



LANCASTER
MENNONITE

FAITH • EDUCATION • COMMUNITY

**Lancaster Mennonite
Middle School
Family Handbook
Grades 5-8th**

July 2023

CONTACT NUMBERS

Elementary Campus: (717) 740-2440

Middle School and High School Campus: (717) 299-0436

System/Business office: (717) 509-4459

Mission: Lancaster Mennonite School provides PreK-12th grade education in a diverse community that nurtures students to become creative and innovative learners who are prepared for college, career and life. Centered in Christ and committed to educational excellence, students are empowered to change the world through Christ-like love, peacemaking and service.

Vision: LM will be a leader in PreK-12th grade educational experiences of excellence and character. Through local and global connections in a Christ-centered community lives will be transformed and our world changed.

Core Values:

Together we will:

- Seek Jesus Wholeheartedly
- Live Compassionately
- Build Bridges of Peace
- Cultivate Global Citizens
- Nurture Curiosity and Creativity
- Empower Lifelong Learning

Change the world!

Educational Goals

- Students will encounter and build a relationship with Jesus and learn the biblical stories and the history of the Anabaptist-Christian faith.
- Students will learn, practice and demonstrate critical thinking, conflict resolution, organization and responsibility, ethical decision-making, problem solving, interpersonal and interdependence relational skills in the LM community.
- Students will become stewards of the earth's resources and their personal God-given gifts.
- Students will experience cultural diversity and respect for others.
- Students will be a presence of Christ in the world.

Admissions

Admissions and tuition information are available from the elementary office as well as from:

Admissions Office

Lancaster Mennonite School

2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA, 17602

Phone: (717) 740-2429

Fax: (717) 299-0823

Email: admissions@lancastermennonite.org

Web site: www.lancastermennonite.org

Welcome to Lancaster Mennonite Middle 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 education excellence in a community setting, the school exists to transform students so they can change our world through Christ-like love, peacemaking and service.

We are excited you are here. Within our walls, we want you to experience being known and loved by God and your team of teachers. This place is special! Here you will spread your wings, grow your minds, and nurture your spirits. As teachers, we pledge to encourage and support you, pray for you, advocate for you and believe in your success every day.

Integral to a positive life together is respect for God, one another and our space. This includes students, faculty, staff, property, and the educational process. At LMMS, we desire to maintain a community that models the life of Jesus and we want all individuals to experience being accepted, valued, and loved. As we interact with one another, our goal is to treat others as we wish to be treated.

School standards and expectations are established to guide our life together. While 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. This handbook is not a comprehensive listing of school expectations and policies, but rather a general summary for your convenience. Not all situations are addressed. In addition to school-wide, teachers will establish specific standards in their classroom. The following habits are what guide our life together as a school community. These habits are built into the culture of our school and are also integrated into our discipline plan.

Parent/Student Covenant with the School

We understand that being part of Lancaster Mennonite School is both a privilege and a responsibility. We partner with the school to:

- Support the mission of the school as it seeks to prepare students to follow in the way of Jesus, transform lives and change our world.
- Honor the community, recognizing that all members are children of God.
- Value and respect every person.
- Be active participants in the educational process, striving for excellence in every aspect of campus life.
- Uphold the policies and expectations of LM, recognizing the right of the school to dismiss any student or dissolve the relationship with any parent who does not cooperate with or remain supportive of the school and its disciplinary procedures.
- Fulfill our financial obligations in a timely manner.
- Support the school through volunteerism, finances and prayer.

We further understand that Lancaster Mennonite School has the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of a student for reasons set forth in the Handbook or other published documents; for reasons that the Superintendent, within their discretion, considers to be detrimental to Lancaster Mennonite School, the student or to other students; or for failure to pay tuition and fees.

Parent-School Relationship

- Lancaster Mennonite School system plans activities that encourage the parent-teacher partnership in the education of their children/students and builds positive relationships between home and school.
- Administration and parent volunteers plan for activities and fundraisers. The structure under which these activities are provided is a principal's decision. All families are invited and encouraged to volunteer their time and resources as they are able, and to attend school events.
- A Parent Orientation evening is planned early in the school year.
- Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year.

Parent-School Communication

Good communication and partnership between home and school are integral components of effective education.

- **Schoology** is the primary source of communication between students, families, and teachers as grades, schedules, and classroom communication is posted there.
- **System and Campus E-Links** are used for monthly information from the system office, campus office and the guidance department. Schoology is also used for email messages.
- **Parent-Teacher conferences** are scheduled in the fall and the spring using an online sign-up platform or can be scheduled with an e-mail or phone call to our guidance department.
- **When a student needs to be absent** from school, please call our attendance line to let us know of their absence.
- **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.
 - For very serious concerns, or if an incident involves the teacher, please communicate directly with the building principal. This would include instances of suspected harassment or abuse.

Daily Procedures for LMMS

Arrival to School

- Students arriving by bus should get off and enter the middle school doors to the main academic building. Students arriving by car should enter the north entrance by the traffic circle. We encourage carpool students to be dropped off at 7:55.
- If students arrive before 7:45, they should report to the MS office to wait. This should not be daily though.
- Students must report to homeroom upon arrival and may not remain in the hallway.
- Devotions/gathering activities will begin at 8:05 a.m.
- Middle Students will hand in their cell phones once they arrive in their homeroom class and can have them back at dismissal.

Dismissal Procedures

- Dismissal is at 3:05. Students leaving school by bus will exit through the middle school doors directly to their waiting buses.
- Students riding with a high school carpool will go directly to the location agreed upon by the students' parents/caregivers and the driver.
- Students being picked up at the traffic circle will go directly to the traffic circle at dismissal. Middle school students must be picked up no later than 3:30 p.m., unless they are staying for an approved after school event (this includes athletic practices).
- **All middle school students must be off campus by 3:30 p.m. unless participating in a school sanctioned activity.**
- When school is dismissed early, the same procedures will apply. Students not picked up within 20 minutes after dismissal must wait in the campus office.
- Students may not leave campus for any reason without first signing out in the campus office.

Visitors

Parents, caregivers, and other visitors must report to the main campus office for a visitor's pass before going to a middle school classroom.

Attendance Policy

School Day

Classes begin at 8:15 a.m. and end at 3:05 p.m. The main lobby doors open at 7:45 a.m. Students should be in their classrooms by 8:10.

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 campus office. 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. 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.
- **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 a 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 quarter grade in each course. Absences are unexcused until proper notification is received.

Tardies

A tardy arrival to school is after 8:10. Students arriving after 8:10 must be checked in by their parent/driver at the office. 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 each school year

After 3 unexcused tardies, students will receive an after-school detention and 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 absences (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.
- Long term medically related absences are handled by administration on a case by case basis following a doctor’s recommendation.

General

Emergency School Closings. Information about weather-related emergency school closings will be posted on the school website www.lancastermennonite.org, Facebook page and on Schoology. Information is also available on these radio and TV stations: WJTL (90.3), WDAC (94.5), WITF (89.5), WGAL (Channel 8), FOX 43.

LM Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Plan

In order to improve the predictability of the school calendar and eliminate the need for make-up days throughout the spring and into June, LM is introducing a Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Plan. FIDs allow academic work to be completed at home when inclement weather requires closing the school building. FIDs will be counted as a school day. LM will use up to five FIDs per school year.

- All teachers will post assignments on Schoology by 9:00am. Each assignment should require approximately 30 minutes of time. Teachers may give additional homework as appropriate.
- Due dates and times will be posted by the teacher on Schoology. Assignments will be due no earlier than 4:00 p.m. on the FID.
- Teachers will check their email and Schoology accounts regularly throughout the day and be available for questions until 3:05 p.m.
- Students without internet or device access should inform their teachers in advance and will be given a one-day extension for their assignments.

School Entrance/Safety

To promote a safe and secure environment for our students, all 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 must use the main door by the office and sign the visitors' log located there.

7th and 8th Grade Interdisciplinary Project Presentations

Students in the 7th and 8th grades may be required to attend a presentation of their quarterly project. These dates and requirements will be communicated to families at the beginning of each quarter so that they can plan accordingly.

Faith Formation, Spiritual Care and Community

Faith formation is integrated into the middle school curriculum and is more explicitly developed through the *Encounter* curriculum, which is taught during Bible class. Students begin their day in homeroom with a devotional time and opportunities for prayer and sharing. There are also opportunities for corporate worship, reflection, and Christian community building through chapel and other activities.

Lunch Time and Campus Food Services

Students may pack their own lunch or they may purchase lunches in the school dining hall. Upon enrollment, each student is given an identification number that is used as the PIN for the student's lunch account. Students purchasing food or beverage should go through the serving area and use their PIN at the cashier.

All food must be eaten in the cafeteria. Students not purchasing food or beverages should go directly to the designated middle school seating area. When students are finished eating, they should dispose of their trash and/or return their trays to the window at the dish room. Tables, chairs, and floor must be clean before students are dismissed from the dining hall. Any middle school student wishing to use the restroom or leave the dining hall for any reason during his/her scheduled lunch period must first ask permission from a supervising teacher or administrator.

Students may carry closed water containers to class at the discretion of their classroom teacher. Open food and drink items from the dining hall are not permitted to be consumed in the hallways or in classrooms unless it is with teacher permission and/or for a planned class activity.

Eligibility Requirements for 7th and 8th grade athletics

Eligibility requirements apply to all extracurricular activities. 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 failing grades at the end of a week results in ineligibility for the next week. Two or more failing grades 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 abuse 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.

Academics

Textbooks/School Equipment

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.

Academic 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, school counseling, psychological services, and social work 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.

School Supplies

A list of student supplies necessary for each grade will be sent to each student before the beginning of the school year, and can be found in the "Back to School" section on the school website.

School Music Programs

Fine arts programs are held at Christmas and in the spring.

Chapel

Is held once a week, and is a time of singing, prayer, worship and community-building.

Phone Use

Students may use the school office phone with permission. All calls are to be made from the office. Students may not use cell phones or smartwatch technology during the school day. Middle Students will hand in their cell phones once they arrive in their homeroom class and can have them back at dismissal.

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. Students can also access the middle school specific library and check out books from there.

Physical Education Classes

Students need opportunities for physical activity during the school day. Students are not permitted in the gym before or after school or 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. Students need to bring gym shorts and sneakers for class.

Middle School Students Enrolled in High School Classes

With administrative and parent approval, middle school students are occasionally permitted to take high school classes when such an arrangement appears to be in the best interest of the student. Middle school students who successfully complete high school courses do not receive credit on their high school transcripts, but they may take the next level of a course sequence when they enter high school.

Screenings

Students participate in some universal screenings that provide their teachers with valuable information about their academic levels. Most of these screenings occur in the fall, winter, and spring.

- **Acadience Reading K–8:** helps educators monitor reading proficiency and identify students who are at risk for reading difficulties in order to provide timely instructional support and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties.
- **FastBridge Spanish Immersion K-8:** provides the same kind of diagnostic reading information, just in Spanish.
- **Acadience Math K-6 and easyCBM 7-8:** measures numeracy, computation, and problem-solving that function as indicators of the essential skills that every child must master in order to become proficient in mathematics.
- **MAP Growth K-10:** measures achievement and growth through adaptive evaluations in math, reading, and language usage.

Student Progress

Lancaster Mennonite uses Schoology to provide information regarding our students' progress. Parents will receive a code via email that grants them access to Schoology. A separate code will be issued for each child in a family. A parent can also contact the front office to obtain these codes. Instructions are available at www.lancastermennonite.org/schoology.

- **Grades 5-8:** Parents and students can access assignments and grades on Schoology throughout the entire year.
- All families will receive copies of report cards through School Messenger.

- **Report cards are used to:**
 - Inform parents of student progress towards specific, grade-level expectations
 - 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 build skills and address needs of students

Middle School Grading Scale

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 59%

Homework and Assignments

Assignments are given in class with some class time devoted to them. At times, students may need additional time to complete those assignments outside of class. The school's intent is that the amount of time needed outside of class is minimal.

Students are given time during the week to read independently and are guided in choosing what to read.

- **Purpose of Assignments:**
 - Encourage students to develop clear and meaningful communication through writing and speaking.
 - Encourage problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity.
 - Promote learning for a lifetime.
 - Stimulate interest beyond the curriculum.
 - Develop responsibility and self-discipline.
 - Reinforce and refine fundamental skills.

- **Teachers' Responsibility:**
 - Establish and communicate a clear purpose for assignments in regard to student learning.
 - Explain how to do the assignment, including good examples.
 - Communicate clear expectations for each assignment. Check for understanding.
 - Assign developmentally appropriate assignments that are not busy work.
 - Make sure students fully understand the concepts and possess the skills needed to

- complete assignments.
 - Structure assignments in such a way that students can accomplish them with relatively high success rates.
 - Differentiate assignments as needed.
 - Give feedback promptly.
 - Discuss assignments and timetable among faculty to establish a balance of assignments.
 - Avoid using homework as a punishment.
- **Students' Responsibility:**
 - Have a system to track assignments.
 - Be sure all assignments are clear; asking questions if necessary.
 - Set aside a regular time to read and study.
 - Find a quiet, well-lit study area free of electronics/social media.
 - Understand when an assignment is expected to be an individual or group effort.
 - Produce quality work.
 - Make sure assignments are done according to the given instructions and completed on time.
- **Parent Suggestions:**
 - Encourage your student(s) to set a regular, uninterrupted reading/study time each day.
 - Encourage your student(s) to establish a quiet, well-lit study area with necessary supplies.
 - Monitor the amount of time spent on assignments at home and communicate to the teacher if the amount of school work done at home disrupts family time or if the student is discouraged.
 - Be supportive to the student.
 - Maintain a balance between student ownership of work and parental involvement so that the student accepts responsibility.

At times students do not have a home environment that lends itself to completion of assignments started in school. Teachers and administrators need to be sensitive to situations like this and process possible means for students to be successful, such as a directed study hall or after school opportunity.

Academic Integrity Policy

As those who seek Jesus wholeheartedly, we strive to model the life of Jesus through our actions that reflect honesty and integrity. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and stands in direct violation of expectations for our learning community. Plagiarism is the use of the words, ideas, or work of another as if it were one's own or re-using one's own work as if it were new.

Examples of plagiarism include the following:

- Submitting, as your own work copied, in part or in whole, from another student or from print or electronic sources

- Using direct quotes or paraphrased information without proper citation
- Incorporating another's phrases, ideas, images, charts, statistics or interpretations in your writing without proper citation
- Collaborating with other students on individual assignments and either submitting similar work or having another student complete the work for you
- Resubmitting your own previous work as new
- Submitting work created in part or in whole that was generated by artificial intelligence

These definitions of plagiarism pertain to papers and essays as well as assignments and tests.

Plagiarism is both unethical and illegal, and teachers should strive to help students understand the gravity of academic theft. In working at consequences for cases of plagiarism, teachers should bear in mind that discipline, in its most useful form, is a learning tool applied for the benefit of both the individual student and the greater school community.

Grades 5 - 8

- All teachers will directly instruct students in:
 - What plagiarism is
 - How it can be avoided
- Students will practice:
 - Selecting and using reference material
 - Paraphrasing information
 - Citing sources
 - Collaborating with peers
- If a student plagiarizes, the teacher will:
 - Discuss the plagiarism with the student and give the student an opportunity to respond
 - Help the student understand the issue and how the problem can be avoided in the future
 - Work with the student to make right the situation by reworking and resubmitting the assignment
 - Determine an appropriate consequence, including point reduction
 - Notify the parents of the plagiarism and consequences

Parent/Caregiver-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are helpful avenues through which parents/caregivers and teachers can discover ways the home and school can best work together for the benefit of the student. Parents/Caregivers will be invited to schedule Fall and Spring conferences with their child's teachers. (*Dates are on the calendar*). Additional conferences may be scheduled by teachers or parents as needed throughout the year.

School Counseling

Lancaster Mennonite provides both academic and non-academic counseling to all students. The school counseling offices are located in the campus office. Parents/Caregivers are welcome to communicate any concerns with the middle school counselors.

Service Opportunities

An important aspect of education at LM is that of service. Students are encouraged to think of ways they can give back to their school and community as well as show Christ-like love to others. There are various opportunities throughout the year when students will participate in service opportunities or projects both on or off-campus.

Sports

LMMS sponsors junior high teams for interscholastic competition in selected sports. These teams are for students in grades 7 through 9. The LMYA (*Lancaster Mennonite Youth Athletics*) offers programs for students through grade 6. Please contact the campus office for more information.

Middle School Drama

Middle School students may audition for the middle school drama, usually performed in late winter or early spring. At times there may also be openings for middle school students in high school drama productions.

Other Middle School Activities

LMMS has a Quiz Bowl team, Chess team, Yearbook, Design Club and various other activities in which students are invited to participate.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A SHARED COMMUNITY

Character growth, positive 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 to help each child know and demonstrate the reconciling love of Jesus.

The school is responsible to clearly define behavioral guidelines and a safe environment and inform parents of any consistent pattern of misbehavior and its consequences. Parents are responsible to support school policies and teacher authority in dialogue with their children.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FRAMEWORK

Revised 7/14/2023

Lancaster Mennonite has long been committed to a restorative framework for discipline that builds positive and peaceful relationships, encourages accountability, and enables pathways to restore harm and change behavior. As a school within the Anabaptist faith tradition, we express that “Jesus is the center of our faith, community is the center of our lives, and reconciliation is the center of our work” (Palmer Becker, 2017). Proactive peacebuilding and involving students in a caring school community is our first approach to preventing student disciplinary issues. We expect most LM students will have little problem following school expectations. Reconciliation strategies, or restorative practices, are the approach taken when disciplinary issues arise.

Students and families are expected to cooperate fully with the restorative process as part of the school community.

Restorative Practices Framework

Lancaster Mennonite has long been committed to a restorative framework for discipline that builds positive and peaceful relationships, encourages accountability, and enables pathways to restore harm and change behavior. As a school within the Anabaptist faith tradition, we express that “Jesus is the center of our faith, community is the center of our lives, and reconciliation is the center of our work” (Palmer Becker, 2017). Proactive peacebuilding and involving students in a caring school community is our first approach to preventing student disciplinary issues. We expect most LM students will have little problem following school expectations. Reconciliation strategies, or restorative practices, are the approach taken when disciplinary issues arise. Students and families are expected to cooperate fully with the restorative process as part of the school community.



Restorative Justice is centered in the belief that all people are created worthy and are wired for positive relationships. When we do things that impact others and create harm to those relationships, it is our individual and collective responsibility to make things right.

Restorative Practices are the skills and processes that help us build, nurture, and repair relationships to form a healthy, supportive, just, & welcoming community.

Katherine Evans and Dorothy Vaandering, from *The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education*

Tiered Restorative Justice and Support

At LM, a tiered approach to restorative justice enables all students to engage with restorative practices at levels which meet their individual needs. Families can contact principals for more detailed information regarding disciplinary responses. Restorative practices help our school:

- Build relationships to create a caring, Christ-centered community
- Prevent or transform conflict peacefully before it escalates
- Engage students and community members in repairing harm and transforming conflict

Tier 1	Strategies for all students to engage in proactive peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and behavior support and modeling . Minor disciplinary issues at this level are primarily overseen by classroom teachers with redirection or conversation.
Tier 2	Intervention strategies for a few students , focusing on accountability, peaceful conflict resolution, repairing harm, and restoring relationships. Disciplinary issues at this level involve additional staff, parents, or administrators.
Tier 3	Intensive interventions for a few students , focusing on safety, repairing harm, and restoring relationships. Disciplinary issues at this level involve multiple stakeholders, and may result in suspension or expulsion. A supported re-entry is provided following suspensions.

Tiered Restorative Justice and Support - Middle

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES		SUPPORT SYSTEMS
<p>Teacher-led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily homeroom meetings ● “Encounter” faith formation curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explicit teaching of conflict resolution and community-building strategies such as STORY ○ Respect Agreements ● Posters of expectations in every room ● Restorative inquiry ● Think sheets <p>School-led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Counselor meeting ● Positive behavior recognition ● Chapel focus on theme and expectations ● Social skills curriculum (counselor) 	<p><u>Tier I</u></p> <p><i>Includes all students in all settings</i></p> <p><i>Proactive peacebuilding</i></p> <p><i>Preventative behavior supports</i></p>	<p>Teacher-led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incident referral forms ● Counselor referrals (teachers, parents, or students can refer) ● Student Success Team referrals <p>School-led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incident referrals - monthly review ● Attendance data - monthly review ● Behavior Response Grid ● Regular staff trainings and professional development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual behavior plan - created with family, teachers, administration, counselor ● Small group counseling - (academic, social-emotional, etc. with school counselor) ● Restorative circles for student conflict resolution 	<p><u>Tier II</u></p> <p><i>Interventions and Strategies for some students, initially school-led</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Success Team case management (plan monitored monthly) ● Attendance support- family contact and plan created ● Bullying and Harassment forms ● Recommendation for Tier 3 support if needed ● Mental Health Clearance if needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternatives to suspension, supported in-school suspension, out of school suspension when necessary ● Re-entry circles following suspensions ● Restorative meetings with multiple stakeholders 	<p><u>Tier III</u></p> <p><i>Intensive school-led supports and alternatives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SST recommends referral for IU13 consultation or evaluation, school district multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE), mental health evaluation, or behavioral health evaluation ● Law enforcement involvement when necessary ● Title IX process enacted when necessary

Behavior Response Grid

<u>Tier I Behaviors</u>	Types of Behaviors (This list is non-exhaustive)	Possible Classroom Responses (Depending on situation)
<p><i>Tier I interventions are handled by classroom teachers. Teachers personally handling these issues with students builds relational equity, allowing for better problem solving in the future. Please make attempts to process the incident and provide an appropriate response or intervention.</i></p>	<p><i>Minor, non-recurring instances of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disrupting class ● Disrespect ● Inappropriate language, humor, or name calling ● Leaving area without permission ● Physical contact (play fighting, hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting, etc.) ● Lying or cheating ● Vandalism or stealing ● Technology violation ● Dress code violation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Restate/reteach expectation</i> ● <i>Remind of Respect Agreement</i> ● <i>Redirection</i> ● <i>Give a warning</i> ● <i>Take-a-break area</i> ● <i>For physical contact - communicate with parents</i> ● <i>Think sheet</i> ● <i>Restorative inquiry</i> ● <i>Student/teacher chat</i> ● <i>Loss of privilege</i> ● <i>Repairing physical damage or replacing item</i> ● <i>Apologies</i>
<p><u>Tier II</u> <i>Major behaviors requiring follow-up from administrative staff and parent involvement</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any repeated Tier I behavior ● Repeated physical contact (hitting, kicking, etc.) ● Possession/suspicion of toy weapon ● Inappropriate touch or sexual contact <p>Major instances of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lying or cheating ● Vandalism or stealing ● Technology violation ● Leaving area ● Inappropriate or oppressive language, humor, or name-calling 	<p><i>In addition to above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Office referral</i> ● <i>Parent contact</i> ● <i>Removal from class if necessary</i> ● <i>Restorative meeting to make a plan and make it right</i> ● <i>Referral for Student Success Team, counselor, etc., if needed</i> ● <i>Enact Title IX investigation, if needed</i> ● <i>Mental health clearance</i>
<p><u>Tier III</u> <i>Major behaviors requiring immediate intervention</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inappropriate touch or sexual contact ● Possession or threats of weapon ● Bullying, harassment, threats (including self-harm) 	<p><i>Always:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Office referral or phone call</i> ● <i>Parent contact</i> <p><i>If necessary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Removal from class</i> ● <i>Suspension or expulsion</i> ● <i>Enact Title IX investigation</i> ● <i>Enact Bullying investigation</i> ● <i>Mental health clearance</i> ● <i>Call 911</i> ● <i>Threat assessment if necessary</i>

Restorative Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion. As an Anabaptist-Christian community, LM is committed to fostering and nurturing a culture of peace, safety, respect, mutual accountability, and trust. When students engage in behavior that damages or threatens to harm our community, our first response must be to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Violence, whether physical or verbal, is not tolerated. We understand violence to include any behaviors, verbal, non-verbal, that cause another person to feel threatened or unsafe. Those who engage in violent behavior are separated from the school community while the situation is processed by the administration.

Our goal is to build a positive learning community with conduct that enhances the educational process. LM expects students to develop self-regulation and build positive relationships with others. Teachers respond appropriately when school standards and expectations are violated. Restorative practices are central to our handling of disciplinary matters.

The goal of discipline is not punishment, but rather changed behavior. It is expected that students and families will respect and work with teachers so that few discipline cases are referred to the administrator. In cases where the unacceptable conduct does not change, referrals will be made to the LMH principal. Restorative conferences may be used to repair harm caused by unacceptable behavior. Student mediation and negotiation strategies are also encouraged as methods for solving problems. In all cases, it is important to respect the dignity of the individual through due process.

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 interests of the student/s and 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 or possession of weapons.
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, vapor products, or illegal drugs or substance 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.

The school's response to disciplinary matters may include a community service assignment, restorative conference, detention, development of a plan to change behavior, fine, suspension, writing thinking papers, etc. Restorative conferences may be used to repair harm caused by poor/unacceptable choices. In all cases, the goal is maintaining a positive school climate and enabling individual growth. Being a student at LM is a privilege that is based upon meeting expectations.

The school will respond to out-of-school behavior when it affects in-school behavior, has a negative effect on other students, interferes with the school's operations, or violates 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.

Expulsion: When restorative measures have failed, the student or family is uncooperative or if the presence of the student in school is deemed inadvisable, or the student has violated law and the family has not withdrawn the student, administration reserves the right to expel the student.

Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Lancaster Mennonite admits students of any race, color, national origin, ethnic origin or gender to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students at the school. LM does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic origin or gender 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.

Bullying

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting or where the behavior directly impacts the school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantial interference with a student's education.
- Creation of a threatening environment.
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

Forms for reporting bullying are available in the office or from the guidance counselor.

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 the student's parents/caregivers should report such conduct immediately to a teacher and/or the campus principal and fill out a bullying, discrimination or harassment form. All such reports will be investigated promptly by the school. If the school determines that bullying, harassment or discrimination has occurred, the offending student, staff member or faculty member will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the school.

Other Campus Expectations

- Displays of affection are not permitted on campus.
- Soliciting or literature distribution is not permitted on campus without administrative approval.
- Fundraising on or off campus is not permitted without administrative approval.
- Skateboards are not permitted on campus.
- Students may not cross the Mill Stream at any time unless they are attending an athletic competition or are under the direct supervision of school staff.

Appearance and Dress Code Expectation:

LM desires that students come to school in clothing that is appropriate for our school context, creating a **positive, professional educational atmosphere** and celebrates human dignity. Our dress code is designed to ensure that all students are respected. Just as certain jobs and professions maintain certain expectations for dress, so, too, does LM.

“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

- Shirts must have straps at least 2.5 inches wide (approximately three fingers wide). Spaghetti straps, tube tops, muscle shirts, halter-tops, off-the-shoulder tops, and/or strapless tops are not permitted.
- No exposed midriffs will be permitted. Shirts must cover the midriff on all sides when the student is seated, standing or performing any other school-related activities (such as raising a hand, etc.).
- Dresses, skirts, and shorts length should be at or below fingertips extended.
 - Jeans may have rips but not above the knee.
- Undergarments must be concealed at all times. Clothing that reveals undergarments, whether due to transparency, length, style, or cut is not permitted. Pants must be worn at the waist and may not reveal undergarments.
- Pictures, messages, and symbols on clothing, jewelry, or other accessories may not contain profanity or obscenity or include references to tobacco, vaping, alcohol, drugs, violence, or illegal activity. Pictures/messages/symbols with sexual, racist, oppressive, satanic, or generally negative connotations may not be worn. Pictures/messages/symbols directly related to/referring to political candidates or politicians may not be worn.
 - Hats, hoods, sunglasses may not be worn during the school day.
- Distinctive military clothing (military camouflage or clothes promoting the military) may not be worn.
 - No pajamas or sleepwear may be worn.
- Footwear must be worn at all times. Safety considerations may dictate the type of footwear worn in specific classes or school settings.

Teachers will inform the office of dress code violations so that students will be called to the office and informed privately.

Students who do not follow the dress code may be asked to change clothes or remove accessories. If the student does not have appropriate clothing in which to change, a parent/caregiver may be asked to provide it. The school may also provide clean alternatives when possible. Repeated dress code infractions may result in additional consequences as noted below. LM asks that parents ensure their student is wearing clothing that meets the stated dress code expectations.

First Offense: Student required to change; warning issued

Repeated Offenses will be managed at the discretion of the principal which will include contact with a parent.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are not permitted to be used or visible during the school day (from the time the student arrives on campus until dismissal). LMMS students turn-in electronic devices to their crew/homeroom teacher upon arriving at school. If you need to contact your child immediately, please phone the school office at 717-299-0436.

Safety and Security

For the safety of our students, our school and personal property we ask that students and parents/caregivers note the following points:

Health

- 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.
- School personnel are not permitted to administer medication to students without written permission from physician and parent on the Medication Consent Form available at each campus office. This includes over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol, cough syrup, etc. Medication Consent Forms can also be found on the website.
- 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 will give first-aid treatment. If a student has an injury requiring further immediate medical attention, the parents are informed immediately.
- If immediate medical attention is required, 911 will be called by a school employee.
- A nurse from the public-school district serves the LM campus. All students receive height, weight, and vision screenings once a year from the nurse.

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.

We strongly discourage students from bringing valuable items to school.

Students are responsible for the security of anything of value that is brought to school.

Communication Between School and Home

Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to attend middle school events to meet the teachers, visit classrooms and talk directly with school administrators. Check the school calendar/website for dates and times.

Teachers post class assignments and information on Schoology, accessed through the Lancaster Mennonite website. In our efforts to care for our earth, LM is trying to limit the amount of paper the school uses. Parents are encouraged to reference the LM website for school information.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

LANCASTER MENNONITE SCHOOL
STUDENT RESPONSIBLE AND ACCEPTABLE USE

5316

Introduction

Lancaster Mennonite School recognizes that educational technology provides a valuable resource for students. The use of this tool requires both district-provided safeguards and student responsibility. To the best of its ability, LMS provides a safe, secure technological environment for students in compliance with state and federal blocking and filtering regulations. Realizing the blocking and filtering software/hardware alone provides a false sense of security, LMS contends that students must obtain the skills necessary to responsibly navigate Internet usage and be held accountable for their behavior.

It is important to note that the services and resources provided by LMS are not the same as private home Internet accounts. Students should have no expectation of privacy. Therefore, LMS has the right to monitor, delete, and access all viewed, verbal, written actions performed or logged on its systems. Furthermore, LMS considers any violation of this Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy to be a significant matter and reserves the right to limit, refuse or revoke access to its technology resources.

The Lancaster Mennonite School's Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy applies to all technology resources including, but not limited to cell phones, tablets, personal laptop computers, school computers, audio and video equipment, networks, and storage devices. LMS students are expected to use school resources in an ethical, moral, and legal manner. All LMS technology systems and information accessed, transmitted, and stored on them are governed by school policies and are subject to administrative supervision and inspection. LMS reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and disclose all messages and other information created, posted, accessed or stored on its system without prior notice.

School administrators may confiscate any electronic device from students suspected of being in violation of the Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy. Any student who violates this policy is subject to loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension and expulsion, and legal prosecution.

This handbook is not a comprehensive listing of school rules, expectations and policies, but rather a summary of some of the rules and policies for your convenience. LM reserves the right to interpret and apply, modify or adopt, with or without notice, its rules.