



Centered in Christ • Transforming Lives • Changing our World

LANCASTER MENNONITE SCHOOL

Locust Grove Campus

FAMILY HANDBOOK

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 Christ like love, peacemaking, and service.

Lancaster Mennonite School is accredited by
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
Mennonite Education Agency (MEA)

Lancaster Mennonite School–Locust Grove is a member of:
Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools (LACMS)
Mennonite Schools Council (MSC)

The school is an agency of the Lancaster and Atlantic Coast Conferences of Mennonite Church USA. As a Mennonite school, we follow the *Mennonite Confession of Faith* and the Anabaptist/Mennonite interpretations of Scripture. The school teaches the doctrines of peace, nonresistance and love for all persons as taught by Jesus.

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School Motto
“*Teach Me Thy Way*”

Core Values

1. Education is centered in Jesus Christ and its purpose is to help students understand what it means to live as a reconciled and reconciling people.
2. The theological foundation of the school is based on the authority of the Bible, as understood in *The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
3. The school is a missional agency of the Atlantic Coast and Lancaster conferences of Mennonite Church USA. An excellent education is holistic in that it enables students to grow academically, socially, spiritually and physically.
4. Education is not an end in itself, but is part of the larger purpose of passing on the faith. It invites students into a vital relationship with Jesus Christ and the community of faith and nurtures them to all that God intends them to be.
5. Educational excellence grows out of a learning community where students, teachers and parents have mutual respect for each other.
6. An articulated K-12 spiritual formation program invites students to grow in relationship to Jesus Christ and the community of faith.
7. Faculty are selected who are in agreement with the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and with a vision and mission of the school.
8. A culturally diverse and educationally inclusive learning community is important for preparing students for life in the church and local and global community.
9. Education is a partnership of home, church and school.
10. Students are nurtured to develop Christian character as they reflect the life of Jesus Christ as servant and peacemaker.
11. Co-curriculars are an integral part of an excellent educational program.
12. Christ-centeredness permeates all aspects of the educational program as faith and learning are integrated.
13. Strong student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships are formed in an Anabaptist learning community.
14. Each student is valued as an individual, uniquely created by God.

Educational Outcomes

1. Students will be centered in Jesus Christ and will know the biblical story and the history of the Christian Church, including the Anabaptist story and theology.
2. Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for further learning and for a successful career.
3. Students will demonstrate critical thinking, conflict resolution skills, disciplines of organization and responsibility, ethical decision making, problem solving, interpersonal skills, and interdependence in relationships.
4. Students will be responsible stewards of the earth's resources and their personal gifts, and they will view their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.
5. Students will choose occupations where they can follow the example of Jesus Christ as servant and peace builder in daily life.
6. Students will build strong relationships with family and church.
7. Students will value cultural diversity and will respect others different from themselves while holding to their personal values and faith.
8. Students will continue to grow in relationship with God and the community of faith and be a presence of Christ in the world.

Admissions

Admissions and tuition information is available from the Locust Grove Campus office as well as from the Admissions Office at Lancaster Mennonite School, 2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA, 17602. Phone: (717) 299-0436; Fax: (717) 299-0823; email: horstcl@lancastermennonite.org Web site: www.lancastermennonite.org

The school's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christlike. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter to or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

Parent-School Relationship

- It is the policy of the Lancaster Mennonite School system to plan activities that encourage the parent-teacher partnership in the education of their children/students and build positive relationships between the home and school.
- Planning for these activities is a function of the building principal and shall be carried out with the Site Council. The structure under which these activities are provided is a site decision.
- Two parent meetings are held each year: one in the fall, the other in the spring.

Parent-School Communication

Good communication between home and school is an integral component of effective education.

- The *REPORT*, covering PreK-12 news, is emailed each month to all LMS families.
- A weekly letter from homeroom teachers is given to students in **grades PreK-5** to take home to parents.
- Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of first quarter and again in the spring. Other conferences are scheduled throughout the year upon request by either parents or teachers.
- Parent-Teacher Fellowship meetings are held in the fall and the spring of each school year.
- **Locust Grove** office hours are 8:00-3:45. Phone calls to the school should be made during these times. The best time to reach teachers directly by phone is between 3:15 and 3:30. Teachers may also be reached by their school email address or home phone numbers which are listed on the back of the LMS calendar.
- Parents are encouraged to visit classes. Visiting times should be arranged with the office at least one day in advance.
- A student visitor is welcome to come to school with your child, but we ask that the office be notified at least one day prior to the visit.
- When addressing a problem or concern, we follow Biblical principles, in a manner of Christian love and respect, using these steps:
 1. For classroom matters, consult the teacher involved.
 2. If, after consulting the teacher, you believe the classroom matter needs further attention, consult the principal.

ATTENDANCE AND TRANSPORTATION

School entrance doors open at 8:00 a.m. Classes start at 8:30 a.m. with dismissal at 3:00 p.m. Students who arrive after 10:30 a.m. or who leave before 1:00 p.m. are counted absent for one-half day.

Absences: If you know that your child will be tardy to school or absent, please call the office with the reason for the absence or tardy.

According to the school attendance laws of PA, excused absences are granted for the following: student illness, death in the immediate family (parents, siblings, grandparents), impassable roads, and educational trips if requested in advance and approved by the principal. Other absences are considered illegal.

Illegal absences are counted according to the number of offenses rather than days. A half-day illegal absence, for example, is considered one of the three illegal absences permitted. If a child has more than three illegal absences, the superintendent of the school district in which they reside will be notified.

Sickness: Parents should not send children to school who exhibit the following: a temperature of 100 degrees or greater; a generalized body rash; an inflamed eye with drainage; head lice or nits (remaining after treatment of lice); strong cold symptoms; vomiting or diarrhea since the evening before school. Parents should call the office and leave a message when a child is at home ill, or when the child will be arriving late to school or leaving before the end of the school day.

Tardy to school: Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. are considered tardy.

Excused Absences: Parents may request an excused absence for a trip or other family matter. Request forms, available from the office, should be turned in at least one week in advance of the trip so homework can be prepared by the teacher.

After School Care is available between the hours of 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. Registration forms are available in the office. There is a charge for this service.

Staying After School: Students are permitted to stay after school only if they are participating in a school sponsored, supervised activity such as athletics.

School Entrance / Safety

To promote a safe and secure environment for our students, the main lobby and other outside doors are kept locked during the school day. (These doors can be easily exited for emergencies even when locked.) Parents and guests who visit during the day should use the main door by the office and sign the visitors' log located there.

Transportation

Bus transportation is provided by the school district in which a student resides. School doors are unlocked at 8:00 a.m. Buses unload students between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. and pick up between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. Carpooled students should not arrive before 8:00 a.m. and should leave by 3:15 p.m.

If a student is going home other than his/her usual way, a note from the parents should be given to the office in the morning. Students from one school district may not ride a bus from another district due to insurance restrictions. If a student needs to go home on another bus within his/her district, a note should be given to the bus driver the day before so permission can be requested from the district transportation coordinator.

Bicycles: Students wishing to ride bicycles to school should bring a permission note from home and present it to the principal before riding to school. Bicycles are not allowed in the building.

Walking: Students who walk to and from school also need to bring a note if they will leave at a different time or in a different manner than usual.

Cancellations & Delays Due to Weather

Parents can learn about weather related emergency school closings for Lancaster Mennonite School on the school website, by calling the Lancaster office at (717) 299-0436 at extension 561, or by tuning in to these FM radio stations: WDAC (94.5), WJTL (90.3), WIOV (105) or to WGAL-TV Channel 8. In the event of early dismissals due to weather information will also be available through the channels above, but parents may also call the Locust Grove office directly for information at 394-7107.

ACADEMICS / SCHOOL LIFE

Report Cards are sent home every quarter (9 weeks) to:

- Inform parents of student progress
- Bring parents into closer understanding of the work of the school.
- Record for students their growth or achievement
- Assist students in evaluating their growth or achievement
- Assist the student, parents and the school in working cooperatively to benefit the student..

Homework: The following general guidelines are used in assigning homework:

Grades K-1: memory work and spelling – five to 15 minutes per evening.

Grades 2-3: 15-30 minutes per evening

Grades 4-6: 30-45 minutes per evening

Weekend homework is not given and tests are not scheduled on Mondays. As a family and church-centered school, we see the weekend as a time for family, church and fun.

Memory Work: Memorization of scripture, poems and songs is an organized part of the curriculum. Memorization is done on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Learning Support: This program offers individualized instruction for students in all grades with learning needs. Admission to the program is done in consultation with the parents, teachers and principal. An additional fee is charged for the program.

Nonpublic School Services of I.U. 13: This state agency provides an instructor at school for remedial academic support in reading and math. The program provides individualized assistance for students. Admission is determined by diagnostic testing. I.U. 13 also provides speech therapy and psychological services. There are no additional charges for these services.

Field Trips: The school supports field trips as a valuable educational experience. The cost of these trips is usually covered by the school. A *Blanket Field Trip Permission* form is sent home at the beginning of the year to be signed and returned.

School Supplies: A list of student supplies necessary for each grade is available from the office.

School Programs: Two major drama/music programs are held at Christmas and in the spring.

Private Instrumental Lessons: Private lessons can be taken during the school day. There is a charge for the lessons. Please check with the office for further information.

Chapel: Chapel is held once a week, and is a time of singing, prayer, worship and praise. Often a guest speaker is invited.

Volunteers: Parent volunteers play a major role in school life. The school's goal is to have every patron family participate in at least one volunteer activity each year. A volunteer sign-up sheet is distributed each year.

Phone Use

Students may use the school office phone with permission. All calls are to be made from office.

Lunch

A daily hot lunch program is provided. Milk can be purchased with a packed lunch. Monthly lunch menus are available at the office or on the Lancaster Mennonite website.

Recess

- Students have a time of daily recess
- Use of personal equipment during recess must be cleared with the homeroom teacher before being brought to school.
- Students must stay on school property and within sight of the supervising teacher.

General Playground Guidelines: Students must stay on school property and within sight of the supervising teacher.

- Slides: use ladder to climb, slide sitting down, facing front only.
- Swings: one person per swing, remain seated, no jumping from swing.

Library

The library has books, magazines and videos for student and classroom use. The library policies are as follows:

- A quiet atmosphere is to be maintained.
- Books may be borrowed for two weeks and may be renewed for another two weeks. Kindergarten students borrow books for one (1) week.
- Lost books must be paid for at the cost of replacing the book.
- Reference books may be checked out for one day only.

Health

- A nurse from the Conestoga Valley School District serves the Locust Grove campus one day a week. All students receive height, weight and vision screenings once a year.
- Physical and dental exams and immunizations are required by the state. Information is sent home about these when they are due.
- First-aid treatment is given by school personnel. If a student has an injury requiring further medical attention, the parents are informed immediately.
- School staff are not permitted to administer medication to students without written permission from parents. This includes over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol, cough syrup, etc. Prescription medication must be sent to school in a container with the prescription labeled by a pharmacist or physician.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Character growth, classroom behavior, attitudes and effort are an integral part of student achievement. Student choices determine consequences, positive or negative, and we believe that students must accept responsibility for their behavior. Lancaster Mennonite School is committed to a restorative rather than punitive approach to discipline which includes counseling, apologies, prayer, reconciliation and parental involvement. Restorative discipline is based on a motivation of love to help each child become conformed to the image of Jesus.

The school is responsible to clearly define and consistently enforce classroom rules, and to inform parents when their child shows a consistent pattern of misbehavior and what the consequences are. Parents are responsible to support school policies and teacher authority in dialogue with their children.

The following guidelines will help us as we strive to create an atmosphere which promotes learning and in which all students are safe and feel secure.

- Teachers' desks are private. Students do not have access to drawers and items on teachers' desks.
- Running in the halls and classrooms is not permitted. Students are expected to walk outside while going to their bus or car
- Eating and drinking is to be done in homerooms under teacher supervision, not in the halls, gym, bathrooms or library.
- Students may not leave the school grounds without permission.
- Playing hardball (baseball) is not permitted.
- Throwing snowballs is not permitted.
- Electronic devices should not be used at school or on field trips. Exceptions are sometimes made for bus trips or other situations by the teacher who is in charge of the event.
- A written excuse by a parent or doctor is required for a student to be excused from the physical education program.
- School property that is broken should be reported immediately. If the damage was caused by student behavior, he/she is responsible to pay for or replace the object.
- Gum chewing is not allowed.
- The use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages and other illicit drugs is prohibited.

The following are examples of unacceptable behavior:

- Being tardy to class.
- Unfinished homework and failure to use class time wisely.
- Classroom behavior which disrupts the right of others to learn.
- Disrespectful attitudes toward other students or to staff members.
- Failure to respect the property of others.
- Disobedience/lying/stealing/cheating
- Obscenities and immoral actions
- Vandalism

The following consequences may be used when students fail to follow guidelines:

1. Loss of free time.
2. “Time out” – (a short time outside of class, in the office)
3. Student sent to the principal.
4. Manual work.
5. Suspension of involvement in extra-curricular activities.
6. Detention / suspension
7. Other disciplinary action deemed suitable.

Suspension and Expulsion

The principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, has the authority to suspend a student from school for a period not to exceed ten days when other disciplinary measures have failed or if the presence of the student in school is deemed inadvisable. Expulsions from school are made only by action of the board of directors.

Appearance Guidelines

Lancaster Mennonite School desires that students come to school in neat, clean and modest clothing that is appropriate for a safe and positive Christian educational atmosphere. The following guidelines will help to provide this environment:

1. Modest length dresses, skirts, shorts, slacks or jeans are appropriate for girls.
2. Slacks, jeans and modest length shorts are appropriate for boys.
3. The following clothing does not meet school standards:
 - Clothes which are torn, tattered, have holes or are frayed.
 - Sleeveless clothing for middle school students.
 - Tank tops, spaghetti straps, tight-fitting or midriff-exposing clothes.
 - Clothing with inappropriate messages/pictures not in keeping with the values of the school.
 - Distinctive military attire.
4. For safety reasons, students should not wear jewelry in P.E. classes.
5. For safety reasons, all students should wear sneakers on the days they have P.E. classes.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books

Textbooks and other instructional materials shall be chosen by the professional staff with final approval by the principal. Because a book is in the library does not mean that the school condones every part or situation characterized in the book, but rather feels that the overall literary content is such that it is important not to disqualify it from the library. A book review committee of parents may be set up by the principal for counsel.

Discrimination & Harassment Policy

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

Universal Health Precautions:

The school shall maintain compliance with Universal Health Precautions to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in the school setting. Staff are instructed to:

1. Treat all bodily fluids as though they are infectious as it is not necessarily known whether or not a fellow employee or a student has an infectious disease such as HIV virus, AIDS, etc. By treating all bodily fluids as infectious, school personnel and students are protected.
2. To handle discharges from another person's body (particularly body fluids containing blood) wearing gloves. Hands are to be thoroughly washed with soap and running water when finished. Latex gloves and plastic bags are accessible in the classroom with additional supplies available in the school office.
3. Dispose of contaminated disposable latex gloves and other contaminated materials in sealed plastic bags which then are placed in plastic-lined waste containers.
4. Avoid punctures with objects that may contain blood from others, i.e., do not pick up broken glass with bare hands, but use a dustpan and brush instead.
5. Carefully dispose of trash that contains sharp objects. Use containers that cannot be broken or penetrated by such objects instead of plastic trash bags. Do not bend, break or recap needles.
6. Be sure all surfaces that have blood, or other potentially infectious materials containing blood, on them are properly cleaned with an EPA approved disinfectant which is available at the office.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

- Pupils and faculty will be able to use the Internet for research and will be prepared to utilize the Internet in further education.

- *Internet Access Security:* Internet access will be guarded via password and/or security programs. The library and computer instructor and professional staff will have access to any passwords, etc. Staff will be expected to guard this access privilege closely. No pupil will be allowed to know this password for any reason. In addition, no pupil will utilize Internet service without a responsible staff person present. Internet access will be guarded via password and security filters. Inappropriate usage of the school's Internet access may result in privileges being suspended.
- *E-mail privileges* will be reserved for staff. Only under special circumstances, and with specific permission, will pupils be granted the right to send e-mail. Student use of e-mail privileges will be granted with the stipulation that the purpose of the e-mail is classroom or school project related and that a staff member supervise said electronic mailing.
- *Copyright Laws:* All staff and pupils will respect current copyright/software laws.
- *Acceptable Use/Unacceptable Use:* Staff and pupils will use the school's Internet access with the understanding that certain behaviors and activities are acceptable and others are unacceptable. Examples of acceptable use would include searching for information for term papers, sending e-mail to other schools for the purposes of establishing electronic pen-pals, or setting up a web site for the school.
- *Unacceptable use* could include vulgar or suggestive language, accessing of pornographic sites, damaging or modifying computer software settings, damage to hardware because of careless behavior, or other inappropriate behaviors as determined by the principal or other adult supervisors.
- *Supervision and Access:* Students will use the school's Internet access only with adult supervision and guidance.

Crisis Management

1. The superintendent, building principal, athletic director and the office secretary will work together to handle any crisis situation with the media, school and parents.
2. The principal and/or the school superintendent is the official spokesperson for the school and will be the person(s) who communicate the official school position regarding a crisis situation to the media and the school community. The administrative assistant will be the liaison through whom details of contacting outside persons are routed. The superintendent and principal will communicate as soon as possible with the staff and then with the students and parents to get the facts out without over-sensationalizing the event. Reporters from the media will not be allowed to speak with students or staff.
3. Staff members are assigned to various tasks to manage a crisis with homeroom teachers having responsibility for supervising their classes.
4. A crisis management team will deal with follow-up details. This will include the superintendent, building principal, local pastor, and one or two staff members. It will include counseling from staff members and local pastors.