



LANCASTER MENNONITE

LOCUST GROVE CAMPUS

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Grades PreK-8

Locust Grove Campus

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.

The school is an agency of the Lancaster and Atlantic Coast Conferences of Mennonite Church USA. As a Mennonite school, we follow the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective 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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TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Hershey Campus:	(717) 533-4900
Locust Grove Campus:	(717) 394-7107
New Danville Campus:	(717) 872-2506
Lancaster Campus:	(717) 299-0436
System/Business office:	(717) 509-4459

Core Values

- 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.
- 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*.
- 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.
- 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.
- Educational excellence grows out of a learning community where students, teachers and parents have mutual respect for each other.
- An articulated K-12 spiritual formation program invites students to grow in relationship to Jesus Christ and the community of faith.
- 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.
- A culturally diverse and educationally inclusive learning community is important for preparing students for life in the church and local and global community.
- Education is a partnership of home, church, and school.
- Students are nurtured to develop Christian character as they reflect the life of Jesus Christ as servant and peacemaker.
- Co-curricular activities are an integral part of an excellent educational program.
- Christ-centeredness permeates all aspects of the educational program as faith and learning are integrated.
- Strong student-to student and student-to teacher relationships are formed in an Anabaptist learning community.
- Each student is valued as an individual, uniquely created by God.

Educational Outcomes

- 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.
- Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for further learning and for a successful career.
- Students will demonstrate critical thinking, conflict resolution skills, disciplines of organization and responsibility, ethical decision-making, problem solving, interpersonal skills, and interdependence in relationships.
- 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.
- Students will choose occupations where they can follow the example of Jesus Christ as servant and peace builder in daily life.
- Students will build strong relationships with family and church.

- Students will value cultural diversity and will respect others different from themselves while holding to their personal values and faith.
- 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 are available from each campus office as well as from:

Admissions Office

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 Christ-like. 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.
- Each campus plans a Parent Orientation evening early in the school year.

Parent-School Communication

- Good communication between home and school is an integral component of effective education.
- Communication from the superintendent and building principal will be sent by E-Link (e-mail). At other times, email messages are sent from the office as reminders of upcoming events or other important information.
- A weekly newsletter from homeroom teachers is e-mailed to parents.
- Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and again in the spring. Other conferences are scheduled throughout the year upon request by either parents or teachers.
- Office hours are 8 a.m - 3:30 p.m. Phone calls to the school should be made during these times.

- A prospective student 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:
 - For classroom matters, consult the teacher involved.
 - If, after consulting the teacher, you believe the classroom matter needs further attention, consult the principal or assistant principal.

ATTENDANCE AND TRANSPORTATION

School entrance doors open at 8 a.m. Classes start at 8:15 a.m. with dismissal at 3 p.m. Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. or who leave before 1 p.m. are counted absent for one-half day.

Absences: If you know that your child will be tardy to school or absent, please email or call the office with the reason for the absence or tardiness. According to the school attendance laws of PA, excused absences / tardies are granted for the following: student illness, death in the immediate family (parents, siblings, and grandparents), impassable roads, and educational trips if requested in advance and approved by the principal. Unexcused absences include those for 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)

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, or vomiting or diarrhea since the evening before school. Students should be fever-free for 24 hours before coming to school. Parents should email the office or call and leave a message when a child is at home ill.

Tardy to school:

Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. are considered tardy. If arriving after 9 am please email the office with your student's lunch order.

Excused Absences: Parents may request an excused absence for a trip up or other family matter (up to 5 days may be excused.) Request forms, available from each campus office, should be turned in at least one week in advance of the trip.

Lancaster Mennonite Attendance Policy

This policy was updated in July 2018 to reflect changes to the Pennsylvania School Code. Please read the following carefully.

- **School Day**
Classes begin at 8:15 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. The main lobby doors open at 8:00 a.m. Students should be in their classrooms by 8:15.

- **Excused Absences**

A maximum of 15 days of cumulative excused absences with parental/caregiver notification are permitted during a school year. Parents/caregivers must notify the school of their child's absence and the reason in writing or by emailing the office lgoffice@lancastermennonite.org. All absences are considered unexcused until acceptable notification is received. If notification is not received within five days after the student returns to school, the absence will be unexcused. **If students miss more than 20% of any given class, credit will not be earned.**

All absences beyond 15 days (excluding absences excused by a physician) require documentation from a physician in order to be excused.

In accordance with Pennsylvania School Code, LM considers the following reasonable causes for absence from school with proper documentation:

- **Illness:** Administration may require a physician's note when absence is excessive.
- **College Visits:** Juniors and Seniors can take up to three days to visit colleges/universities per year. College trip forms must be completed and turned in to the office at least five days prior to the day of visitation.
- **Educational Trips and International Home Visits:** Trips require written parent/caregiver request and completion of an Educational Trip Form and prior approval. Educational Trip Forms must be turned in to the office at least five days in advance of the trip. These forms can be found online or in the school office. A maximum of seven days will be excused.
- **Observation of Legitimate Religious Holiday:** Requires written parent/caregiver request and prior approval.
- **Death in the Family**
- **Administrative Discretion**

Unexcused Absences

Any absence not included in the above list is considered unexcused. LM does not give a penalty for the first two unexcused absences during the school year. Each additional unexcused day results in a 2% point deduction from the quarterly grade in each course (for middle school and up.) Absences are unexcused until proper notification is received.

***Seniors who have fulfilled the academic requirements for graduation but fail to meet the minimum attendance requirements will be allowed to participate in commencement; however, these students will not receive a diploma until make-up days are completed.**

Tardies

A tardy is arrival to school after the start of the school day but before 2nd period. Arrival after 10 a.m. will be counted as a half-day absence. Tardies are excused using the same criteria as absences. Students are permitted three unexcused tardies per year without penalty. After 3 unexcused tardies, an individualized plan will be created to help resolve the issue. After each additional two tardies, students will be charged with a half-day unexcused absence. **If students miss more than 20% of any given class, credit will not be earned.**

Early Dismissal

Students must have written parent/caregiver permission to leave school prior to dismissal. Students leaving more than two hours early will be charged a half-day absence.

PIAA Attendance Policy

Per PIAA policy, if a student athlete is absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, the student will lose eligibility until the student athlete attends school for a total of 45 school days following the 20th day of absence.

In order to participate in an after school activity, LM requires all students to arrive for the school day no later than 10 a.m. Students who arrive after this time will not be permitted to participate in the day's scheduled practice or competition. Prior made medical and legal appointments may be an exception.

- **Notification of Excessive Absence**

- **Official First Notice:** When a student has accumulated three unexcused absence (current school year), the state views this as truant behavior. A written notification is sent home. If the student continues to accumulate unexcused days, a Truancy Mediation Conference will be held to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.
- **Habitually Truant Status:** Under Pennsylvania law, if a student accumulates six unexcused absences during the course of a school year, the school must identify the student as “habitually truant” and the school must take further action immediately based upon the age of the student:
 - For students under the age of 15: Truancy Mediation Conference and Attendance Improvement Plan, a referral to Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency and may include truancy citations. As a private school, LM reserves the right to require withdraw from school or proceed with expulsion due to excessive absence.
 - For students under the age of 18: Truancy Mediation Conference and Attendance Improvement Plan, truancy citations, and may include a referral to Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency. As a private school, LM reserves the right to require withdraw from school or proceed with expulsion due to excessive absence.
- **10-Day Letter:** Notification that a student has accrued 10 absences during the current school year. This letter is for information only.
- **15-Day Letter:** Notification that a student has accrued 15 absences during the current school year that were not excused by a physician. All subsequent absences require a doctor's note in order to be excused.

After School Care: is available between 3-5:30 p.m. Information and registration forms are available in the office and on the school website (On website click on your campus and then “my campus info”).

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, or by Lancaster Mennonite buses. School doors are unlocked at 8 a.m. Buses unload students between 8 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. and pick up between 3 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. Carpoled students should not arrive before 8 a.m. and should leave by 3:15 p.m.

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 and Delays Due to Weather: Parents can learn about weather-related emergency school closings for Lancaster Mennonite School through the school website www.lancastermennonite.org, the school Facebook page, by calling the school's hotline at (717) 299-0436, ext. 561, or by tuning in to these FM radio stations:
WDAC (94.5), WJTL (90.3), WIOV (105) or WGAL-TV Channel 8.

In the event of an early dismissal due to weather, information will also be available through the website or through the channels listed above.

ACADEMICS/SCHOOL LIFE

Report Cards: Lancaster Mennonite School system uses Schoology to provide information regarding our students' progress.

- PreK students will receive a hard copy of their report card.
- In grades K-5: Report cards are available on Schoology every trimester.
- In grades 6-8: Parents and students can access grades throughout the entire year. Report cards will be available each quarter.

Report cards are used to:

- Inform parents of student progress
- Bring parents into closer understanding of the work of the school
- Record growth and achievement for students and parents
- 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/reading five to 15 minutes per evening
- Grades 2-3: 15-30 minutes per evening
- Grades 4-5: 30-45 minutes per evening
- Grades 6-8: 60 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.

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 IU 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. IU 13 also provides speech therapy and psychological services. There are no additional charges for these services.

Field Trips: The school views field trips as a valuable educational experience. The school covers the cost of transportation, but each student pays for any admission charges. 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 on the school website. Go to <https://www.lancastermennonite.org/> click on Locust Grove Campus – My Campus Info – School Supplies

School Programs: Drama/music programs are held at Christmas and in the spring.

Chapel: Is held once a week, and is a time of singing, prayer, worship and praise.

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 is available online each year.

Phone Use: Students may use the school office phone with permission. All call are to be made from the office. Students may not use cell phones during the school day.

Lunch: A daily lunch is offered for purchase. Monthly lunch menus are available on the school website. Go to <https://www.lancastermennonite.org/> click on Locust Grove Campus – My Campus Info – Food Services

Health:

- School personnel are not permitted to administer medication to students without written permission from a doctor on a form provided by the office. This includes over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol, cough syrup, ect. Forms can also be found on the website. Go to <https://www.lancastermennonite.org/> click on Locust Grove Campus – My Campus Info – Medication Consent Form. Prescription medication must be sent to school in a container with the prescription labeled by a pharmacist or physician.

- Physical exams, dental exams, and immunizations are required by the state. Information is sent home about these when they are due.
- School personnel give first-aid treatment. If a student has an injury requiring further medical attention, the parents are informed immediately.
- A nurse from the public school district serves the campus in its district. All students receive height, weight, and vision screenings once a year from the nurse.

Locust Grove Campus: Conestoga Valley School District

Sports: Locust Grove Campus combines with the Lancaster Campus Middle School for interscholastic completion in selected sports. These teams are for students in grades 7 through 9. The Mennonite Sports Organization (MSO) offers programs for students through grade 6. (<https://www.lancastermennonite.org/athletics/mso/>)

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 under teacher supervision, not in the halls, gym, bathrooms, or library.
- Students may not leave the school grounds without permission.
- Cell phones should not be used during the school day.
- Teachers will monitor use of other electronic devices.
- Inappropriate use of an electronic device may result in requiring the parent to come to pick it up.

- 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.

The following are examples of unacceptable behavior:

- Gum chewing is not allowed.
- The use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages and other illicit drugs is prohibited.
- Being tardy to class
- Unfinished homework and failure to use class time wisely
- Classroom behavior that 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
- Playing hardball (baseball) is not permitted.
- Throwing snowballs is not permitted.

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

- Loss of free time
- “Time out” (a short time outside of class in the office)
- Student sent to the principal
- Manual work
- Suspension of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Detention/suspension
- 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:

- Modest length dresses, skirts, shorts (fingertip length). Slacks or jeans are appropriate for girls.
- Pants or jeans and modest length shorts are appropriate for boys.
- The following clothing does not meet school standards:
 - Clothes that are torn, tattered, have holes or are frayed
 - Spaghetti straps, tight-fitting or midriff-exposing clothes

- Clothing with inappropriate messages or pictures not in keeping with the values of the school
- Distinctive military attire
- For safety reasons, students should NOT wear jewelry in P.E. class
- For safety reasons, all students should wear sneakers on the days they have P.E. class

SCHOOL POLICIES

Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books: The professional staff chooses textbooks and other instructional materials 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:

- 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 or AIDS, ect. By treating all bodily fluids as infectious, school personnel and students are protected.
- 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.

- Dispose of contaminated disposable latex gloves and other contaminated materials in sealed plastic bags which then are placed in plastic-lined waste containers.
- 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.
- Be sure all surfaces that have blood, or other potentially infectious materials containing blood, on them are properly cleaned with an EPA approved disinfectant that 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.
- **Email privileges** will be reserved for staff. Only under special circumstances, and with specific permission, will pupils be granted the right to send email. Student use of email privileges will be granted with the stipulation that the purpose of the email 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 email to other schools for the purposes of establishing electronic pen pals, or setting up a website 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

- The superintendent, building principal, athletic director and the administrative assistant will work together to handle any crisis situation with the media, school and parents.
- 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.

- Staff members are assigned to various tasks to manage a crisis, with homeroom teachers having responsibility for supervising their classes.
- 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.

Please follow the school wellness policy/guidelines listed below for refreshments for school parties and birthday treats.

- Classroom parties may offer minimal amounts of foods with one item that contains added sugar (i.e. mini cupcakes, doughnut holes, small serving of cookies, brownies, mini candy bar, or a small serving of ice cream or Popsicle). These sugar treats should be limited to special occasions such as a birthday treat.
- Two healthy foods should accompany a sugar-added treat.
- Suggestions of healthy foods include: fruits, vegetables, cheese, yogurt, dried fruit, and trail mix.
- Teachers need to inform the class and parents of foods that may trigger food allergy reactions (including peanut and nut allergies) so persons can avoid those foods if necessary.
- Acceptable beverages include water, milk, 100% fruit juices and fruit blend juices.