
Upper School

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**HANDBOOK—
UPPER SCHOOL**

HONOR STATEMENT

Conducting oneself honorably is essential to living a meaningful and successful life. Honorable conduct is a gift that one gives to enhance the entire community. I choose to tell the truth, do my own work, treat others decently and fairly, and take responsibility for my actions. Integrity, goodness, and truthfulness are ideals I strive to live up to each day. By living honorably I respect myself and serve others.

The Honor Statement was approved by the Upper School after a lengthy set of discussions conducted in the spring of 2003. It is a significant and defining statement of the ideals of the entire Upper School community and serves as the basis for the creation of trust in our school. Among other things, it is a guiding document in all questions involving student discipline in the Upper School, including but not limited to referrals to the Honor Committee. It is important to understand that an Honor Statement is a living document and needs to be reaffirmed by each member of the community each year in order to carry any weight. At the same time, the entire community should contemplate the implications of the Honor Statement as the basis of trust in our community.

All Upper School students are expected to sign a copy of the Honor Statement and to uphold it as members in good standing of our community.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Philosophy and Standards

Encouraging students to pursue a challenging academic curriculum is one facet of the mission and purpose of St. Margaret's Episcopal School. Our academic program focuses not only on the acquisition of basic skills in a wide range of disciplines, but also aims to help students advance their critical thinking, intellectual independence, and ability to engage in advanced, rational inquiry, all in the context of the liberal arts tradition.

The following paragraphs contain a brief overview of major academic policies. The Upper School Curriculum Guide covers these matters in greater detail.

Graduation Requirements

St. Margaret's Upper School is a four-year program and requires its students to be enrolled in at least five academic courses per semester. (The only non-academic courses are Physical Education classes.) Requirements include the courses of study listed below. The current and complete description of departmental requirements and courses offered is provided in the Upper School Curriculum Guide.

Successful completion of the following courses is required for graduation.

- 4 years English (3 progressive levels; 2 semesters English IV or AP English)
- Mathematics completion through Algebra II as a minimum
- 3 years Lab Science (one year of physical science and one year of biological science required)
- Physical sciences include: Conceptual Physics, Physics, AP Physics, Chemistry and AP Chemistry
- Biological sciences include: Biology, AP Biology, AP Environmental Science and Physiology
- 3 years History (World Civilizations to 1750 and U.S. History required for Class of 2006 - 2008) (World History and U.S. History required for Class of 2009 and beyond)
- Foreign Language completion through level III
- 3 semesters Religion and Philosophy (one semester of scripture required)
- 1 year advanced study (1.0 credit beyond the graduation requirement in any discipline)
- 1 year Fine Arts
- 2 years Physical Education (including one semester of Human Development)

- Successful completion of the technology proficiency exam or Computer Applications (formerly Research Methods & Technology)

The minimum load for a student is 5 academic classes each semester. Students must pass all 5 classes each semester in order to graduate. If a student fails to pass a course for a semester, he or she must make up that semester course if it is a requisite course for graduation. If it is not a course necessary for graduation, the student must replace the unearned credit by taking an additional course (beyond the required five) in a subsequent semester.

Reports on Progress and Grading

Grades (letter and effort) and comments are sent home at the middle (quarter) and the end of each semester. Teachers prepare interim reports at the mid-point of each quarter for students whose grades are C- or below or whose grades have slipped dramatically. Along with grades and effort marks at the quarter grading periods (November and March), faculty also write personal comments on each student's performance and suggestions for improvement, as needed.

Grades Defined

- A Consistent and exceptional performance and achievement in all areas of the course
(A+ is not given, A = 4.0, A- = 3.7)
- B Commended performance and achievement in all areas of the course
(B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7)
- C Adequate performance and achievement in the course, but lacking commendatory strength in all areas of the course
(C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7)
- D Partial completion of the minimum requirements of a course or inadequate performance and achievement in the course
(D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0, D- = 0.7)
- F Failure to meet the minimum requirements of the course
(F = 0.0)

Note: While a "D" is a passing grade at St. Margaret's, most colleges and universities require "C" grades in core courses for admission. As a result, students must make up a "D" grade through a summer course by repeating the St. Margaret's course or risk jeopardizing their admission to certain colleges and universities.

Effort Grades

In addition to letter grades, effort grades are given as follows:

- 1) Very Good
- 2) Satisfactory
- 3) Needs Improvement
- 4) Unsatisfactory

Honor Roll

At the conclusion of each semester, students who have earned a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.49.

Headmaster's Honors

At the conclusion of each semester, students who have earned a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Homework, Quizzes, and Tests

- As a guideline, homework given in each class should not exceed 150 minutes per week, although older and more advanced students are in general asked to do more than younger ones or those not in AP classes.
- Tests are scheduled by the faculty on the test calendar.
- It is intended that no student be responsible for taking more than two tests on any given day. Make-up tests are not counted for the purposes of this limit.
- A “test” differs from a “quiz” (for which no such limitation is structured) in the time allocated for its completion and the relative importance it is given by the teachers. An examination intended to require more than 20 minutes in class is considered to be a “test.”

Study Hours and After-School Help

After-school help is available to students for every course. The exact schedule of these sessions is announced by each teacher. These sessions may, at the request of a student's advisor or teacher, become mandatory for that student. The tutorial/study time slot also may be utilized at the discretion of the faculty as a mandatory time for students to make up incomplete academic work, including quizzes, tests, or homework. Any student absence from such a required session may incur disciplinary action and the loss of opportunity to make-up the academic work in question.

Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is often available to students through department chairs. Students who tutor other students, whether for pay or as a service to their peers, are responsi-

ble for upholding the same academic ethics as teachers do. Peer tutoring is available in mathematics and for all writing projects and assignments. Through our chapter of Mu Alpha Theta, the national mathematics association for high school students, our students conduct one-on-one tutorial sessions with peers who need help beyond what can be provided in tutorial sessions with their teachers. Students seeking help can speak with Mrs. Murray, the Math Department Chair. Students may receive help with their writing assignments through the Writing Center, located in Room 87 and moderated by Mr. Clemmons. In both tutoring settings, students are not guided to correct answers but given assistance in recognizing flaws in reasoning or in understanding of the problem presented.

- Tutoring and other forms of outside assistance—whether from a teacher, a parent, a friend, or a tutor—should be limited to helping with skills, outlining, and ideas; specifically, it must not include the actual solving of problems or the writing of essays.
- Guidelines for Tutoring
 - 1) Before any tutor is employed, St. Margaret's encourages students to ask for help from their teachers.
 - 2) Teachers will occasionally recommend that students seek outside help.
 - 3) Before faculty members recommend tutoring, they must consult with the Principal and receive approval for the recommended tutoring.

Study Periods/Study Hall

Students who are not assigned to a course or classroom during any block of the school day enjoy a study or free block. During this time, students may not visit in the Highland Hall or Ortega Business Center parking lots nor any other area of campus which is not academically associated with the Upper School. If a student's advisor considers him or her to require more structure during a free block, the student may be assigned to a study hall where daily attendance is mandatory and roll is kept. Students may re-earn the privilege of a less heavily structured free block based upon their academic performance, good behavior, the recommendation of their faculty advisor, and the approval of the Principal.

Academic Integrity

The fundamental principle of academic integrity is always to give others due credit. Using the work of another as one's own without acknowledgement constitutes either plagiarism, collusion, or cheating, all of which are forms of academic fraud. St. Margaret's Episcopal School does not tolerate fraud of any kind. Violators of this fundamental principle may incur severe penalties up to and including expulsion.

- 1) Any work prepared by students outside of class which is presented in class is presumed to be entirely their own, unless they make proper acknowledgement of help

from a classmate, some other person (including a teacher, parent, friend, or tutor) or published source.

2) Every paper written by a student for a class must show appropriate documentation for:

- a) any direct quotation taken from another writer;
- b) any statement of fact which is not common knowledge available to any reader. (If there are questions, the student should contact the teacher);
- c) any developed idea or plan of organization or concept derived from another person or taken from another author;
- d) any diagram or illustration copied from another source;
- e) any colorful phrase or distinctive statement from another;
- f) sources cited by other writers within their own works.

3) Students are reminded that they should refuse to share their homework and papers with other students. If cheating occurs, a student who allowed a classmate to borrow work may be called before the Honor Committee and may be considered just as responsible as the classmate who borrowed the work.

Additional Information

Additional information on general academic policies, departments, specific classes, academic plans, honors and advanced placement courses, courses taken off-campus, eligibility for extra-curricular activities, examinations, and a wide range of other issues can be found in the Upper School Curriculum Guide, which is available both in hard copy and online.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

St. Margaret's requires all students to participate in the community service program by completing a minimum grade level requirement for grades nine through twelve. Students are encouraged to move beyond their grade level requirement and work on other projects and in other areas of their choosing. Often students find areas of special interest or need and pursue these beyond their requirements for the year.

Program of Service

All students are required to meet a minimum grade level requirement:

- *9th Grade: Service Begins at Home = 15 hours*

Fifteen hours of service within the St. Margaret's school community completed by the beginning of 10th grade.

- *10th grade: We Learn from Those We Serve = 15 hours*

Fifteen hours of person-to-person service to the special needs community completed by the beginning of 11th grade and during a 3-5 month period. The special needs includes individuals who are disabled, the frail or elderly, or disadvantaged students considered at risk.

- *11th and 12th grade (combined): Deepening Service = 40 hours*

Forty hours of service to one charitable organization. This person-to-person service occurs during one three-to-five-month period or program. The requirement must be fulfilled by graduation and students are expected to provide their own transportation.

Note: Students must complete the minimum grade level requirement each year before they are allowed to begin classes in the fall. A record of each student's completion, noncompletion, or make-up of community service is a part of the student's permanent record. Students must complete their requirements within the time that is prescribed by the school.

ATHLETICS

A tradition of wide and enthusiastic participation has developed at St. Margaret's Episcopal School, along with a tradition of winning, due to the dedication and commitment of the coaches and the dedication of a large number of talented scholar-athletes. Although tryouts are held and cuts are made, the emphasis is on participation and the development of skills. Team participation provides St. Margaret's students with an excellent opportunity to garner competitive experience and to develop school spirit and feelings of camaraderie. The end of each season often finds St. Margaret's teams having attained league championships as well as CIF play-off berths. Under the jurisdiction of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), St. Margaret's follows the rules of eligibility requirements for inter-school competition. The Upper School offers opportunities in 22 interscholastic sports in three seasons over the course of the year. Practices are typically held between the hours of 3:30 and 5:30 p.m., following school and tutorial sessions. Some practices and contests also may be scheduled for Saturdays.

Sports Physicals

St. Margaret's and the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) require the completion of sports physical forms for all students who wish to participate on the school teams. Students may not try out for a sport until their sports physicals are completed and on file in the Upper School office.

Summer Sports Programs and Leagues

During the summer, St. Margaret's offers current and prospective student-athletes the chance to participate in summer leagues for their sports. Complete information on the summer leagues is sent in the spring.

New Student-Athletes

The following notes are important for eighth graders and high school students who are trying out for a team for the first time.

a) The athletic department supports all students who want to participate in interscholastic athletics. While the school would like to offer team membership to all who want to make the necessary commitment for the season, space, court, time limitations, and minimum skill level do exist in some sports. For example, while the school does not make cuts for football and cross country, the coaches in girls' volleyball may need to make cuts after tryouts because limited gym space and availability of practice time do not allow for an unlimited number of players.

b) Some teams require special skills for participation and for students to experience success. In those particular sports, students will need additional practice, coaching, or training during the summer or before the season begins. Students can contact the Athletic Director or the specific coach for information on the special skills that may be needed.

c) High school interscholastic competition requires at least a three-hour, daily commitment for practice. On game days, the additional time required of student-athletes includes the distance traveled to and from the playing site, the actual time required for the contest or game, and additional time for the number of levels or teams who are competing on that day.

d) Once students make the team and begin practice, they are committing themselves to their teammates and hard work for the entire season. Since the school teams do practice and play matches over vacation periods, family schedules may need some adjustment so student-athletes can meet their commitments.

Athletic Participation

The school requires that students wear their full uniforms or appropriate school dress while traveling to and from games. St. Margaret's expects student-athletes to act in a courteous, responsible, and sportsman-like manner at all times. All athletes are required to follow the rules and guidelines of St. Margaret's Athletic Code, which must be signed by all student-athletes prior to their playing on school teams. All athletes should review the guidelines set down in the Athletic Code.

Rules for Playing on a Game Day

On the day of a game or competition, an athlete is required to attend all academic commitments in order to be eligible to compete that day. The only exceptions are for doctors appointments and the like in which case the athlete is required to bring a doctor's note of verification to school.

FINE ARTS PROGRAMS

In addition to courses offered in visual and performing arts (music, dance, and drama), the Upper School offers students opportunities to participate in after-school dramatic productions during the course of the year. Rehearsals are typically held from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., following classes and tutorial. Longer rehearsals may be expected during the last week prior to the opening of a show. The Highlander Chorale, Orchestra, and Pep Band also meet throughout the year. Students are encouraged to contact the Performing Arts Department for more detailed information.

STUDENT LIFE

As a complement to the rigorous academic program at St. Margaret's, along with the athletic programs, the arts, and the spiritual programs, a rich student life program has developed. It is St. Margaret's goal to provide students with as many areas as possible in which to develop their talents and to grow and succeed.

Chapel

During the weekly chapel service the Upper School joins in prayer, song, and reflection. This time is set aside and formal dress is worn out of respect for the faith and traditions that guide our school. To facilitate roll taking, students sit with their advisors in pews assigned in the first week of school. Attendance is required.

Student Government

Every student is encouraged to participate in student government at St. Margaret's. In addition to elections that are held for class officers, students also elect Associated Student Body (ASB) Officers each year in the spring. The purposes of student government include discussion of school issues, the exchange of ideas, the formulation of recommendations to the Principal, and the planning and implementation of varied activities and intramural programs. Students may hold only one major elected position such as ASB & Honor Committee member each year.

Activities

On Tuesdays and Fridays, St. Margaret's offers a scheduled activities period for students to participate in extracurricular clubs and organizations. The school strongly supports the involvement of students and faculty in their efforts to expand their practical experience and education as well as extend their assistance to those in need. Each full-time faculty member sponsors a club or a tutorial during the activity period. Some of the opportunities available include the following: Ambassadors, a young women's service organization; ASB, elected student government representatives; Debate Club, participating in debate competitions; Ecology Club, promoting awareness and action on behalf of our environment; Mock Trial, training for competitions through debate and trial simulations; Model United Nations, training and study in the field of International Relations; and Peer Counselors, offering trained support to students through the Chaplain's office.

This year's weekly schedule features a sixty-five minute Orchestra/ Choir/ Club Period. Every student will be a member of an active club during this time. Attendance is not optional.

School Functions

The Upper School hosts many events and activities over the course of the year which, in addition to their curricular or extracurricular functions, serve as focal points for the school's social life. Athletic events, dances, field or club trips, class retreats and celebrations associated with certain holidays may take place either on- or off-campus. Most of these events benefit from substantial student and ASB participation in their planning and implementation. Either the Director of Activities or the Director of Athletics (at athletic events), supported by the Deans, is responsible for the planning, coordination, and supervision of these events. It is important to note that all school rules apply to students in attendance at school activities whether these activities are held at St. Margaret's Episcopal School or any other location. Students may face a disciplinary response if their behavior is not in keeping with Upper School standards.

Dances

Dances are a wonderful way for our students, who do not all live near the school, to gather to socialize. To create a safe and orderly setting for dances, students must follow the following rules:

- a) Every student must sign in.
- b) Students must remain at the dance and may not leave until 30 minutes prior to its end. They will not need to sign out on leaving the dance.
- c) A student may bring only one non-St. Margaret's Episcopal School student/date to a dance. The St. Margaret's student is responsible for the guest's behavior and must complete a guest form in advance.
- d) Once a student enters the dance, he or she may not leave and return. Trips to the car are not permitted.
- e) Casual attire is appropriate unless otherwise stated. "Free" dress rules apply here.
- f) When theme dances are held, students may come in costume. Discounts on admission are offered to students when they come in costume.

The guidelines for formal dances differ from those noted above on a number of points. We will send home specific information on the winter semi-formal and the prom prior to the events.

Class Retreats

During first week of school, the school reserves a day so that each grade can participate in a retreat. The purposes of these retreats include 1) academic enrichment, 2) outdoor education, 3) leadership training and personal development, 4) class unity and teamwork, 5) reflection and spiritual development. Attendance is required of all

students and full-time faculty at the various sites. The pro-rated cost of the retreat is charged to each student's account.

School Support Systems

Advising and counseling. During every year of their St. Margaret's experience, students have as their advisor either a faculty, staff member, or an administrator. Although advisor/ advisee relationships differ, the main roles of an advisor are to monitor the academic progress of the student and to keep attuned to personal or family circumstances which might affect the student's performance and experience. In addition, advisors often act as liaisons between parents and the school, working with the Principal and Class Deans to arrange conferences when necessary or requested. This system augments the many close, informal faculty/student relationships that develop during the course of any school year.

College Counseling

St. Margaret's Episcopal School's college counseling office helps our students and their families feel as if they have designed and implemented a direct and appropriate journey for their next academic adventure. The formal college advising process begins during the second half of junior year.

Dozens of college and university representatives visit St. Margaret's in the fall to meet with our students. The college counselors are professionally active and maintain a national profile in order to proactively strengthen the relationship of St. Margaret's with colleges and universities.

Some of the components of St. Margaret's College Counseling Program include:

- a) individual meetings with students and their parents beginning the second half of junior year;
- b) specific workshops for students on the nuts and bolts of the college application, including the essay;
- c) workshops for parents on the college process throughout the year, some which are open to all divisions of SMES;
- d) an informational website located at: www.smes.org/college;
- e) advice on visiting colleges and admissions interviews;
- f) regular communication with the SMES community to share important information on applying to college;
- g) providing support to the deans and academic advisors on issues pertinent to student preparation for college.

Standardized Testing

The Preliminary SAT Test (PSAT) is given to all sophomores and juniors in October. All 10th and 11th graders are registered for the PSAT by the college counselors.

The SAT Reasoning Test (formerly the SAT I) is usually taken in the spring of the junior year and may be taken subsequently in consultation with the college counselors.

SAT II Subject Tests are required by a small group of colleges, including the University of California system. Most of our students will take two or three subject tests at the end of the junior year in some subjects, most likely in science, mathematics, history or literature. The college counselors will advise juniors on SAT II tests.

In rare cases, a teacher may recommend that a 9th or 10th student take an SAT II subject test at the completion of a course in which the student has shown particular strength.

Class Deans

The Class Deans are responsible for overseeing the Student Life Curriculum of the Upper School. They supervise, coordinate, and participate in all class activities, as well as facilitating grade level discussions among teachers. The Deans serve as disciplinary advisors and general liaisons for questions and concerns that might arise between students and faculty. They also monitor the progress of students in their grade levels and intervene as necessary.

Chaplains and School Psychologists

The school's chaplains, along with the school's psychologists, provide on-campus support and counseling for students as needed or as requested.

School Nurse

For all medical and health concerns throughout the year, the school's nurses serve the needs of all the students and faculty. Cell phones are not to be used by students to call parents during the school day to arrange for illness-related departure from school. Students may make illness-related calls in the Nurses' office.

Core Team

The Core Team is a committee of faculty, professionals from the Nurse's office, the chaplain, and the school psychologists that is responsible for responding to students at risk. The Core Team is defined by and aligned with the school's policy regarding notification of parents.

Peer Counselors

As part of the community service program, students selected as Peer Counselors are trained in listening skills that can offer a confidential, non-judgmental environment to fellow students. The Peer Counselors receive training in the following areas: substance abuse, eating disorders, relationships, communication, school difficulties, stress management, death, suicide, grief, rape, depression, pregnancy, family issues, and just being a friend. They also are trained in assessing when to make a referral to an appropriate professional (pediatrician, social worker, chaplain, or psychologist). The school psychologists serve as the peer counseling advisors.

Services for Students with Special Needs and Testing Requirements

In most cases, students achieve success in their academic work at St. Margaret's through the in-class instruction and tutorial help that teachers provide. However, a small number of students may need additional support and services beyond the normal instruction. With these few in mind, St. Margaret's offers accommodations for students who have completed the SMES Services for Students with Special Needs application and have been approved by the school psychologists and Upper School administrators. The documentation must comply with the guidelines in the application and the family is required to furnish documentation that the disability **substantially limits** a major life activity, such as learning.

Thus, if a student is or becomes eligible for accommodations, the school will do all that it can to respond to these special needs and make every reasonable effort to accommodate a student with a documented disability in accordance with applicable law.

St. Margaret's does require specific actions be taken by families as a condition of students' receiving special accommodations. Actions may include, but are not limited to, counseling from a licensed psychologist or licensed educational therapist. In some exceptional cases, if a student's needs require the school to alter significantly the nature of its program, the student may be asked to seek another school that can respond more completely to the condition or disability.

Counseling and Confidentiality

St. Margaret's respects the right of any student who sincerely desires to receive assistance in overcoming past problems or indiscretions which may involve violations of school standards to speak in confidence to a chaplain, counselor, nurse, faculty member, or peer counselor. The student must understand, however,

- a) that if the confidant(e) feels that the information at hand threatens the health or safety of the student, the school, or other members of the school community, the information must be disclosed;
- b) that if any information regarding the same violation(s) of school standards comes to light by some other independent means, the student's confession in confidence cannot

serve to shield him/her from the consequences of the violations known by the second separate source;

c) that any continued violations concerning the same or similar school standards which come to the attention of the person who received the original confidence will void the first confidence and expose the student to disciplinary action. Again, entering into a confidential relationship does not extend to a student any sort of blanket immunity from the school's disciplinary response.

Standards of Student Conduct and Student Responsibilities

The Honor Statement presents an ideal for the community, but it also offers a realistic guide to individual daily choices and reasoning. With care for the school's reputation, the school reserves the right to remove from the community students who violate the law or whose actions reflect negatively upon the school. However, in all less grievous instances, the Upper School stands by the Honor Code and the student's ability to apply it. More specifically, the Upper School refers students to the following guidelines for student conduct. Everyone in our community is expected to take these standards with the utmost seriousness.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs, and Other Illegal Substances

Parents and students should read closely the general policy of the school stated on page 5 of the General Section of the Parent-Student Handbook and Directory. Of related importance is the Ancillary Policy which follows.

Student deportment (on and off campus)

Students' behavior both on and off campus is not only a reflection on themselves, but also on the St. Margaret's Episcopal School community. Students who are arrested and convicted of crimes off-campus or who draw attention to themselves in ways that reflect negatively upon the school may face disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Respect, Trust, and Acceptance

Respect, trust, and acceptance underlie all healthy relations between faculty and students and between students. Prejudiced or demeaning, abusive speech and hazing or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

Sportsmanship

St. Margaret's Episcopal School expects all athletes and their families to conduct themselves in a well-behaved and disciplined manner at all times, including scrimmages and games. Arguing with officials and disrespectful behavior toward opposing players, fans, or school property at any time is unacceptable and warrants disciplinary action.

All of the school's athletic teams work hard and deserve student support. Whenever students attend athletic contests, they should cheer enthusiastically for the teams and always show respect for the officials, opposing players, and fans. Any cheer or behavior which demeans or denigrates an opposing school, team, officials, or players or diminishes the game or the athletes warrants serious disciplinary action.

Care of the Campus

We take particular pride in the appearance of the campus and we respect all of those who work hard to maintain it. The school appreciates being notified of facilities which may have been damaged, either accidentally or for any other reason. During lunch, students should deposit all waste in trash cans. Since students are allowed some latitude in selecting an area in which to eat and/or relax during lunchtime, care must be taken to see that each area is absolutely clean when they leave it. This means that students must occasionally pick up litter which belongs to another person.

Hand-Held Technology

Students are allowed to have cell phones on campus but the devices should be turned off and not be visible or audible during classes, chapel, club meetings, assemblies, or convocations. Furthermore, it is our expectation that student cell phone use between class periods be limited to urgent and serious business only. Casual use of cell phones between classes is strongly discouraged and students who break this rule will risk the temporary forfeiture of their phones. Casual cell phone use is permitted in the break/lunch areas. Text-messaging during classes, chapel, club meetings, assemblies, or convocations is also forbidden.

The use of iPods and other players has become so ubiquitous as to constitute a hindrance to conversation and dialogue. iPods and other players are allowed on campus but may not be visible or audible during classes, chapel, club meetings, assemblies, or convocations.

Using the photographic capacity of a cell phone in a locker room or changing area constitutes a serious breach of commonly understood forms of decency and respect for others and oneself.

Off-Campus Privileges for Seniors and Juniors

Seniors are given the privilege of leaving campus for lunch on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays unless otherwise announced. Juniors are typically accorded a similar privilege involving one day each week at some point during their second semester. It is critical to the continued existence of this privilege that the students who exercise it:

- a) have a signed permission slip on file with the school;
- b) stay in school uniform while off-campus;
- c) sign out and sign in;

- d) exhibit appropriate behavior when off-campus and;
- e) leave and return to campus on time.

Departures from these standards will result in either the suspension of this privilege, disciplinary action, or both as circumstances warrant.

Leaving Campus

Since the Upper School is a closed campus, students, even with parental permission, are not permitted to leave campus without the permission of a Dean or an administrator. Being off-campus without permission during the school day is a serious offense which may result in serious disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion.

Public Displays of Affection

Extended or inappropriate public gestures of intimacy or affection are inappropriate for the school environment. Violation of this policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Driving and Parking

The Campus Speed Limit is 10 mph. Driving and parking on campus are privileges which extend only to those members of the community who exercise them responsibly. As such, these privileges may be suspended or denied at the discretion of the school. For more complete information, students should see the special section on "Student Parking Privileges, On-Campus Driving, and School Safety."

DRESS CODE

The approved school colors are navy, white, red, and burgundy.

Informal Dress Code for Boys

- Khaki or navy blue shorts or pants. No cargo or corduroy shorts or pants.
- Polo shirt in a solid school color. An untucked polo shirt must have a straight hem. Small logos on polo shirts are permitted if the logo is small enough to be covered by a nickel.
- T-shirt in a solid school color with no logos may be worn underneath a polo shirt.
- White dress shirt appropriately buttoned and tucked in.
- Any SMES sweatshirt or, if a senior, any college sweatshirt.
- Any unmarked sweater or sweatshirt in a solid school color with no logos of any kind.
- No gray or black of any kind allowed on any article of clothing except on college sweatshirts.
- Closed-toe, Closed-heel shoes.

Formal Dress Code for Boys

- Navy blazer with school crest.
- White, formal dress shirt, short or long sleeved, appropriately buttoned and tucked in.
- Gray dress slacks; no Dickies, no gray jeans or non-dress pants.
- Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors must wear the school tie or bow tie; Seniors may wear any appropriate tie.
- No hooded sweatshirts are to be worn on Formal Dress days
- Polishable, leather dress shoes in black or brown, closed-toe, closed-heel.

Informal Dress Code for Girls

- Khaki or navy blue shorts, pants or skirts. Skirts must be no more than 4 inches from the top of the knee. Capri pants in navy or khaki are acceptable. Approved checkered gray skirt from True Grits may be worn on informal days. No cargo or corduroy shorts or pants.
- Polo shirt in a solid school color. An untucked polo shirt must have a straight hem. Small logos on polo shirts are permitted if the logo is small enough to be covered by a nickel.
- White dress shirt, appropriately buttoned and hemmed or tucked in.

- Any SMES sweatshirt or, if a senior, any college sweatshirt.
- Any unmarked sweater or sweatshirt in a solid school color with no logos of any kind.
- No gray or black of any kind allowed on any article of clothing except on college sweatshirts.
- Tights in solid school colors or black.
- Closed-toe, closed-heel shoes. No UGGs.

Formal Dress Code for Girls

- Navy blazer with school crest.
- White formal shirt, appropriately buttoned and straight-hemmed or tucked in.
- Formal gray skirts must be dress material/wool and must be no more than 4 inches from the top of the knee. Formal gray dress slacks may also be worn. No Dickies, gray jeans or non-dress pants.
- No hooded sweatshirts are to be worn on Formal Dress days
- Tights in solid school colors or black. Tights should be full length, footed and the tops should not be visible.
- Polishable, leather dress shoes in black, brown or a solid school color, closed-toe, closed-heel. Rain boots are acceptable on rainy days.

Student dress should always be clean, neat, presentable and appropriate. All clothes must fit properly and be in good repair. Clothing that is too revealing and exposes undergarments and midriffs, clothing that is too tight, too short, too baggy or too sloppy is not allowed.

Free Dress for Spirit Days

Free Dress will accompany selected days in which school spirit may be promoted. On certain designated days, a theme may be associated with a certain type of dress and students wishing to participate must dress accordingly or they may choose to wear their normal, informal dress. Clothing must conform to our generally conservative school community and the general criteria of good taste and appropriateness for our schools standards of decency. For example, jeans may be allowed, but blouses that are revealing or which expose the midriff or undergarments, pajamas, tank tops, and beach attire are not acceptable. Students who do not follow the letter and the spirit of the rule will be asked to change clothing, serve a detention, and/or be sent home.

Event Attire

While the school does not mandate school uniforms for school events outside of school hours whether on or off campus, it does expect that students always remember that the guidelines for personal appearance and dress are neatness, appropriateness for a grade 9 - 12 environment, and reasonable standards of decency in keeping with our traditions as an Episcopal school. Whether the focus is on shorts, shirts, skirts, or pants, clothing should not be overly tight, short, baggy, or revealing. Students may be asked to leave the event if they choose to wear inappropriate dress.

Notes

- a) Extreme styles of dress or appearance (particularly on “free dress” days), colorfully dyed (not found naturally on human heads!), unkempt or overly long hair (for boys) are unacceptable.
- b) Boys must be clean-shaven at all times.
- c) Facial jewelry (other than earrings for girls only) and visible tattoos are not allowed.
- d) Khaki refers not only to color but also to fabric and style for shorts, pants, and skirts. Jeans or jean styles, cords, or stretch pants, and other colors even when they are related to the “Khaki Family” are not acceptable.
- e) During cold and rainy weather, students may wear jackets (without a St. Margaret’s Episcopal School logo) if they are navy, red, or burgundy. Logos are not permitted.
- f) T-shirts, including those of athletic teams, are not acceptable on school days. The school does allow exceptions for special occasions.
- g) Full-length stockings for girls should be opaque, black, gray, solid navy, white, red, or burgundy.
- h) The color of acceptably visible undergarments, e.g. tube tops and T-shirts, must be navy, white, red, or burgundy.
- i) The formal uniform is worn only on Thursdays (chapel) and other special occasions announced by the school.
- j) No caps, hats, or sunglasses indoors. No hoods are to be worn up inside classrooms.

The school recognizes that it cannot specify every rule for dress and personal appearance. We expect students to adhere as much to the spirit of the dress code as they would to the letter of this code. If students diverge from the norm and move into questionable areas for their dress, they should seek the opinion of their class dean or an administrator prior to their wearing the particular article of clothing or risk appropriate consequences for their choices.

DRESS CODE

Responses to Dress Code Violations

A student who reports to class in violation of the dress code may not remain in class until the violation has been remedied. Responses to dress violations may include any of the following: conversation and warning, detention, suspension of lunch privileges, loss of the privilege to wear a skirt(obviously for girls), required removal or replacement of improper clothing, to suspension and removal from class and activities. For repeated, prominent, or flagrant violations of the dress code, students will be removed from class and sent home immediately. In general, we do not want issues of personal appearance and dress to distract students from the academic enterprise or in any way diminish the intellectual life or subvert the core values that we are trying to foster in our community. The administration reserves the right to modify these guidelines whenever needed.

ATTENDANCE

The school ascribes great importance to students' consistent and timely attendance to classes, physical education, athletic practices and contests, convocations, chapel, activities and appointments with teachers, administrators, advisors, and other required activities. Failure to meet any of these commitments may result in serious disciplinary consequences, up to and including dismissal in serious cases such as truancy.

Class attendance is absolutely requisite. A student with multiple unexcused absences can expect to be separated from the school for a period of time to be determined by the Principal. If, for any reason, there are more than eight absences (including Chapel) in any class in any one semester, credit for the course will be subject to review by the Principal, the student's advisor, class dean, the instructor, and the department chair. A loss of academic credit may occur if a student's total absences from class reach a level which significantly compromises her or his learning and the integrity of the course. A student's grade is affected by excessive classroom absences regardless of the reasons for the absences. Off-campus appointments should be scheduled outside regular school hours or during vacations, if at all possible.

a) Student absence due to illness. St. Margaret's asks parents to call the attendance office as soon as possible. Please note the attendance line is 661-4894 x244 and is available 24 hours a day. Parents may therefore call as soon as they determine their child is too ill to attend school. Please notify the attendance officer of any absences

that are not on the school calendar (including long weekends, college trips, funerals, etc.). A student is considered absent from a class 15 minutes after it has begun.

b) Student absence due to illness at school. When they become ill during school, students should report to the school Nurse. St. Margaret's Episcopal School will not allow a student to leave campus unless a parent picks up his/her child, or, in the case of a student driver, the parent is home to receive the student upon arrival or approves of the student being home alone. All students leaving campus for any reason must check out with the attendance office.

c) Tardiness. Students are allowed two (2) unexcused tardies in a class per quarter. A student is considered tardy up to 15 minutes after the beginning of class.

d) Students dismissed from class. In this case, students receive an unexcused absence. They must report promptly to their Dean.

e) Students leaving school before the end of the school day. If students must leave school for medical or other essential appointments, they must bring a note from home to the attendance office and receive permission from the attendance officer or an administrator to leave campus before the beginning of school.

f) Students returning from an excused absence. Students are not to go to any classes until they have checked in with the attendance office. For safety reasons, it is important that the attendance office knows who is on or off campus at all times. Students returning from an excused absence are responsible for contacting their teachers for all assignments, tests, or examinations as soon as they return. Failure to follow this procedure results in loss of credit for missing work.

h) Absences for personal convenience are regarded as unexcused absences. The student is responsible for all work covered during the time away from school, and the teacher is not under any obligation to hold a conference to teach the material that was missed. The student is expected to turn in all work either before the departure or upon returning, according to the preference of the teacher of each course. If a test is missed during an unexcused absence, the teacher is under no obligation to give a make-up test. If there is no make-up test given, an unsatisfactory grade may be recorded. If, at the end of an official grading period, the student has some unfinished work due to an unexcused absence, grades of unsatisfactory may be averaged.

i) Notification of Intended Absence. Whether or not an absence is excused, if a student knows in advance that he or she will be missing a day of class or even a part of a day, the student and his or her teachers must complete a "Notification of Intended Absence." The student must have his or her parent and dean sign it, make one copy and give it to the Attendance Officer (Mrs. Fincher), and keep the other to keep track of the assigned work. Students leaving during the day to participate in competitions do not need to complete this form, though they are responsible for class work that they have missed. Additionally, it is the athletes' responsibility to inform his /her teacher in advance of an intended absence for an athletic event although the form is unnecessary.

DISCIPLINE

“Discipline” is not a synonym for “punishment”—it is a way of learning through action. Just as a student who is struggling in a math class needs extra educational help, a student struggling in the Student Life curriculum of the school also deserves support. This support comes ideally with three crucial components: an acknowledgment of having made a mistake or a poor choice (once the facts are as clear as possible); an appropriate consequence, in the form of the loss of a privilege associated with the error; and some kind of appropriate education, whether in the form of conversation, reading and writing, or the assignment of some other appropriate task. In all its disciplinary responses, the Upper School seeks to be fair, consistent, swift, and compassionate. The school intends that its actions reflect the light of both its Honor Statement and the previously described Fundamental Standards as well as the traditional ideals of St. Margaret’s Episcopal School as a whole. In pursuit of this goal, a variety of disciplinary responses has evolved as appropriate responses to violations of the Standards of Student Conduct.

Some of the sanctions which teachers and deans may employ include the following:

- A warning, either verbal or written.
- The removal of a specific privilege.
- Detention, a restriction of a student’s customary freedom which may affect access to extracurricular activities, and/or require a student’s appearance before or after school under the supervision of faculty or staff. Periods of detention occur every Monday and Thursday at 3:15 pm.
- Probation, a final warning to a student and parent(s) that further violations will result in more severe disciplinary action or expulsion. Once placed on probation, a student must petition, at the appropriate time, to be removed from probationary status.
- Internal Suspension, the loss of all privileges on campus, except the right to attend class. See description below.
- External Suspension, generally reserved for behavior which is so out of keeping with the expectations of the school that removal from the community is warranted. This may range from a one-day suspension through expulsion. Separation from classes or school may involve loss of access to any extracurricular activities, including athletics, assemblies, dances, plays, or other school functions which may occur during the period of separation. School days missed due to separation are regarded as unexcused absences.

Please see descriptions of in-school and out of school suspension below.

- Withholding of a contract, due perhaps to repeated violations of Upper School standards or the failure to maintain satisfactory progress. On occasion, a student may be better served by a different educational program. In such a case, a student will be placed on “contract withhold” for the upcoming semester. A student’s failure to meet the conditions of the withheld contract may lead to that student’s dismissal from St. Margaret’s.

Disciplinary responses to particular student violations include the following consequences.

Grounds for detention

- 1) Tardiness (The lateness of a student carpool driver, oversleeping, missing transportation, car trouble, traffic problems, or staying home are unacceptable excuses.)
- 2) Inappropriate attire or personal appearance (Some dress and appearance issues may warrant suspension.)
- 3) Littering: students may not eat or drink inside school buildings except when a teacher permits.
- 4) Inappropriate conduct in school, at school functions, or on campus
- 5) Being asked by a teacher to leave any class for behavioral reasons
- 6) Using electronic equipment on campus, including beepers, cellular phones, electronic games, radios, cassette, and CD players in such a way as to disturb or disrupt the educational process
- 7) Gambling on or near the campus
- 8) Obscenities, profanity, or vulgarity
- 9) Failure to follow school traffic and parking regulations
- 10) Altering or tampering with any posted sign or bulletin board

Grounds for suspension

- 1) Truancy
- 2) Behavior which could cause personal injury or damage to property
- 3) Leaving campus without proper permission from the school
- 4) Tampering with or removing anything from another’s mailbox
- 4) Driving recklessly or inappropriately on or near campus
- 5) Smoking or the possession of tobacco on or near campus or at school events.
- 6) “Cutting” a school commitment or continued tardiness to commitments
- 7) Repeated incidents of inappropriate behavior and/or repeated violation of any standard of conduct in class, on campus, or at a school function
- 8) Unauthorized use of campus facilities

- 9) Plagiarism
- 10) Cheating, stealing, or lying
- 11) Blatant disrespect for a teacher or a substitute teacher
- 12) Failure to report to detention

Grounds for dismissal

- 1) Commission of a crime
- 2) Possession of, use of, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or possession of related paraphernalia at school or at a school related event
- 3) Cheating, lying, or stealing of an egregious nature or if repeated
- 4) Academic dishonesty
- 5) Vandalism against the school or personal property including defacement and destruction*
- 6) Tampering with school records, documents or files, or violating St. Margaret's Episcopal School's Acceptable Use Policy*
- 7) Possession or use of a firearm (weapon) or any dangerous item, such as a knife, firecracker, or other explosive
- 8) Intimidating physical or verbal behavior which threatens the safety or endangers the life of any member of the community
- 9) Repeated or flagrant violations of the Standards of Student Conduct
- 10) Flagrant insubordination or disobedience*
- 11) Incompatibility with the educational goals, fundamental standards, and mission of St. Margaret's Episcopal School. **

**Any action in these areas committed against another school or directed toward a student, faculty member, or administrator at that school is grounds for dismissal.*

The school reserves the right to review unsatisfactory conduct with a view to suspension, probation, or dismissal.

*** Incompatibility is defined as flagrant, routine, or consistent defiance of the basic routine of the school which includes, but is not limited to, repeated classroom absences or repeated failure to turn in classroom assignments, missing assigned punitive responsibilities, and repeated antagonistic or uncooperative behavior.*

Whenever St. Margaret's Episcopal School dismisses a student, the Principal announces the decision that results in the dismissal at an all-school assembly; the student's name is not mentioned. This announcement is made for educational purposes.

Self-Reported Infractions

Because telling the truth and taking responsibility for one's actions are important values in our school community, St. Margaret's Episcopal School appreciates any student who self-reports his or her violation of the Standards of Student Conduct. The members of the Honor Committee and the Principal will, if deemed appropriate, consider favorably such honesty and responsibility in their deliberations.

Internal Suspension

For disciplinary and academic reasons, students may be suspended in-school for a specified time. When students are suspended "internally," they must arrive at school at 7:45 a.m. in the Upper School Administrative offices where they will serve their suspension. Students may not attend or participate in any school events during the suspension.

External Suspension

For serious disciplinary and academic reasons, students may be suspended out-of-school for a specified time. Students do not return to class until their parents or legal guardians have met with the Principal or the Dean. During out-of-school suspensions, students may not attend any classes, be present on campus for any reason, and may not participate in or support any extracurricular activity during the suspension. The suspension is documented in the student's file.

Disciplinary Probation

A student whose conduct warrants severe sanction may be placed on Disciplinary Probation. The Principal or the students' dean will determine the conditions for probation. Students on probation are subject to immediate dismissal if they violate the conditions of the probation.

Reporting of infractions to colleges and universities

It is the policy of St. Margaret's Episcopal School to notify colleges of a serious disciplinary matter when this substantially affects a student's application and profile. If a student has been subject to serious discipline while at St. Margaret's, this matter may be noted in the School Recommendation and/or Secondary School Report Form. In the event that a serious disciplinary infraction occurs after the application forms have been sent, St. Margaret's Episcopal School and the student will notify the admission offices of the colleges to which the student has applied of the disciplinary infraction.

DISCIPLINE

The Honor Committee

St. Margaret's has for many years authorized an Honor Committee to assist the Principal and the Headmaster in assessing responsibility and consequences for students accused of acts for which suspension or expulsion may result. The Committee's primary obligation is to evaluate the facts of the case, understand the perspective of the accused student, uphold the Honor Statement and the rules and general order of the school, and ultimately recommend a response.

The Assistant Principal of the Upper School is present at all meetings and guides the Committee through the due process of its deliberations. In the end, the Committee reports to the Principal, who may accept in full, alter, or reject the recommendation of the Committee. The Principal then makes the final recommendation to the Headmaster who has full and final decision-making in all such matters. Once a decision has been made, the Principal and/or Headmaster will inform the Upper School community.

Student-Teacher Interaction

An informal but important commitment that we ask of students is to speak frankly with their teachers about problems they may have in their classes. Rather than complain to parents or friends, students should first make the effort to meet with the teacher to examine the issue and consider solutions. This simple strategy enables the student to take responsibility for his or her actions and builds trust between teacher and student. If direct discussion does not resolve the difficulty, the student should speak with his or her advisor, class dean, or the appropriate department chair.

STUDENT PARKING PRIVILEGES, SCHOOL SAFETY

The school requires all students who drive to school to complete a parking form and obtain a parking hang tag permit that must be displayed on the rear-view mirror of the car that is driven to school. All parking for Upper School students is on the north side of the Ortega Village Center in spaces specifically designated for St. Margaret's parking (yellow-curbed spaces). All students must park in the Ortega Village Center, unless specifically authorized to do otherwise. In all cases, students may not go to their cars at any time during the school day, unless they receive permission from an administrator to do so.

During construction, there is no vehicular access or parking around the Upper School, with the exception of a limited number of short-term visitor spaces for parents immediately inside the Upper School entrance.

Student Driving

Students who drive on campus without permission (have not completed or submitted their permits, or have them displayed) between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. receive a one month suspension of their driving privileges (first offense), five months (second offense), one year (third offense). If a student drives on campus during any suspension of driving privileges, the student loses on-campus driving privileges for a year and appears before the Honor Committee. Also, a student's failure to observe the school's traffic patterns will mean detention (other disciplinary sanctions and fines as appropriate) and the loss of driving privileges for one month (first offense), five months (second offense), one year (third offense). Since the roads on campus also serve as walkways for students, faculty, parents, and visitors, all drivers must drive slowly (10 m.p.h.) and be constantly aware of the foot traffic which usually forgets about cars! Excessive speed or reckless driving at any time is dangerous and is grounds for serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Because the school wants to maintain a safe traffic pattern on campus and eliminate the possibility of accidents, students will receive detention or other disciplinary sanctions as appropriate, and lose their driving privileges for violations.

Campus Limits

In general, students may not go to their cars at any time during the school day unless they receive permission from an administrator to do so. Students will receive up to two days of suspension for leaving campus or parking in unapproved spaces in the center, and may have their vehicle towed by the center.

Campus Information and Student Services

Bulletin Boards

Students may post notices on school bulletin boards after the appropriate administrator, coach, or secretary approves the note. Students may not post notices, signs, or similar items on any wall or other area around the school without prior approval.

Campus Security

St. Margaret's Episcopal School uses the services of unarmed security guards. It is the guard's responsibility to escort unauthorized users of campus facilities and grounds off the property. Students must be accompanied by St. Margaret's Episcopal School staff or faculty when using campus facilities in the evening or on the weekend.

Although the atmosphere on campus is relaxed, theft occasionally occurs. Theft includes everything from permanently "borrowing" a book left out or eating someone else's lunch to taking an unattended camera, purse, or bag. Since any theft threatens the trust necessary for nurturing community, such theft is grounds for dismissal from St. Margaret's Episcopal School. The easiest and most secure way of preventing theft is for students to lock their belongings in their lockers, which are provided by the school.

Also, if students participate in after school activities or sports, they should either use their lockers or keep backpacks and sports bags with them at all times. Students should not leave bags in the locker room, around the gym, or school area because no formal supervision exists in these areas after school. If students observe any suspicious behavior by off-campus visitors, they should report the behavior immediately to a teacher or administrator.

Off-Campus Privileges

Since St. Margaret's Episcopal School is responsible for students' safety during school hours, St. Margaret's Episcopal School does not permit students to leave campus except in the manner outlined under Standards of Student Conduct; students must have permission from a school administrator to leave campus.

OTHER

Faculty Mailboxes

If students wish to place something in an Upper School faculty mailbox, they must leave it in the front office or ask a teacher or secretary to assist them.

Student Lockers

The school provides lockers for students. Though these lockers are intended for the secure storage of students' personal effects, all lockers are the property of the school and may, under special circumstances, be subject to entry by the school. Students should take care to occupy only the locker which has been assigned to them and keep their locker locked at all times.

Lost and Found

Many times students report personal items as stolen when, in fact, they are lost or have been returned to the office or lost and found and never picked up! Also, a student will report that a backpack was stolen when, in fact, another student merely picked up the backpack by mistake; since so many backpacks look alike, this mistake is common.

St. Margaret's Episcopal School asks students to check with the Upper School office, the lost and found, and P.E. department if they have lost something of value. St. Margaret's Episcopal School gives all unclaimed articles to needy individuals and families in the Orange County area.

Visitors and Guests

All visitors and guests to campus must be cleared in advance before they can attend classes or other school events. Specifically, St. Margaret's Episcopal School students need the approval of their teachers and a pass from the Dean before they can bring any visitors or guests on campus. Student visitors must keep their passes in their possession at all times. Because St. Margaret's is concerned about student safety, a student's failure to obtain clearance in advance can mean detention. St. Margaret's Episcopal School students are responsible for their guests at all times.