



CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE AT ASCENSION ACADEMY

Respectful and cooperative student conduct is essential for the creation of a school culture where students and teachers are free to learn while being safe from harm or unnecessary discomfort. It is imperative that students and faculty accept and adhere to a code of conduct that protects and reinforces the values necessary for a civil academic environment to flourish.

Student behavior that ignores or violates acceptable conduct will be addressed through the following process.

First level offenses: These are minor behavioral concerns that will be handled by classroom teachers or other staff persons as they are observed and in a manner deemed appropriate by the adult involved.

Second level offenses: These are behavioral concerns of a more serious nature, or minor concerns which have become chronic irritations in the classroom, hallway or school activities. The teacher or staff person involved will notify—in person or in writing—the dean or assistant dean of students about the infraction. The deans will consult with the reporting teacher, then address the concern with the student(s) in question, notifying parents/guardians and teachers of the disciplinary response that will be assigned to the student(s) in question.

Third level offenses: These are behaviors of such a serious nature (or a host of violations of a lesser nature that have become unacceptably chronic) that the student's right to continue at Ascension Academy is called into question. Academic dishonesty; unacceptable use of technology; theft; destruction of property; reckless or disorderly conduct, extending to the use of a motor vehicle; on-campus use of tobacco; possession, use and/or distribution of alcohol, prescription or illegal drugs; possession of a weapon of any kind; bullying and/or sexual harassment: any of these concerns should be brought to the attention of the dean or assistant dean of students as soon as they have been reported or witnessed. In such cases the dean will investigate the charges and, in consultation with members of the Student Services Team (consisting of the deans of students, the school counselors and the head of school) determine an appropriate school response from the list of disciplinary consequences described below. Should the nature of the offense be sufficient to consider expulsion, the head of school will convene a Disciplinary Board to hear all sides in the matter and to render a judgment on the future relationship of that student with the school.

Disciplinary Boards will consist of the following persons:

The Head of School

The Dean of Students

The Middle School or High School Counselor One faculty member chosen by the student

The student and his/her parents/guardians will be called before this Board to offer his/her interpretation of the alleged offense and provide the board with an understanding of his/her grasp of our expectations for acceptable conduct. Furthermore, the Board will seek to determine whether or not this student wants to continue at the school and, if so, is capable of doing so. After the student and parents/guardians have been heard, the Disciplinary Board will come to a decision concerning whether or not the school will retain the student. If the decision is to retain, then a disciplinary response will be designed from the list of disciplinary consequences outlined below. If the decision is to expel a student, an appeal process is available to the family/guardians in which they may present their case to a body representing the school's Board of Regents. An appeal petition must be conveyed to the Chairman of the Board of Regents within a 24-hour period of the decision to expel, including reasons for the appeal, for the Board of Regents to consider hearing the appeal. If the Board consents to hear an appeal, a subcommittee of the Board (no less than 3 and no more than 5 members) will meet the student(s) and his/her parents/guardians followed by a closed meeting with the head of school.

The Board of Regents' appellate decision may uphold the Disciplinary Board or rescind that judgment, with no further appeals to be permitted.

Disciplinary Consequences

Faculty and staff responses to violations of acceptable conduct will be measured according to the seriousness of the offense and the chronic incidence of the infractions.

Teachers or staff members will normally handle such matters through firm but respectful verbal confrontation with students who have shown that they do not understand or will not abide by our expectations. Teachers will make every effort to address the student privately to maximize instruction and minimize embarrassment. The school does not sanction nor will permit corporal punishment directed by a teacher to a student, nor will we support corrective measures that involve intimidation or humiliation of a student.

Students reported to the dean or assistant dean of students for inappropriate conduct will be required to meet to discuss the reported concerns and outline a disciplinary response deemed appropriate by the dean handling the incident. Parents will be notified by that dean should the incident be considered serious or chronic. The school's response to disciplinary concerns may include any of the following:

Apologies: Students are required to offer a verbal and written apology to the teachers and/or students who were adversely affected by his or her conduct.

Lunch-time detentions: Students are allowed to get eat lunch for 10 minutes, then spend the remainder of the lunch period in an area separate from their classmates, proctored by a dean, counselor, head of school or a faculty designee.

After-school detentions: Students are required to stay after school from 3:45-4:45 p.m. on one or more days, proctored by a dean, counselor, head of school or a faculty designee.

In-school suspension: Students are required to come to school during a normal school day (8:00 a.m.-3:42 p.m.) but work in a room apart from their classmates. Suspensions can be assigned up to five days.

Community Service: Students are required to complete an agreed-upon number of community service hours outside the school, the particular type of service to be related to the nature of the particular conduct violation reported. In such a case a document will be given to the student to be filled out and signed by the person representing the organization where the community service was performed. This document must be turned into the dean of students upon completion.

Work Detail: Students are required to perform helpful maintenance or clean-up work for the school either after school or on the weekend to be scheduled with the agreement of the student's parents.

Disciplinary Probation: Students whose conduct warrants an in-school suspension will be placed on disciplinary probation for a period of time ranging from the remainder of a grading period to the rest of the academic year. Students on disciplinary probation are on notice that, should their conduct be such as to warrant consideration as a third level offense, they will automatically be brought to a Disciplinary Board wherein their continuation at Ascension Academy will be considered. Re-invitations are automatically "held" for any student on disciplinary probation pending review by the faculty at the final faculty meeting in May.

Students brought before a Disciplinary Board may be required to serve any of the aforementioned consequences or may face Expulsion from Ascension Academy. In such a case the student will be immediately separated from the school for the duration of that academic year with full forfeiture of any and all tuitions paid up to that time. Students expelled may be eligible for readmission to the school during the next academic year should they wish to apply for consideration, depending, however, on the severity of their expellable offense. Such applications will be reviewed by the head of school in consultation with the Student Services Team, the director of admission, and the Chairman of the Board of Regents, prior to a decision for reenrollment being granted.

Students of Ascension Academy need to understand that their relationship with the school is elective and subject to annual review. Conduct by students beyond the boundaries of the campus and outside the normal school daily and yearly calendar are nonetheless factored into the school's annual assessment of any person's qualifications to continue as a member of the Ascension community. Behavior that is deemed injurious to the reputation of the school or threatening to the welfare of members of the school community—when that behavior is corroborated by valid evidence or made a matter of public record--will be taken seriously by the school and will result in an appropriate disciplinary response, including possible separation of the student from Ascension Academy.

