

WELCOME

Gehmans Mennonite School is located along Route 897 one and one-half miles south of Route 272 in northeast Lancaster County. We offer a quality program of education, for K-8 grades, that is Christ-centered, Anabaptist oriented, and operates with a certification from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Without regard to race, sex, or national origin, this organization welcomes all persons who share a commitment to its purpose and who recognize the Lordship of Christ and the authority of scripture as expressed in the Mennonite Confession of Faith, 1963.

HISTORY OF GMS

In the fall of 1952 Gehmans Mennonite School was begun by an association of Christian parents related to the Mennonite Church. The first year there were two faculty members. Since this beginning year, God has blessed the school with growth in enrollment, staff, and buildings.

The original building erected in 1952 had two classrooms. Shortly thereafter, a third room was added in the basement. Bulging enrollment necessitated additional classroom space, so in 1969 more property was purchased and four classrooms were added to the original building. In 1975 additional space was obtained through the use of a trailer which was shortly thereafter replaced with a modular building which gave space for two more classrooms.

A constitution was adopted in May 1975 and officially listed the school's name as Gehmans Mennonite Christian Day School. In 1991 the school name was officially changed to Gehmans Mennonite School without the apostrophe for convenience sake.

In 1979 an additional two acres were added to the school grounds, and a new wing was added to the existing building. This new

extension provided two additional classrooms, library, offices, and an all-purpose room.

In 1986 the original building and first addition were given a major external renovation consisting of an attractive new stucco finish.

Gehmans Mennonite School now represents approximately 80 families and students.

The school offered grades one through nine and added kindergarten in 1977. In the spring of 1985 ninth grade was discontinued due to the opening of Terre Hill Mennonite High School.

In 1988 the all purpose room was converted to two classrooms, an auxiliary room was added to the office, and a new 56' x 60' all purpose room was constructed.

In 1989 an "L" shaped, one and one-half acre tract of land to the North and West was added. In 1996 a 0.9 acre tract was added to the Northern boundary and in the year 2000 a 3.5 acre tract to the west was added bringing the total to 10.5 acres. In 2004 a land development project added a new parking lot and renewed the playground area.

We thank God for His blessing in the past and seek His guidance daily.

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SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Nelson Martin, Chairman (13)
Randy Brubacher, Vice Chairman (14)
Anthony Hostetter, Treasurer (13)
Barry Wenger, Secretary (13)
Evan Newswanger, Maintenance (14)

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Brian Zeiset (13)
Nelson Gehman (14)
Clair Good (15)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Anthony Hostetter, Chairman
Richard Burkholder (13)
John Burkholder (13)
Nelson Rutt (13)
Randy Martin (14)
Nate Smucker (14)

TRANSPORTATION COMM.

Jim Martin (13)
Nelson Martin (13)
Randy Sauder (14)
Dale Nolt (14)

BUS MAINTENANCE COMM.

Jim Martin – Overseer
Lester Martin – Service Calls
Bus #1 – Javan Horst (14)
Bus #2 – Randy Martin
Bus #3 – Kent Zeiset (15)
Bus #4 – Evan Newswanger (13)
Bus #5 – Carl Martin

MAINTENANCE COMM.

Crist Smucker (13)
Duane Weaver (14)
Steve Weaver (15)

AUXILIARY COMMITTEE

Rachelle Hostetter (13)
Erma Martin (13)
Karen Martin (14)
Cordelia Stoltzfus (14)

PTF COMMITTEE

Nelson Gehman, Chairman
Michael Burkholder, Principal
Nelson Rutt (13)
Ernest Hahn (13)

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Nelson Martin, Chairman
Michael Burkholder, Principal
Josh Wagler (13)
Judy Burkholder (John) (13)
Sharon Cody (14)
Dorita Gehman (14)

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Bonnie Martin (13)
Tracy Fox (13)
Erma Martin (14)
Lorraine Harnish (14)

LANDSCAPING COMMITTEE

Ken Wanner (13)
Lorraine Harnish (13)
Karen Wanner (14)
Dean Hoover (14)

PICNIC COMMITTEE

Neil & Betty Good (13)
Nelson & Dorita Gehman (14)
Pending (15)

MISSION STATEMENT

Gehmans Mennonite School cooperates with Christian families and Mennonite churches in providing a Christ-centered, Anabaptist oriented, K-8 academic program. This program provides opportunities for excellence and growth in academic, spiritual, and social development. Students are encouraged to commit their lives to Jesus Christ who empowers them to live meaningful lives of peace and service.

ADMISSIONS

Gehmans Mennonite School admits students of any race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational or admissions policies, scholarship, and loan programs or athletic and other school administered programs.

All new patrons applying for admission will receive a packet including the by-laws, student handbook, and admission forms. After reading these materials, complete the application and return it to GMS.

Student Entrance Policy

There are three general criteria used to determine readiness to enter school.

1. Student should be at least five years old by September 1st to enter kindergarten and six years old by September 1st to enter first grade.
2. School readiness testing results. (These tests are given in the spring preceding entrance to kindergarten or first grade.)
3. Student's individual development readiness.

Student Transfers

All students transferring from another school to Gehmans Mennonite School shall be informed of the regulations of this school by the parents and should be given the opportunity to read the current student handbook. Health and academic records held at the previous school should be transferred to GMS. Junior high students will be interviewed by the principal and/or board representative.

ANNUAL EVENTS

School Cleaning

School cleaning throughout the school year is being done by employed cleaners. As long as we have this arrangement you will be excused from cleaning. If the school needs money for this you may be assessed a small fee.

There is however, a cleaning detail prior to the opening of school in August where you will be scheduled to help with cleaning.

Fund Raising

Offerings are received at various school functions. You will be informed of what the offering is designated for. You may be asked to provide assistance with school trip expenses. The finance committee initiates various fund raising activities as deemed necessary to meet GMS needs. You are encouraged to make tax deductible gifts to GMS since tuition does not fund the total cost of education.

Programs

Two student programs are performed, one in the winter and the other in the spring. These are meant to be inspirational, promote student participation, and be a spiritual witness opportunity. All students are encouraged to participate.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

These conferences are scheduled once each year to provide constructive communication between parents and teachers. Evidence indicated that children take their educational responsibilities more seriously when both parents become involved. Therefore, we strongly urge both parents to become actively involved in these conferences as well as other school related responsibilities.

Parent-Teacher Fellowship

There are three PTF Meetings planned each year to provide for a time of inspiration, fellowship, and decision-making on school business. All patrons are strongly urged to attend these meetings. Your participation will keep you in close contact with the school and your child's educational progress. See the school calendar in the middle of this handbook for scheduled PTF dates.

Interscholastic Activities

Each year interscholastic ball games are planned for upper elementary and junior high with other Christian schools. This provides a broader acquaintance with the students in other Christian schools. In the past, students have participated in softball, soccer, basketball, and volleyball. Students also have the opportunity to compete in a Geography Bee, Spelling Bee, and Bible Quizzing.

Picnic

A picnic is held on the school grounds at the end of each school year. All present and new patrons are encouraged to participate in this afternoon of fellowship and fun. A covered dish lunch, ball games, relay races, candy scrambles, etc. make up the fun.

ATTENDANCE

All elementary and high schools are required by state law to provide a 180-day school year. All students in grades one through twelve who are sixteen years of age and younger are required to attend school unless authorized to be exempt. Parents are responsible for seeing that their children comply with these laws.

Personal Illness

A student should stay home if he is too sick to attend or is contagious to other students, like with chicken pox, impetigo, or pink eye. For extended illness a doctor's excuse is appreciated.

Health Care Appointments

When making arrangements with your doctor for routine appointments, try to avoid school hour appointments as much as possible. If however, you must accept appointments during school hours please be sure to notify your child's teacher the day before the actual appointment, giving the specific time of absence from classes. All students are expected to notify the teacher before leaving school. A leave of greater than two hours will be recorded as a one-half day absence. Absences of 2 hours or less are recorded as brief absences (BA).

Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school in case of emergencies, e.g. illness, injury, death in the family, health care emergencies, etc.

Non-Emergency Situations (Educational trips, weddings, family vacations)

You need to obtain and Educational Absence Form from the office and follow through with the instructions to have these absences excused. Please try to schedule family vacations for times when school is not in session.

Unexcused Absences

These absences will be noted on a student's permanent record. Any unexcused absences are illegal. If three unexcused absences accumulate in a given school year the principal will contact the parents to seek a solution. If more than three absences occur the School Board may take action and proper authorities will be notified.

Excuse Cards

Upon returning to school, students will be expected to complete unfinished assignments. Excuse cards shall be brought from home the day of return. Educational absences and all other absences except brief absences of 2 hours or less and kindergarten absences, require excuse cards. Brief absences (BA) do not count against perfect attendance. Brief absences in excess of 6/quarter will be reported to the principal for investigation. All other absences will count against perfect attendance. At the beginning of the school year each family will receive a quantity of excuse cards. If more are needed during the year, they may be obtained from your child's teacher. Any excuse card not submitted by the end of the term shall be counted as unexcused.

Parental Notes

Parents should notify teachers in writing or by calling the school if a student is to be dismissed early, or has been ill and should not participate in recess or P. E. activities, or is not to ride his regular bus. Please notify the administrator and bus drivers of day to day changes in transportation.

DISCIPLINARY CODE

Personal Appearance

Extremes in dress merely draw attention to the pupil. Good judgment should be exercised at all times in choosing clothing appropriate for the occasion and weather. Students reflect the image the family wishes to project. All students shall dress in neat, clean clothing. Slacks and culottes are not acceptable as girls' attire, however, school approved culottes are permitted for girls in

6th, 7th, and 8th grades for athletic activities. Fifth through eighth grade girls shall have their skirts and slits covering the knee when standing and shall wear a dress or blouse. Students shall not wear tee shirts that are immodest, gaudy, or have offensive words or pictures. Clothing that portrays pictures or words connected with sport, movie, or rock stars can be distracting and should be avoided as school attire. All clothing shall express Christian ideals of simplicity and modesty. Decorative jewelry and noticeable make-up shall not be worn. The wearing of the Christian woman's veil is to be encouraged for all Christian girls. Mennonite girls are asked to wear the veiling at school, on the bus, and at all school functions. Junior high school girls not wearing their hair up shall keep it tied to the side or back. Boys' hair shall not cover the ears or hang on the collar. The Board understands this to mean, "no hair shall cover any part of the face of the ear. It may touch the top of the ear." Also, boys should avoid hair styles that copy fads not approved by the Board and administration, such as bowl cuts, skin heads, or mohawks. The hair arrangement of all pupils shall reflect good taste, Christian simplicity, and neatness.

Students need to wear shoes that are appropriate for school, recess, and PE activities. If students bring special athletic shoes they are not have metal spikes. Plastic spikes are acceptable. Barefoot activities must be by teacher permission for special occasions. Shoes must always be worn for sports and Track-n-Field activities.

SOCIAL CONDUCT

Students are expected to be courteous and kind to each other throughout all grade levels. Students should "cultivate" good manners and express their appreciation for the opportunity to attend GMS.

Students are expected to respect, show appreciation to, and obey the staff at all levels of interaction. Students need to respect school property, exercise care in the use of equipment, and learn to be neat. Students shall abide by the safety rules of the classroom and the school.

Students shall avoid the following activities:

- exclusive cliques
- foul or unwholesome language
- running in classrooms and hallways
- making disruptive, disturbing, or loud noises
- “horseplay”, unsupervised activities, climbing trees, walls, or buildings.
- boy/girl dating or obvious paired relationships
- possession of illegal drugs or tobacco

The following items shall not be brought to school without the principal’s permission:

- matches, lighters, or hazardous materials
- knives; including pocket knives
- guns (toy or real)
- chewing gum
- electronic equipment, e.g. radios, headphones, electronic toys and gadgets, musical media e.g. tapes & CDs, computer games/programs, movies.
- skateboards

Any person introducing or possessing obscene literature, tobacco, illegal drugs, or intoxicating drinks is subject to suspension from school.

Parents are expected to teach Christian attitudes and character qualities in the home that will foster good behavior and contribute towards a pleasant social climate at school.

Discipline

The intent of discipline is to help students develop healthy attitudes and avoid destructive behavior. As students learn to be self-disciplined, they will contribute to making school a positive experience.

Forms of discipline may vary from one teacher to another. Students need to give whatever response is called for by the teacher without being told repeatedly. Teachers will clearly

communicate expectations to students before resorting to other forms of discipline.

Examples of disciplinary action are: loss of privileges, repeating school work until satisfactory results are achieved, assignment to work projects, paying for or restoring broken items, making or writing an apology, and after school detention. Teachers should communicate to parents when early attempts to discipline do not produce desirable results.

Disorderly Conduct

A student's conduct is considered disorderly when he/she becomes defiant, uncooperative, disrespectful, lazy, threatening, or destructive. If a student becomes disorderly he is liable to in school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion.

The following steps shall serve as a guideline in carrying out discipline for an offending student.

1. The student shall be counseled, prayed for, and encouraged to resolve the problem.
2. Students guilty of repeated offenses may be given suspensions.
3. If the student persists in disorderly conduct, he/she may be expelled.
4. Corporal punishment may be used if parents are informed in advance and the principal consents. However, a witness is needed for any spankings. Teachers in the lower elementary grades may administer a hand swat to the buttocks, but not any face slapping.

Expulsion Rules

A student may be subject to expulsion if he persists in defiance of rules and authority of the school. Expulsion must not necessarily be preceded by a suspension. The following rules shall apply to expulsion procedures:

1. The student must be notified of reasons for expulsion.
2. The principal shall call for a hearing with the parents of the offending student along with the School Board and faculty members if necessary.
3. The hearing must find the student guilty of the charges against him before a just expulsion can be given. Substantial evidence must be given to show that his presence at school is hindering other students' health or moral standards or is interfering in the education efforts of other students.

Property Damage Policy

Parents of students involved in property damage, intentional or unintentional, will be notified by the principal. Parents, along with the student, depending on the circumstance, shall assume the responsibility to restore or replace the damaged property. In case of a broken window, etc, you will then be asked to contact the maintenance committee chairman to make arrangements for the repairs or to pay for such repairs.

GRADING POLICY

Report cards will be given to each student quarterly. Parent-Teacher Conferences are arranged at the close of the first grading period. Older students (third grade and up) receiving all "A's" or all "A's" and "B's" for the quarter are given honor roll status.

99-100 A+	75-76 D+
95-99 A Excellent	72-74 D Below Average
93-94 A-	70-71 D-
91-92 B+	0-69 F Failing
88-90 B Above Average	I- Incomplete
86-87 B-	O- Outstanding
84-85 C+	S- Satisfactory
79-83 C Average	U- Unsatisfactory
77-78 C-	

KINDERGARTEN

A kindergarten handbook is available from the school upon request.

LIBRARY

The central library will be open daily from 8:15-3:00 PM. Books may be checked out for a two-week period and may be renewed if needed longer. Books shall be returned to the librarian's desk and not to the shelves. Books must be returned on time or a fine of ten cents per school day must be paid. Be a responsible book borrower. Handle books with care. All losses and damages to material must be borne by the borrower. Keep the library a place for studying, not visiting.

The school often opens the library for part of the summer to encourage student reading.

MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

Assembly Periods

Each Wednesday morning the student body is divided into two groups for the devotional period. A visiting speaker will address each group as arranged by the pastoral committee. Sometimes special in house programs will be planned by the staff and students.

Announcements

Announcements will be given after morning devotions. The staff will post printed announcements on the bulletin boards. Students wishing to post announcements shall receive permission from the office.

Bicycles

Bicycles are to be parked at the designated area of the school and remain there until after dismissal of buses. Bicycle riders should report to their home room upon arrival.

Disaster & Fire Drills

These drills will be held periodically. Teachers will acquaint pupils with procedures and evacuation routes.

Office Permission

Office permission is required for students to leave school property and also to use the phone. All long distance phone calls must be recorded. Students making such calls shall reimburse the school

Recreation Facilities and Equipment

Nearly all recreational equipment is provided by the school. Students will need to bring their own ball gloves and may bring bats if permission is granted by the teacher. GMS cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to this equipment. Students are expected to use equipment properly and to put it away to the designated place when finished playing. Hockey sticks, baseballs, and skateboards are not to be brought to school without the principal's permission.

Shop and Home Economics

Technology education, shop, and home economics classes are held once per week in the junior high grades. All equipment, tools, and utensils are to be used only with teacher supervision. Students in these classes completing projects for themselves are expected to pay for the materials used in such projects. The following rules shall be observed by all teachers and students using these facilities:

1. All equipment, tools, utensils, etc. shall be cleaned and returned to their proper places.
2. Kitchen utensils shall not be taken out of the home economics room without office permission.
3. Power tools shall be operated by students only after safety instructions have been given and an instructor is present.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome at all times. We request that persons wanting to visit make arrangements with office personnel prior to the visit. The annual spring open house provides an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with the school and its program.

RULES

General Rules

1. All persons shall keep their feet off the furniture. Allowances will be made for the use of chairs for stepping stools when used respectfully. Chairs shall not be used as rocking chairs. Students should use good posture.
2. Complaints about any school responsibilities such as lessons, class assignments, cleaning schedule, programs, etc. shall be registered only with the school personnel who are in charge. If the complaint cannot be resolved between the persons involved, then it shall be made known to the administrator.
3. When receiving permission to go to another area of the school building, go directly and quietly to the place for which you have received permission.
4. No running through the school building, corridors, or classrooms.
5. All students are expected to respect the personal property of teachers and other students.
6. Students shall not possess at school or on the bus: guns, knives, pocket knives, electronic devices, toys, and gadgets, media, e.g., players, tapes, earphones, radios, CDs, computer programs, DVDs, etc. unless it is by specific permission of their teacher or the principal.

Classroom Rules

1. Since posture affects us physically and mentally it is essential to sit up straight in your seat.
2. Each student shall be in his/her seat at the time the class period or study hall is scheduled to begin.
3. Each student needs to be alert, on task, and staying within the “boundaries” and guidelines established by the teacher.

Recreation Room Rules

1. All games played shall be organized games with recognized rules. This rules out any nonsense games lacking structure e.g. “horseplay” or unsafe activities.
2. All games shall be played fairly and politely with respect shown to other players, the building, equipment, and facilities. The referee or supervisor will have the final say on any questionable calls.
3. Outdoor recreation is preferred during nice weather. Students may be required to play outdoors unless they have a note from their parents. Please dress them appropriately.
4. Students who are involved in property damage will be asked to pay for such damages.
5. Special caution shall be exercised to avoid excessive noise and disturbances to nearby classes.
6. Recreational equipment must always be returned to its proper place at the designated time.

SCHEDULE

Daily Schedule

Devotions 8:20-8:40

Morning Recesses:

9:15-9:30 Grades K and 1

9:30 – 9:45 Grade 2

9:45 – 10:00 Grades 3 and 4

10:00 – 10:15 Grades 5 and 6

Lunch:

11:30 – 12:00 Grades 1 and 2

11:45 – 12:15 Grades 3 and 4

12:00 – 12:30 Grade 5

12:15 – 12:45 Grade 6

11:30 - 11:50 Grades 7 and 8

Afternoon Recesses:

1:15 – 1:30 Grades 1 and 2

1:30 – 1:45 Grades 3 and 4

1:45 – 2:00 Grades 5 and 6

3:00 Dismissal

Kindergarten lunch is at 11:50 and recesses are flexible.

Lunch

Because the school does not have a lunch program, all students will need to carry their own lunch. White or chocolate milk, lemonade, and orange juice are available for a minimal cost. Students may purchase tickets from their teacher. Ice cream bars are available on Fridays.

Lunch periods are generally thirty minutes long, allowing 15 minutes to eat and 15 minutes for recess. One day each month the auxiliary committee organizes a hot meal. Some of these are designated as fundraisers.

SCHOOL AND FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips

These trips are taken at the discretion of the teacher and with the approval of the principal. Normally a field trip only takes a portion of the school day, and does not impact on the bus schedules.

School Trips

Full day trips are usually taken by each class in the spring. These are very special and sometimes extend beyond the usual 3:00 PM dismissal time.

Chaperones for Trips

Teachers are responsible to obtain chaperones and to orient them for their task. These are usually volunteers, e.g. parents. Teachers or the principal may set limits for how many volunteers are needed.

Guidelines

1. NO preschool children will be permitted on the trip.
2. Parents asked to drive a van or car may be reimbursed for mileage at the standard rate set by the school, unless they wish to donate their expenses. The school cannot pay compensation for time.

SERVICES

Transportation

Bus service is provided within a certain radius of the school. This includes Cocalico, Blainsport, Mohnton, Alleghenyville, Churchtown, parts of Honeybrook, Welsh Mountain, New Holland, Hinkletown, Ephrata, and Schoeneck. Links to our bus route may be established by those outside our range.

Meet your bus promptly, enter single file and find your assigned seat. Once seated, remain seated until you reach your stop. Students arriving at school in the morning shall remain inside the building and in an area acceptable to their teacher until school is in session. In the afternoon students are to remain in their classrooms until dismissed. Dismissal will be directed by the administrator or his designee.

Parents, please contact the bus driver whenever your student will not need transportation.

Bus Rules

1. Stay at least ten feet from the bus until boarding.
2. Remain seated in forward position while bus is moving.
3. No eating without permission from an adult.
4. No yelling or loud noises.
5. Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus (state law).
6. No throwing objects.
7. No destruction to property.
8. Show courtesy and respect to others.
9. Present a positive image for our Christian school.

First Aid

Report all accidents and injuries to the teacher in charge. The first aid supplies are located in the secretary's office. If students become ill during the day, the teacher may contact the parents requesting that the student be taken home.

School Closing Due to Inclement Weather

Announcements of school cancellations and early closings will be sent to parents via an automated phone call system and aired on WDAC-FM (94.5) & WJTL-FM (90.3).