

Lancaster Mennonite Middle School

Centered in Christ, Transforming Lives, Changing our World

2006-2007 Student-Parent Handbook

Philosophy

Lancaster Mennonite Middle School provides a Christ-centered quality education in a safe and nurturing environment where students grow personally, socially and spiritually. The school is a mission of congregations of the Mennonite Church USA and welcomes students from these and other congregations who embrace the mission of the school. Students are admitted regardless of race, gender, or national origin.

The school provides a nurturing environment where students explore faith issues, develop Christ-like servanthood, and discover their gifts and sense of calling. The school also helps students learn how to work together, develop positive relationships and grow in respect for themselves, their peers, and others.

Teachers are central role models and facilitators of learning who challenge individual students, mentor them in light of personal needs, and foster student curiosity in learning. Faculty members are selected on the basis of their spiritual commitment and their personal and professional qualifications.

Notice: 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. LMS reserves the right to interpret and apply, and modify or adopt, with or without notice, its rules and policies, in its discretion.

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. One of the purposes 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 classroom.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is crucial for class objectives to be achieved. Pennsylvania law requires school attendance until the age of 17. Students absent from class have the responsibility to make up missed work.

Legal or Excused Absences. Excusable absences include illness, death in the immediate family, and impassable roads. An Educational Excuse Request Form, obtained at the office, is required five days in advance to request other excusable absences (such as educational trips). If a trip is three days or more, the back of the Educational Excuse Request Form must be completed, obtaining teachers' signatures before the trip can be considered excused. This applies to college visits (maximum of two days), and church activities and trips with parents (overnight and educational). To maintain academic excellence, one week is normally the maximum excused educational family trip.

Illegal or Unexcused Absences. Phone calls to parents are made on a regular basis so that school and home may work together in promoting good attendance. Parents may leave messages on the attendance phone line.

Truancy from school and/or individual classes (unexcused absences without parental permission prior to the absence), results in a two percentage point deduction from the final grade of each class missed or two hours of community service at a local nonprofit organization for each class missed. The community service needs to be verified by a supervisor at the nonprofit organization and must be completed by the end of the academic quarter to avoid

percentage point deductions.

LMS will not give a penalty for the first three unexcused days during the school year; however, each additional unexcused day results in a percentage point deduction from the quarter grade in each course. LMS is required to report three or more illegal absences to the public school district in which the student lives. After three days of illegal absence, the district may take legal action against students or parents.

Excuse Cards. Excuse cards are available at the office. If an absence has not been pre-approved through the office or cleared by parents by phone, a student is required to submit an excuse card. The excuse card must be signed by a parent or guardian. This policy applies to all students including those over 17. The excuse card should be handed in the day following the absence. A student failing to bring in an excuse card by the second morning after returning from an absence may receive an after-school detention. If a proper excuse card has not been handed in by the fifth day following an absence (not cleared in advance), the absence becomes unexcused. Absences cleared in advance or by phone the day of the absence do not require an excuse card.

Early Dismissal. An early dismissal requires a written request from a parent stating the reason for the request and the time of dismissal and return. This request shall be presented at the office no later than 8:15 a.m. (Before leaving and when returning, students must report to the office.) If an early dismissal or absence is one half day or more, an Educational Excuse Request Form (obtained at the office) should be completed at least five school days before the desired absence. Any student

who becomes ill during the school day, must obtain a pass from his or her teacher and report to the office for further direction.

Tardy to School. Arriving at school on time develops an important work place skill. Students who arrive to school late (either by bus or car) must obtain a tardy pass to be admitted to school. Tardiness is excusable according to the guidelines used for absences. After the second unexcused tardy per semester, a letter is sent to the parent. The third and fourth unexcused tardies result in an after-school detention. The fifth tardy may result in two percentage points off the first class or 14 hours of community service. Additional tardies result in a meeting with an administrator to develop a plan to solve the problem. A student arriving after the close of the first morning class is recorded as absent for one half day. A student is marked absent for the day if missing more than half of the school day.

Tardiness During the School Day. Students who are late to class or an assigned activity during the school day must obtain a tardy pass from the previous teacher. Without a pass, the student is unexcused. Teachers respond appropriately to unexcused tardies.

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 the 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 students or the student's parent's immediately should report such conduct to a teacher, the student's principal, or the school's superintendent. The schools 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.

General Conduct and 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. LMS 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

an administrator. In cases where the unacceptable conduct does not change, the discipline response will depend on both the incident and the student's cumulative citizenship record.

The school's response may include a community service assignment, conference, detention, development of a plan to change behavior, fine, suspension, writing think papers, etc. 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 LMS 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 the student's enrollment status and conditions of enrollment.

- Students must make necessary arrangements with teachers for making up work when absent from school.
- 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 they are attending an athletic competition, 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 the premises no later than 4:00 p.m. unless they are under the direct supervision of a staff member.
 - Students with approval for early dismissal are to leave immediately at the designated time.
 - Bulletin board announcements must be initialed by an administrator before they may be displayed.
 - 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). Gum chewing and hard candy are at the teacher's discretion.
 - Radios, cassette tape recorders, CD players, beepers, or any other electronic devices are not permitted during the school day (this includes bringing them into the auditorium).
 - Displays of affection are not allowed on campus.

- Skateboards are not permitted on campus.

Suspension and Expulsion. The following cases of unacceptable conduct are causes for suspension:

- Actions involving injury to persons or deliberate destruction or misuse of property.
- Possession of or setting off firecrackers, smokebombs, or snappers of any kind, setting fires in the buildings, and tampering with fire alarms or fire extinguishers.
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs on campus and at off-campus school functions. Use or possession of weapons and look-alike weapons including, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument or tool, nunchakus stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Students can expect a process of search-and-seizure when they are suspected of possessing or being under the influence of any of these items. Areas of search include a student's vehicle, locker, personal effects, and person, including a drug test. Information may also be shared with the police.
- Truancy from school or class.
- Lying, stealing, cheating, fighting, or immorality.
- Throwing others into the Mill Stream or pond.
- Picking locks, forcing doors, or otherwise entering locked buildings.
- Accumulation and continuation of

minor offenses.

- Possession or use of a squirt gun.
- Violation of telecommunications equipment or policies.
- Other conduct that is disrespectful to persons or disruptive of the educational process.

Suspension is normally in-school, up to 10 days. A citizenship grade of U is given for the marking period in which the suspension occurs. Normally, the student may return to class after a satisfactory conference involving an administrator, student, and other appropriate persons. The decision of readmission may be referred to the Judicial Committee of the School Board.

A second suspension of three days or more within two consecutive semesters requires a decision on readmission by the Administrative Judicial Council or the Judicial Committee of the school board.

A third suspension of three days or more within two consecutive semesters requires a decision by the Judicial Committee of the school board. A student who is expelled normally loses all credits for the semester in which the suspension occurs.

Appearance. LMS desires that students come to school in neat, clean, and modest clothing that is appropriate to create a positive Christian educational atmosphere. For boys and girls, shirts (with sleeves) manufactured as outer wear 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 no shorter than four inches above the top of the knee are appropriate school dress. Cut-offs, athletic shorts, sweatpants, 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 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 that expose 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 cocurricular 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.

Visitors. Prospective LMS 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 six may visit if accompanied by their parents.

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: WDAC (94.5), WJTL (90.3), WIOV (105), WITF (89.5), BOB (94.9), WHP (580), KISS (99.3), WRVW (97.3), WLAN (97), WGAL (Channel 8), WHP-CBS (Channel 21, Channel 15).

School Lockers. Each student is assigned a locker for school use. LMS locks can be obtained at the office for a deposit. Lockers are the property of the school and can be searched.

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. They are required to use only the locker assigned to them. Combination locks may be rented for a \$10 fee. Fees are refundable when locks are returned.

Daily Life

Arrival. Middle school students report to room 115 when they arrive on campus. At 8:05, students report to their first period class. Students arriving after 8:05 report directly to first period. Attendance is taken at 8:15. Students arriving after 8:15 report to the main office.

Bus Transportation. Lancaster Mennonite is privileged to have bus service from several different school districts. Upon arrival, middle school students exit the bus at the second stop, the middle school entrance. Students must board buses outside the main office. A teacher accompanies students to the bus after school. Students must abide by the rules established for the bus. If students abuse these rules, bus-riding privileges may be denied.

Carpools. Parents should drive through the circle outside the middle school north entrance to drop off or pick up students. If you need to enter the building, please park in a visitor parking space. Students will be dismissed at 3:00 to wait for carpools. Students not picked up by 3:30 will be sent to the main office lobby. The north entrance will be open at the beginning and end of the day but locked during the rest of the day to help maintain a safe environment.

Chapels/Assemblies/Devotions. Middle school chapel is scheduled once a week. Occasionally, the middle school will join the high school for chapel/assembly. The purpose of chapels is to provide opportunity for worship and Christian community. Students should proceed quickly and quietly to the auditorium and sit in assigned seats for attendance purposes. Other opportunities for Christian growth include year-long Bible classes and daily devotions.

Tardy to Class. Students arriving late to class without a pass will be considered tardy. Subsequent tardies will result in disciplinary action.

Lunch. Students may purchase the featured lunch of the day, soup and salad bar, cold or hot combo, a la carte items or pack a lunch. Lunch money (preferably a check) can be mailed to the school, made payable to “Lancaster Mennonite Food Services.” Please indicate your child’s name and PIN on the check or with an attached note.

Students purchasing food or beverage should go through the serving area and use their PIN at the cashier. Students not purchasing any food or beverage should go directly to their designated seating area.

Students may not save seats and may not change seats during the lunch period. Tables, chairs, and the floor must be cleaned before dismissal. Students are permitted to go through the food serving area one time. Students should return their trays to the window at the appropriate time. All food must be eaten in the cafeteria. Students may not store food in their lockers.

Emergency Drills. The purpose of emergency evacuation drills is to practice orderly departure from the building. Teachers will lead their students out of the building according to a set plan that is posted in each room.

Students should move quickly, quietly, and in an orderly fashion. Each group will stay together. After the drill, students will be directed back to the classroom by the teacher.

Hall Passes. Students are not allowed to travel through the halls during a class period without a pass.

P.E. Class. Lancaster Mennonite believes middle school students need opportunity for exercise during the school day. P.E. classes are scheduled three times a week. Students are not

permitted in the gym when a teacher is not present. The P.E. teachers establish guidelines for use of the gym and locker room. All students will be assigned a locker in the locker room to store belongings. Showers are optional. Students need to bring gym shorts and sneakers for class. Not dressing for P.E. class can negatively affect the student’s grade.

Health Concerns. If a student becomes ill during school hours, the student must request a pass from the classroom teacher to report to the nurse’s office (in the Guidance area). The teacher will report this illness to the office immediately. If necessary, a parent will be called to pick up the student.

Students requiring medications during school hours must keep the medicine in the main office and report to the office at the specified time to take the medication.

Accidents. All accidents and injuries occurring during the school day must be reported to the supervising teacher or coach.

Student Assignment Books. To encourage responsibility and organization, each student receives an assignment book to record homework and messages to parents. We ask parents to work together with the teachers in teaching students to be prepared for class. Students will also use a three-ring notebook with dividers for handouts and notes for all their courses.

Internet. Students will have the opportunity to explore education via the Internet (which is filtered) through classroom activities and individual

research.

Media Center. Middle school students will have access to the media center as a classroom or individually with a pass from the classroom teacher. The media center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Reference materials may be signed out for overnight use. Students may request materials not in the media center through Access PA and may access numerous periodicals via the Internet in the media center and in the classroom. Fines will incur for books that are overdue.

Lost and Found. Items found in the middle school area should be turned in to the middle school office to be placed in the lost and found box. There are lost and found boxes located in the main office and the gym.

A fee may be charged to claim lost articles. Items not claimed at the end of the year are donated to charities.

Textbooks. Textbooks and equipment are the property of the school and must be kept in good condition. Textbooks are numbered prior to issuance to students. Lost or damaged books or equipment will be charged to the responsible student and cost will be subject to the original price and the condition of the object(s).

Visitors. Parents and other visitors must report to the main office for a visitor pass before going to a middle school classroom.

Prospective students are encouraged to visit the school with advance registration. All student visitors are required to stop at the main office to receive a visitor's pass before going to any part of the school. Visitors cannot be accepted the last week of each

semester or on special activity days.

Guidance Services. Lancaster Mennonite provides both academic and non-academic counseling to all students. The guidance offices are located in the main office. Parents and guardians are welcome to communicate any concerns with the counselor.

Peer Leadership. Seventh and eighth grade students will be divided into small groups to meet with two high school peer leaders once a week for eight weeks. Seventh grade meets in the fall, and eighth grade meets in the spring. Goals include positive peer role models, an avenue for dialogue and orientation to high school.

Change of Status. Parents are asked to notify Eliza Booth at extension 312 immediately with changes in home address, home or work phone number, or emergency contact person.

Reporting Pupil Progress

Report cards are issued quarterly during the academic school year and are distributed to students following the first three marking periods, with the final report card being mailed to parents at the conclusion of the school year. Scholastic grades, comments about attitude, conduct and effort, as well as a record of absences are included on each report card.

Grading Standards

The following percentages are used in assigning grades:

A	Superior	94-100%
B	Good	86-93%
C	Average	76-85%
D	Below Average	66-75%
F	Unsatisfactory	Below 66%

An incomplete is given only for emergency reasons approved in advance by the teacher and the guidance counselor. Eighth graders completing a high school class (math, world language) will not receive credit on their high school transcript, but may take the next level course in grade 9.

Teacher Conferences

Parents may schedule a conference with teachers during the scheduled conference times in the fall (dates are on the calendar) by calling Joyce Thomas at extension 311, or as needed throughout the school year by calling teachers. Teachers also may schedule a conference with parents to discover ways the home and school can best work together for the benefit of the student.

Honor Roll

To attain the Honor Roll, a student must have a minimum 3.3 grade-point average, have no grades lower than a C, and not have received an unsatisfactory. The method for determining the Honor Roll is based on a system of quality points. Each grade has the following quality point value.

A	4.00
B	3.00
C	2.00

D 1.00

Course Meeting	Credit Value
Every day	1.00
4 times a week	.80
3 times a week	.60
2 times a week	.40
1 time a week	.20

Promotion/Retention

Students failing one core subject or two other subjects will be recommended for retention review by the faculty and the principal.

Transfer or Withdrawal from School

A student wishing to transfer or withdraw from school must bring a signed statement from her/his parents to the principal, have an interview with an administrator, return all school property, and settle her/his account with the business office.

Achievement Tests

The middle school administers achievement tests to all students. The tests measure student achievement in cognitive areas related to reading and mathematics. The dates are given on the school calendar. Please plan your family schedule to allow proper rest during this time.

Student Activities

Clubs. Clubs are scheduled one period per week, changing each quarter. We offer a wide variety of choices. Fieldtrips and service projects are interwoven throughout the year.

Interscholastic Sports. LMMS sponsors JH teams for interscholastic competition in the following sports: boys and girls cross country, field hockey, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls basketball.

The teams are for students in grades 7-9. Normally there are two or three teams for each sport. The teams may be comprised of students from all three LMS sites. We encourage students to play more than one sport.

Intramural Sports. Intramural programs for grades 6-8 are available at either the LG or ND sites in girls volleyball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls basketball. Normally these activities are held twice a week, with a few contests scheduled against other Mennonite schools.

Youth Programs. LMS is in the process of developing a youth sports program that will sponsor activities in grades 3-6 in a variety of sports. For the 04-05 school year, programs in field hockey, boys and girls basketball, and midget basketball will be in operation.

Middle School Band and String Orchestra. Lancaster Mennonite Middle School will partner with Locust Grove and New Danville for band and string orchestra. Each group will practice independently at its own school with the same director. The schools will combine for a couple of practices and then jointly perform twice a year in the Lancaster Mennonite Fine Arts Auditorium. Seventh and eighth grade students will have opportunity to audition for Lancaster-Lebanon Music Educators Association's (LLMEA) county orchestra/band.

Middle School Choir. Students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades are encouraged to participate in the choir. The choir will perform twice a year and have other possible opportunities. Seventh and eighth grade students may participate in LLMEA.

Middle School Drama. Students in middle school may audition for a drama performed in late winter. At times there may be openings for middle school students in a high school drama production.

Student Council. A student council exists to stimulate working together between faculty and students to help plan service activities and school-sponsored events such as school spirit days.

Eighth Grade Recognition. The eighth grade class will celebrate their completion of middle school with an evening ceremony at the end of the school year.

Eighth Grade Retreat. The eighth grade class will join with other LMS eighth graders in a retreat at the end of the year.

End-of-Year Activities. Sixth and Seventh grade students participate in special activities during the last week of the school year. Dates are listed on the school calendar.

LMS Daily Schedule

Regular Schedule

<i>Period</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
1	8:15	8:53
2	8:57	9:40
3	9:44	10:27
4	10:31	11:14
lunch	11:18	11:44
5	11:48	12:44
6	12:48	1:31
7	1:35	2:18
8	2:22	3:00

First Thursday of Month

<i>Period</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
1	8:15	8:53
2	8:57	9:32
3	9:36	10:11
4	10:15	10:50
activity	10:54	11:14
lunch	11:18	11:44
5	11:48	12:44
6	12:48	1:31
7	1:35	2:18
8	2:22	3:00

One Hour Delay

<i>Period</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
1	9:15	9:32
2	9:36	10:15
3	10:19	10:55
4	10:59	11:35
lunch	11:39	12:05
5	12:09	1:05
6	1:09	1:45
7	1:49	2:25
8	2:29	3:00

Third Thursday of Month

<i>Period</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
1	8:15	8:53
2	8:57	9:40
3	9:44	10:27
4	10:31	11:14
lunch	11:18	11:44
5	11:48	12:44
Activity	12:48	1:08
6	1:12	1:47
7	1:51	2:26
8	2:30	3:00

Two Hour Delay

<i>Period</i>	<i>Begin</i>	<i>End</i>
1	10:15	10:27
2	10:30	11:00
3	11:04	11:31
4	11:35	12:02
lunch	12:06	12:32
5	12:36	1:32
6	1:36	2:03
7	2:07	2:34
8	2:38	3:00