never open an outside door for any stranger. For the safety of our students, please do not try to use any other entrance except the one near the school office. This includes the cafeteria entrance into the school in the mornings as school begins.

Parents are welcome to enter the classrooms for scheduled appointments and Open Houses. It is inappropriate for parents to arrive unannounced and interrupt instruction.

Fire, Earthquake, Tornado Drills

Drills are conducted periodically according to the requirements of the state and the Office of Lifelong Formation.

Patrols

Eighth graders assist with the arrival and dismissal of students. Their job is to monitor the parking lot with teachers, assist with the opening and closing of car doors, and tell students when they may cross the street. We ask that all parents cooperate with our safety patrol. Drivers who ignore patrols or put students at risk are reportable to police.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Ascension School is committed to providing the best learning experience for all students. Effective learning requires group work, experiments, discussions, and the use of many and varied materials. It requires a Christian atmosphere in which students feel comfortable while trying new activities. It requires a spirit of cooperation between students, parent, and teachers so that engaging and lively learning activities may take place. It requires the recognition that disruptive, disrespectful behavior has no place in a Catholic school.

Learning problem-solving techniques and appropriate behavior are important lessons we teach at Ascension. While we certainly recognize that all students make poor decisions on occasion, we expect students to take responsibility for their actions and for parents to support consequences for poor behavior. In choosing Ascension School, parents demonstrate their support of Catholic values and their desire for excellent behavior – both for their children and from their children.

In order to ensure a safe school, Ascension cannot tolerate the following behaviors:

- Bringing weapons or other items, i.e. lighters, which might cause injury to others
- Possession of illegal substances - cigarettes, alcohol, drugs - at school
- Bullying, harassing, or threatening behavior
- Disrespect toward teachers, parents, staff, fellow students, and in church
- Fighting or other aggressive behavior
- Theft or damage to school, teacher, or student property
- Plagiarism from any source (books or internet) – automatic zero and major infraction notice in grades 6-8
- Cheating – automatic zero in any grade and major infraction notice in grades 6 – 8
- Leaving school property or class without permission
- Disregard for classroom or school rules
- Inappropriate language and hand gestures
- Inappropriate use of technology, such as myspace.com, that connects student with Ascension School

In an effort to keep parents informed in a more timely fashion about inappropriate behavior or missing assignments, Ascension uses a means to notify parents each week about progress. Students in grades 3-8 will receive Agenda books on the first day of school. These books have Conduct Codes and reporting sheets in the back of the books that help teachers communicate with you each week. These are the only Agenda books that will be acceptable. Students begin each week with 100% for behavior. This process gives you immediate feedback and helps students take responsibility for choices they make. Taking care of the things we have is an important part of instruction so there is an expectation that keep agenda books, school books, and Bibles free of graffiti.

Conduct K, 1, 2 Students in grades K – 2 learn classroom expectations and respectful behavior. Teachers contact parents by note or phone call when the behavior consistently

interferes with learning. A conference and/or testing may be required if the behavior persists over a period of time.

Conduct 3-8 Students learn classroom expectations and respectful behavior. Students bring Agenda books home each day to indicate areas in which they need to take more responsibility. Teachers contact parents by note or phone call when the behavior consistently interferes with learning. A conference and/or testing may be required if inappropriate behavior persists over a period of time.

Field Trips

Students in grades 6 – 8 may not participate in any field trips if they receive two detentions and/or suspensions in a trimester. Participation in the Washington trip will be left to the discretion of the principal for students in grade 8 who receive four detentions and/or suspensions during the school year. See notes on Field Trips on page 9.

Detention

Detention is held each Thursday morning from 7:10 A.M. until 7:40 A.M. Students and parents will be notified about morning detention through the Agenda books. The student and parent must meet the supervising teacher in the cafeteria at 7:10 A.M. The intent of the detention is to help the student reflect on ways to change inappropriate behavior.

Suspension

Any 5th, 6th, 7th, or 8th grade student placed on suspension will be automatically suspended from athletic/extra-curricular activities, practices, and competitions until the end of the suspension and will not be allowed in school during the time of the suspension. They may not participate in any parish activities during the school year except for Sunday liturgy. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension. The Athletic Director or the appropriate extracurricular activity sponsor will be notified of the student's suspension. Only the principal has the authority to suspend a student. Conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, can result in an indefinite suspension.

Probation

Students who have demonstrated a disregard for school rules or continually fail to turn in homework assignments may be placed on probation. Probation is a contract specifying the expectations for behavior and/or work habits. Failure to abide by the terms of the probationary contract may result in dismissal from school.

Students dismissed from Ascension School may be permitted to participate in athletic activities with the express permission of the pastor. Absent the pastor's permission, students dismissed from Ascension School may not participate in athletic activities.

Bullying Behavior

Bullying occurs when a student with greater power takes advantage of a less powerful student, and this behavior becomes a pattern. The bullying may take many forms, including physical or verbal abuse, or social exclusion and telling tales. Students who continue to be bullied, even after expressing displeasure to the offender, should report the abuse to a parent, teacher, counselor or administrator. Steps will be taken to teach the offender appropriate behavior, and parents will be notified as we work through the process. When measures taken are ineffective to stop the behavior, situations will be handled individually and actions will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of all students. Actions could result in suspension or expulsion from school if behavior persists.

Illegal Drugs (Taken from the Archdiocesan Handbook for Catholic Schools # 5330)

The possession, use, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol is subject to disciplinary action. If students bring to or from school, or have in their possession at school or on school grounds, or before, during, or after a school-sponsored event, during or after school hours, any illegal drugs or alcohol, look-alikes, or paraphernalia, they are subject to disciplinary action which may include dismissal from school.

Possession/Use of Illegal Drugs or Alcohol

When a student is found in possession or under the influence of alcohol or other illegal drugs, look-alikes, or paraphernalia on the way to or from school, at school, or before, during or after a school-sponsored event:

1. The substance will be taken away from the student. Parent/guardian will be called to take the student home unless emergency help is necessary.
2. The Superintendent and/or the Safe & Drug Free Schools Coordinator of the Archdiocese will be notified and consulted.
3. A conference with the student, parent/guardian, and school officials will take place.
4. Law enforcement authorities will be informed.
5. A professional assessment for chemical dependency will be required, and the student may be suspended from school pending the results of the assessment.
6. Assessment results, disciplinary history, and other pertinent information is reviewed by school officials to determine subsequent disciplinary measures which may include consequences in accordance with the school's code of conduct, suspension or reinstatement with stipulations, and/or dismissal from school.

Distributing/Selling Illegal Drugs or Alcohol (Taken from the Archdiocesan Handbook for Catholic Schools #5331)

If a student is found distributing or selling illegal drugs or alcohol, look-alikes, or paraphernalia on the way to or from school, at school, or before, or during or after a school-sponsored event:

1. Parent/guardian will be called to take the student home.
2. Law enforcement authorities will be notified.
3. The Superintendent and/or Safe & Drug Free Schools Coordinator will be notified and consulted.
4. The student will be dismissed from school.

At all times it is important to respect privacy issues of all involved. The Archdiocese provides assistance for students needing additional help.

Search and Seizure

School officials have the right to search a student's personal items (jacket, purse, backpack, etc.) and desk and locker if the principal or staff suspects the student brought items to school that are not permitted or might be harmful. The principal will keep any confiscated items in the office. Parents will need to make an appointment to get items. See note on electronic devices on page 15.

Sexual/Other Harassment

The harassment of students or employees is unacceptable at any of the Archdiocesan schools. Students and employees have the right to respectful treatment. Harassment can take many forms:

Verbal

Threats, insults
Comments about a person's body
Sexual jokes, suggestions, or remarks
Sexual stories or rumors
Notes, letters or graffiti
Whistles, catcalls, rude noises

Physical

Bumping into another or brushing up against them on purpose
Standing in another's way or standing too close
Patting, hugging, kissing without permission
Grabbing, touching, pinching

Nonverbal

Staring at another's body
Sexual drawings or pictures
Gestures or looks, or suggestive body movements

Students who feel they are being harassed should first express their displeasure with the student harassing them. If the harassment continues, the behavior should be reported to a teacher or administrator. The incident will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken, which may include suspension, removal from situations where the harassment occurred, and/or the requirement of counseling. Continued harassment may result in dismissal from the school.

Threatening Behavior

Threatening behavior is defined as intentional statements, gestures, or actions meant to cause harm to another and/or damage to property. School officials may consider the following factors in deeming whether behavior is threatening: history of inappropriate behavior, circumstances surrounding the behavior, nature of statements/gestures/actions, developmental stage of student, other relevant information.

Any behavior deemed threatening by school officials is inappropriate and may result in immediate suspension and/or result in dismissal from school. Threatening behavior will result in the following manner:

1. The student exhibiting threatening behavior is removed from the situation and placed under the direct supervision of appropriate school personnel.
2. The student's parent/guardian is notified. The pastor and school superintendent are also informed. If the threat concerns death or serious physical injury to any student, teacher, volunteer, employee, or any other person reasonably expected to be on school property, the local authorities will be contacted. Individuals, who have been threatened, as well as parents/guardians, will be notified as soon as possible.
3. The student is suspended from school pending the results of a mental health assessment conducted by an appropriately credentialed professional. The Family Counseling Office may assist the principal in determining the adequacy of a mental health assessment.
4. While undergoing the assessment, the student may not attend school, any school function, or be present on school grounds during the school year.
5. The mental health assessment results and recommendations are shared with the principal who makes a final decision as to whether the student shall be allowed to return to school. In making the final decision, the principal considers not only the results of the mental health assessment but also any history of inappropriate behavior, the circumstances surrounding the threatening behavior, the nature of the threat, the developmental stage of the student, and other relevant information. Additionally, should the student be allowed to return to school, the decision may include conditions for reinstatement and follow-up.

Weapons

It is the policy of Ascension School to report any student who brings a weapon to school to the police. Weapons according to Kentucky Penal Code include: any weapon from which a shot readily capable of producing death or other physical injury may be discharged; any knife other than an ordinary pocket knife or hunting knife; billy, nightstick or club; blackjack or slapjack; nunchaku karate sticks; shuriken or death star; artificial knuckles. Students with firearms or weapons will be indefinitely suspended from school. Also note: Any item used to inflict harm or injury to another person will not be permitted.

Please note: While not considered a dangerous weapon according to Kentucky Penal Code, hunting knives and pocket knives are not permitted in the building. Possession will result in disciplinary action.

STUDENT SERVICES

A. Cafeteria

Ascension School participates in the federal lunch program. All students are expected to either bring lunch from home or purchase lunch in the cafeteria. The cost of the school lunch this year is \$2.00. Efforts are being made to reduce the amount of fat and sugar in the lunch program so students receive the best nutrition possible. Parents can help by making sure that children begin with a nutritional breakfast each morning.

Families may apply for a free or reduced price lunch for their children. Applications are included in the registration packet. The applications are also available in the principal's office throughout the school year. The confidentiality of students on free or reduced lunch is strictly maintained.

Accounts must be paid in full to receive report cards at the end of each trimester. As per guidelines from the Archdiocese, students with a balance of more than \$40 will receive a peanut butter or cheese sandwich, milk, and fruit until account is settled.

Students with allergies to dairy products may substitute juice for milk in the government program. A doctor's note may be required in these cases. A note should be submitted to the cafeteria manager.

For safety reasons no soft drinks or glass containers are allowed in lunches brought from home.

Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their children. If they wish to purchase lunch, they should call the cafeteria at 451-0334 by 9:00 A.M. Parents must sign in at the school office before going to the cafeteria. Fast food may not be brought to the cafeteria by parents.

B. Health

AIDS Policy

All Catholic elementary schools follow the policy adopted by the state and local Department of Health in dealing with children identified as infected with the HIV virus. This policy respects the rights of children and parents to privacy. School personnel are only informed on a “need-to-know” basis.

Exclusion from School

Parents are required to keep a child home if the child is nauseous, has had a fever within the last 24 hours, has diarrhea, or has a rash. Children who have pink eye, head lice, or other contagious infections must remain at home until the child is not contagious. A doctor’s note may be required to return to school.

Health Screening

The PTO Health Committee coordinates the yearly mandated vision, hearing, height/weight, and scoliosis tests. Results are recorded on a student’s health record. If a problem is detected, a confidential referral is sent to the parent.

Immunization

All immunization certificates must be current and the original on file with the school by the first day of school. These certificates are necessary for student attendance in order to be in compliance with Kentucky State Statutes concerning health requirements.

Medication

Whenever possible, medication should be given at home.

If medication must be administered at school, it must be sent to school in its original container. This includes over the counter medications, such as Tylenol and cough drops. The prescription label should be attached and include the physician’s directions for administering the medication. Only a sufficient amount of medication should be sent because leftover medication may not be sent home with students. All medication must be accompanied by a permission form, signed and dated by a parent or guardian. (See appendix.) All medication is kept under lock and is dispensed in the office by the secretary.

Asthmatic students should keep their inhalers with them. The secretary keeps a log of all medication given to students.

Parents/guardians must alert the homeroom teacher **in writing** that their child is using medication, at what times the medication is to be taken, and for how long.

If a student is placed on medication for a short term, and the daily time of the medication is critical, the parent may wish to call the school office to ensure that the child has received the medication.

Student Accidents

Parents will be notified if students are injured or hurt while at school or on a field trip. A report will be filed with the Archdiocese and a copy will be kept in the school office.

C. Kid's Time

A state-licensed after school care program is available for students during the school term. It operates from school dismissal until 6:00 P.M. It is also open on some school holidays and during the summer. Parents of all students in grades K-6 are asked to fill out the medical information. The \$30 registration fee is due at the time of the school registration for those students planning to use Kid's Time regularly. Students left after school and sent to Kid's Time will be responsible for the registration fee the first time the students are sent to Kid's Time. For information about the program, please contact Brenda Gonzalez at 451-3860.

D. Parties

Celebrations are planned throughout the year for special events. Room parents work with classroom teachers to plan simple events with minimal expense. Grade level room parents and teachers should consult so that both homerooms have similar, though not necessarily identical, parties.

Students in grades K – 3 are allowed to bring treats for individual birthdays according to classroom guidelines.

Party invitations may be distributed on school grounds **only** if the entire class is invited. This is to ensure that the feelings of each child are respected. Gifts, flowers, or thank you notes may not be brought or sent to school to keep disruptions of instructional time to a minimum.

UNIFORM

Students may wear shorts from August – October and after Spring Break – May. From November – Spring Break shorts may not be worn except on days students have PE. White uniform shirts or navy sweatshirts with previous Ascension logos

are acceptable, but if navy or yellow uniform shirts are worn, they must have the school logo.

Girls

Shirts	Solid white uniform shirts or white, navy, or yellow shirts with Ascension logo
K-4	Plaid jumper, navy blue or plaid skirt (no shorter than three inches above the back of the knee), navy uniform shorts or navy uniform pants
Grade 5	Plaid jumper or skirt, navy blue or plaid skirt, navy uniform shorts or navy uniform pants
Grades 6-8	Plaid skirt, navy blue or plaid skirt (no shorter than three inches above the back of the knee), navy uniform shorts or navy uniform pants
Grade 8	May also wear khaki uniform shorts or uniform slacks.

Tights/Sweat Pants: Plain navy blue or white tights are allowed. **Only navy blue sweat pants** may be worn to and from school and at recess during the winter months. These may not be worn during the school day unless we have problems with lack of heat in the building, in which case an announcement will be made.

Boys

Shirts	Solid white uniform shirts or white, navy, or yellow shirts with Ascension logo
Grades K-7	Navy uniform shorts or uniform slacks
Grade 8	Khaki uniform shorts or uniform pants

All Students

Pants/Shorts: No jeans or corduroys. No visible label. Size must be appropriate.

Belts: Must be a uniform belt of navy, black, or brown and must be worn with pants, slacks, or shorts which have belt loops. Camouflage, riveted, or colored belts are not permitted with uniforms.

Sweater: Plain navy blue, black or white cardigan, slipover or vest

Sweatshirts: Navy blue with approved school emblem (purchased through school). Size must be appropriate.

Socks: Plain white crew socks. Blue or black crew socks may be worn with dress shoes and slacks but not tennis shoes and/or shorts. Short athletic socks are not permitted. Socks may not have logos on them. Socks for girls in grades K and 1 may be white socks that turn down at the ankles but may not have ruffles.

Shirts: See above. T-shirts must be plain white, if worn under uniform shirts.

Shoes: Students may wear shoes of any kind **except sandals, backless, toeless shoes, or crocs**. On dress down days, the exceptions still apply. Heels of shoes should never be more

than one inch, for the safety of the students. Tennis shoes should always be worn on days students have PE. Students may not wear roller balls in tennis shoes at school at any time.

Purses: Purses should be large enough to carry personal items but small enough to be handled easily. Large purses add additional weight to the load students carry and are inappropriate with school uniforms.

Grooming

Shirts must be tucked in, except at recess or in PE class.

Pants and shorts must fit properly, especially at the waist and ankles. The “baggy” and sloppy look is not appropriate at school. Skirts must be buttoned. Hems must be sewn; they may not be stapled, pinned, or taped.

Girls may not wear makeup of any kind, fingernail polish, or acrylic nails. Jewelry should be limited to watches, rings, and simple crosses or holy medals on a narrow silver or gold chain. (only 2 earrings per ear)

Boys may not wear earrings to school or to school programs. Boys wearing earrings will turn these in to the office to be picked up at the end of the year. No piercing of the eyebrows, nose, tongue or any other fad is allowed for anyone.

Hats may not be worn in the building. Hologram contacts are not permitted.

Hair must be a natural color and must not pose a distraction in the class. Overly spiked hair, lines, stripes, Mohawks, or shaven heads are not permitted. Beads are not permitted in braided hair. Boys must have hair neatly trimmed above the collar and above the eyebrows. Boys’ faces should be cleanly shaven, if applicable.

Non-Uniform Days

Please note changes to this section!!

Dress down days on the last Friday of each month and with uniform passes will be as follows: **uniform pants or shorts and an Ascension spirit T-shirt or sweatshirt (something with an Ascension logo)**. 2 exceptions will be on picture day and with a birthday pass. Birthday passes may be used on any Friday and students with summer birthdays may select a Friday during the year to use their passes.

Non-Uniform Attire: Students may wear jeans, sweatpants, walking shorts (no more than three inches above the knee), t-shirts with appropriate logos or pictures, sweatshirts, etc. Students may wear shoes of any kind **with the exceptions of sandals, backless, or toeless shoes, crocs, or shoes with heels higher than one inch**. Short athletic socks or socks with

logos are acceptable. Students may also wear nail polish or other jewelry as long as the jewelry does not pose a safety hazard during PE or recess.

Students may not wear muscle shirts, tank tops, sleeveless shirts, midriff or low cut shirts.

Bedroom slippers and pajamas are inappropriate on out of uniform days. If there is any question about the appropriateness of student dress, the teacher will make the call.

Uniform infractions for grades 3-8 will be noted in the Agenda books. Infractions will affect all students in the behavior/effort grade.

At no time may students wear multiple cancer wrist bands with school uniforms, on dress down or out-of-uniform days. Only one band will be permitted on non-uniform days. Students will surrender inappropriately worn bands and may pick them up at the end of the school year. Students will also surrender any personal items, such as backpacks or pencil pouches, if they have inappropriate graffiti on them. These may also be picked up at the end of the year.