

**Lancaster Mennonite High School**  
**Student Handbook**  
**School Policies**  
**2011-12**

*This handbook is not a comprehensive listing of school rules and policies, but rather a summary of some of the rules and policies for your convenience. Please refer to the Policy Manual for more complete rules and policies. LMH reserves the right to interpret and apply, and modify or adopt, with or without notice, its rules and policies, in its discretion.*

Welcome to Lancaster Mennonite High School. Lancaster Mennonite School offers a PreK-12 comprehensive education in a nurturing and diverse environment that prepares students to be lifelong learners. Centered in Christ and committed to educational excellence in a community setting, the school exists to transform students so they can change our world through Christlike love, peacemaking, and service. A basic LMH belief is that "education is a partnership of family, congregation, and school."

**Standards for Guiding our Life Together**

**GENERAL**- School standards and expectations are established to guide our life together. While reasonable persons may have different opinions about nearly all of the standards, a common understanding is needed to live and work together as a school. The purpose of this handbook is to communicate standards and expectations. Basic to a positive life together is respect of students, staff, property, and the educational process.

Not all situations are addressed. However, any action that disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. A summation of expectations in relationships is the Golden Rule, which is to treat others the way you want to be treated. This will result in a community of mutual respect and positive growth. In addition to the general school standards, teachers may establish specific standards in their classrooms.

School policies apply to students until they graduate, regardless of age. This includes parental access to student records.

**ATTENDANCE**

All students enrolled in Lancaster Mennonite High School are expected to attend school and classes on a regular basis. Pennsylvania law requires regular school attendance until the age of 17. Students absent from class are responsible for making up missed work.

**LEGAL AND EXCUSED ABSENCES** – Absences may be excused for illness, death in the immediate family, impassable roads, or other urgent reason when approved by the principal or the principal's designee. With pre-approval, educational trips, church activities,

and college visits may also be excused. Unexcused absences include those for job interviews, care for younger children, oversleeping, missed bus, personal problems, hunting or fishing, shopping, hair appointments, farm shows (unless exhibiting), and trips (unless educational and pre-approved).

Parents should call the school attendance line (299-0436 ext 550) whenever their student will be absent from or late to school. If the attendance office does not receive a lawful excuse in writing or by phone within five days of a student's return to school following an absence, the absence is recorded as unexcused.

**ILLEGAL AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** – When a student is under 17, Lancaster Mennonite High School is required to report excessive unexcused absences to the public school district in which the student resides. School district officials may take action against the student and the parents that could result in fines, participation in court-mandated programs, and/or suspension of the student's driving privileges.

After age 17, unexcused absences are no longer illegal. More than three days of unexcused absences for students above 17 are considered excessive and will not meet minimum attendance requirements. Underclassmen, 17 or older, who accumulate more than three unexcused days may need to make up each unexcused day prior to the next academic year. Seniors who have enough academic credits for graduation but fail to meet the minimum attendance requirements will be allowed to participate in commencement; however, these students will not receive an LMH diploma until the days of excessive absence have been made up.

LMH does not give a penalty for the first three unexcused absences during the school year; however, each additional unexcused day results in a 1% point deduction from the quarter grade in each course. Truancy from school and/or individual classes (unexcused absences without parental permission prior to the absence) results in a 2% point deduction from the quarter grade in each class missed. Students have the option of completing community service at a local non-profit organization, one hour for each percentage point for each class, in place of receiving grade deductions. Community service hours need to be verified by a supervisor at the non-profit organization, and must be completed before the end of the academic quarter to avoid grade deductions.

After the fifth absence for illness in a school year, the administration may require a note from a physician for all future absences for illness in order to record the absence as excused.

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**EDUCATIONAL TRIPS** – A request for excusing an educational trip is to be made at least five school days in advance of the requested absence. This policy applies to college visits, church activities, and educational trips with a parent or other responsible adult. Educational Trip Request Forms are available in the school office and on the school website. To maintain satisfactory academic performance, the maximum number of days excused per school year should not exceed five.

**TARDY TO SCHOOL** – A tardy to school is classified as excused or unexcused using the same criteria as for general absences. Each student is permitted one unexcused tardy to school per semester without penalty. Students are assigned to an after-school detention for their second through fifth tardy to school. Parents will be notified when the first detention (for the second tardy) is assigned. For the sixth and any subsequent tardy to school, the student will meet with an administrator to devise a plan to modify the behavior.

Any student who signs in at the office more than 45 minutes after the school day begins is recorded as absent for one-half day. Students are recorded as absent for an entire day if they miss more than one-half of a school day.

With permission of the coach, director, or other main advisor, students participating in a school-sponsored activity who are not able to leave campus before 11:00 p.m. will not be recorded as late-unexcused if they sign in at the office and are in class by the start of period 2.

Students who arrive and sign in at school after 12:00 p.m. are not permitted to participate in any extra or co-curricular activity for the remainder of the day.

**EARLY DISMISSAL** – An early dismissal requires a written request or a call from a parent stating the reason for the request and time for the dismissal and return. The written request or call shall be received at the office no later than 8:15 a.m. Before leaving and when returning, students must report to the office.

**TARDINESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY** – Without a pass from the office or a previous teacher, a student who is late to class is unexcused. Teachers will respond appropriately to unexcused tardies.

### **SCHOOL STANDARDS**

#### **GENERAL CONDUCT & UNDERSTANDINGS**

School conduct is to be of a nature that promotes our mission in education. Our goal is to build a positive learning community with conduct that enhances the educational process.

LMH expects students to develop self-discipline and build positive relationships with others. Teachers respond appropriately when school standards and expectations are violated.

The goal of discipline is not punishment, but rather changed behavior. It is expected that students will respect and work with teachers so that few discipline cases are referred to the principal. In cases where the unacceptable conduct does not change, the discipline response will depend on both the incident and the student's cumulative conduct record.

The school's response may include, but is not limited to, a community service assignment, a conference, a detention, the development of a plan to change behavior, a fine, suspension, expulsion, or other actions deemed appropriate in the school's discretion. At times the student's pastor may be included in the process. Restorative justice conferences may be used to repair harm caused by unacceptable behavior. In all cases, the goal is maintaining a positive school and enabling individual growth. Being a student at LMH is a privilege that is based upon meeting expectations.

The school will respond to out-of-school behavior when it could affect in-school behavior, have a negative effect on other students, interfere with the school's operations, or violate the standards of conduct the school expects of its students. If a student experiences an arrest or conviction, the school will conduct a review of the situation, including whether continued enrollment is appropriate.

- Graybill Hall is closed during the school day.
- Snowballs may not be thrown on campus.
- When students arrive on campus, whether by bus or car, they must remain on campus until school is dismissed. The 2160 property is off campus.
- Students may not cross over the Mill Stream at any time unless attending an athletic competition, playing tennis, are under direct staff supervision, or have staff permission.
- Students must be in school for their afternoon classes to be eligible to participate in afternoon or evening co-curricular activities.
- Students are expected to leave campus immediately at the close of the school day. Students must leave campus no later than 4:00 p.m. unless attending an official school event or under the direct supervision of a staff member.
- Bulletin board announcements must be initialed by an administrator before they may be displayed.

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- Students are allowed to be in the halls during class time and during their lunch period only if they have a pass.
- Soliciting or literature distribution is not permitted on campus without administrative approval.
- Fundraising on or off campus is permitted only through administrative approval.
- No eating or drinking from open containers is allowed in school except in designated areas or when included in the educational program.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices (such as portable media players) may be used before and after school, in the halls between class periods, and in the dining hall during lunch periods. They may be used during class time only with the permission of the supervising teacher.
- Displays of affection are not allowed on campus.
- Skateboards are not permitted on campus.
- The school is not liable for damages to musical instruments, electronic devices, or any personal items brought on campus.

**DETENTION** - Detention is held most Tuesdays and Thursdays after school from 3:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Once scheduled, detention dates cannot generally be changed. Students who fail to report to an assigned detention will meet with an administrator to develop a plan for changed behavior that may include additional detentions, a fine, suspension, or other actions deemed appropriate in the school's discretion.

**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION** – A school administrator may suspend a student for any behavior that damages or threatens to harm our school community, or when suspension is otherwise determined to be in the best interest of the school community. Examples of such behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Violence (physical and verbal, including bullying).
- Actions involving injury to persons or destruction or misuse of property.
- Violation of local, state, or federal laws.
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs on campus and at off-campus school functions.
- Abuse of legal drugs.
- Truancy from school or classes.
- Accumulation and continuation of minor offenses.

- Other conduct that is disrespectful to persons or disruptive of the educational process.

A school administrator may suspend a student, either in school or out of school, for up to thirty days. Since the ultimate goal of the suspension is reconciliation and healing, one response cannot fit every student. Decisions to suspend will take into account relevant factors such as the developmental stage of the student, behavior patterns, and whether the offending actions were spontaneous or pre-meditated.

All suspensions result in an unsatisfactory citizenship grade. In all cases of exclusion from classes, the student must be informed of the reason for the suspension **and** given an opportunity to respond before the suspension is effective, if deemed feasible by the administrator. Parents must be notified of the action, but not necessarily before it is enforced.

When a student is suspended, the student or parent may request an informal hearing. An informal hearing is a meeting with the appropriate school official designated by the principal to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended and to allow the student to show why the student should not be suspended. Whenever appropriate, a student should participate in a restorative meeting before returning to classes. This is an important step for reconciliation and healing.

When the restorative process fails to bring a satisfactory reconciliation, or where there is an unwillingness to change behavior, or a need for a lengthier separation from the school community, or when otherwise deemed to be in the best interest of the school community, an administrative team comprised of the superintendent and building principals may expel a student from school for the remainder of the school year.

When a student is expelled, the student or a parent may request an informal hearing. An informal hearing is a meeting with the appropriate school official designated by the superintendent to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being expelled and to allow the student to show why the student should not be expelled. If a student or parent disagrees with the expulsion, the student or the parent may appeal to the Executive Board, which shall have the option of reviewing the record or appointing a Board committee to conduct a hearing. A decision of the majority of the Board committee shall be final and binding on the student and on the school.

**APPEARANCE** – LMH desires that students come to school in neat, clean and modest clothing that is

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appropriate to create a positive Christian educational atmosphere. For boys and girls, shirts (with sleeves) manufactured as outerwear and dress or denim slacks, along with skirts or dresses for girls, meet the school standards. The following standards are in effect immediately upon entering the buildings in the mornings until exiting the buildings at the end of the day.

- Girls' dresses or skirts shall be long enough to be clearly modest, being no more than two inches shorter than the top of the knee. Dress or denim shorts that are not shorter than four inches above the top of the knee are appropriate school dress. Cut-offs or frayed hems do not meet school standards.
- Pictures, messages, and symbols on clothing and jewelry shall be in keeping with the mission and values of the school. Examples that do not meet school standards include those related to tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, any music group, or pictures/messages/symbols with sexual or racist connotations.
- Hats, form-fitting clothing, clothing with holes, clothing that exposes the midriff, bandannas, distinctive military or camouflage clothing, body piercing (other than the ears), unusual hair colors and styles, and clothing or jewelry that is disruptive to the educational process are not allowed during the school day. Jewelry may not be worn in some classes or co-curricular activities where safety is an issue such as, but not limited to, ag mechanics labs, technology education, physical education classes, and athletics. Appropriate footwear should be worn.

#### **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

**STUDENT COUNCIL** – Student Council implements programs to benefit the student body and school community.

**NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY** – Sophomores, juniors, and seniors, on the basis of scholarship, service, leadership, and character, are elected by the faculty to the LMH Chapter of the National Honor Society. To remain in NHS, members must stay on the honor roll.

**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS** – Before students may begin practice in any sport, they must give the coach the required parent permission/physical examination, eligibility, and emergency forms.

**PUBLICATIONS** – *Laurel Wreath* is the school yearbook published each spring as a record of campus personnel and activities.

*Millstream* is the school newspaper published monthly September through May.

*Silhouette* is the school literary arts magazine which gives students a chance to have their drawing, photography and writing published.

**FFA** – FFA provides leadership training and other activities for agricultural students.

**MUSIC** – LMH provides students with a choice of several different choral groups and an orchestra in which to develop their musical interests. Most of these groups participate in public programs.

**OTHER CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** – In addition to the activities listed above, a variety of other opportunities are offered, such as clubs and fine arts experiences.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**CHAPEL** – A gathering of the school community is scheduled most school days. Students are expected to be seated in their assigned seats when the bell sounds at the start of the period. To maintain an atmosphere of respect and courtesy, students should avoid sleeping, slouching, propping feet on the benches, and working on class assignments. No food or drink is permitted in the auditorium.

**DINING HALL CODE** – Our goal is to have a positive dining atmosphere. Running or butting in line is not permitted. Food must be eaten in the dining hall.

Trays must be returned to the dishwasher window. Students may wait inside the dining hall or in the lobby after eating.

**DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT** - Lancaster Mennonite School admits students of any race, color, national origin, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational, admissions, scholarship, loan, athletic, and other school-administered programs and policies. Any discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, or gender is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Any allegation of harassment or discrimination will be promptly investigated.

If a student suffers any such harassment or discrimination by a student, a staff member, or faculty member or knows of such harassment or discrimination, the student or the student's parents immediately should report such conduct to a teacher, the student's principal or assistant principal, guidance counselor, or the school's superintendent. The school will not retaliate against a student who makes such a

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report. All such reports will be investigated promptly by the school. If the school determines that harassment or discrimination has occurred, the offending student, staff member, or faculty member will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the school.

**DRIVING TO SCHOOL** – Student drivers may park in any campus parking lot. All cars must be parked in designated parking spaces. Drivers of cars not parked in a designated parking space may be fined or towed at the driver's expense. Costs could exceed \$75.00. Students are not to be in their cars or the parking lot during the school day.

The campus speed limit is 5 miles per hour. The school is not liable for damage to any vehicles brought on campus.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS** – Eligibility requirements apply to Student Council, Campus Chorale, *Millstream*, *Laurel Wreath*, interscholastic athletics, National Honor Society, school plays, FFA officers, student exchange groups, and participants in school groups that function beyond LMH and represent the school in the community.

Participation in these activities is a privilege and requires a satisfactory academic and conduct report. Academic eligibility is determined weekly and at the end of each quarter. Two or more F's at the end of a week results in ineligibility for the next week. Two or more F's at the end of a quarter results in a 20 day ineligibility beginning with the day of report card distribution.

Normally students receive one week of ineligibility for each day of school suspension for discipline reasons. An unsatisfactory conduct record at the end of a quarter or the accumulation of unsatisfactory activities may result in a time of ineligibility. Students who are ineligible or in suspension may not practice or play with the team.

Students participating in a co-curricular activity must sign a substance use policy that is in effect for the entire school year and during the summer when involved with a school activity. Each co-curricular activity may develop additional policies specific to the activity.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS** - Parents can learn about weather –related emergency school closings by calling the school at 717-299-0436, ext 561 or by tuning in to these stations:

- FM – WDAC (94.5), WJTL (90.3), WITF (89.5), BOB (94.9), WHP (580), KISS (99.3), WRVW (97.3), WLAN (97)
- TV – WGAL (Channel 8), WHP-CBS (Channel 21, Channel 15)

**GRADE CLASSIFICATION** – In order to be classified as any official member of a class, a student must have successfully completed the following minimum credits of work:

Sophomores .....	5.5
Juniors .....	11
Seniors .....	17

Students will be permitted to attend school-sponsored social events with their class even if they do not meet the minimum credit requirements. However, a senior class trip can only be taken once.

**GRADING STANDARDS** – The following percentages are used in assigning grades:

A Superior	90-100
B Good	80-89
C Average	70-79
D Below Average	60-69
F Unsatisfactory	Below 60

An incomplete is given only for emergency reasons approved in advance by the teacher and the school counselor. Such a grade must be removed within two weeks after the student's return to school or it automatically becomes an F.

**LOST AND FOUND** – Items found on campus are to be turned in to the office to be placed in the lost and found box. Such items may be redeemed at a cost of \$0.50 an article.

**MEDIA CENTER** – Students using the media center are expected to maintain a quiet atmosphere at all times. The media center is open from 7:50 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on school days. Materials which may be taken from the media center must be signed out. Such materials should be returned promptly so they will be available to others. All materials are to be returned to the "book drop" at the circulation desk.

**SCHEDULE CHANGES** – Dropping or adding courses after the opening of school will be made only for good reasons and with permission of parents, teachers, and a guidance counselor.

No student may drop any course after the first three weeks except for urgent health reasons. In such cases, the students will not receive credit for the dropped course(s). A WP (withdrawn passing) or WF (withdrawn failing) will be entered on the record, based on whether the student was passing or failing at the time of withdrawal.

**SCHOOL LOCKERS** – Each student is assigned a locker for school use. Students are assigned individual lockers. Lockers are the property of the school and can be searched.

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Students are responsible for the security of anything of value that is brought to school. Students are assigned individual lockers. For reasons of health and safety, students are responsible for the locker assigned to them. Combination locks may be rented for a \$10.00 fee. Fees are refundable when locks are returned.

**VISITORS** – Prospective LMH students are encouraged to visit the school. Students wanting to bring a visitor, and visitors themselves, must bring written permission from their parents. All visitors are required to stop at the office to receive a visitor's pass before going to any other part of the school. Visitors cannot be accepted the last week of each semester.

Parents are invited to visit classes at any time following registration at the office. Children under grade 6 may visit if accompanied by their parents.

**STUDY HALLS** – Students are assigned a seat for study periods. There is to be no communication among students without permission. Students shall return to the study hall before the end of each period.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- To be on the honor roll a student must achieve a grade of 3.5 in all classes with no grade lower than a C (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) and a citizenship grade of "G" (Good).
- Students desiring work permits for employment must obtain them from the school district in which they reside.
- Students who are injured while participating in any school function must stop at the office for a special insurance form to assure coverage from the school's insurance company.
- To date approximately 10,180 students have graduated from LMH.
- The school motto is "Teach me thy way, O Lord." Psalm 86:11
- Communication is important to the successful operation of LMH. You can communicate with LMH in the following ways:

Phone: 717-299-0436  
Ext. 550 Attendance (call before 8:15 a.m.  
The morning of an absence)  
Ext. 561 Weather related delays & closings  
Ext. 562 Weekly athletic schedule  
Ext. 563 Status of the day's athletic events  
Email: Email addresses listed at  
[www.lancastermennonite.org](http://www.lancastermennonite.org)  
FAX: 717-299-0823  
Website: [www.lancastermennonite.org](http://www.lancastermennonite.org)