

WELCOME

Gehmans Mennonite School is located along Route 897 one and one-half miles south of Route 272 in north-east Lancaster County. We offer a quality program of education, for K-8 grades, that is Christ-centered, Anabaptist oriented and is certified by 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.

Brief 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 it's beginning, God has blessed the school with growth in enrollment, staff, and buildings.

The original building erected in 1952 has two class-rooms. 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 Gehman's 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 and face-lift with a new stucco finish

The school offered grades one through nine until kindergarten was added in 1977. In the spring of 1985 ninth grade was discontinued due to the initiation 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'x60' all purpose room was constructed.

In 1989 an "L" shaped, one and one-half acre tract of land was purchased to expand the playground area, and in 1991 some excavating and seeding was done to prepare this area for use. This tract is situated to the north and west of the existing property. In 1997 another 0.9 acre tract was added to the north of the property.

In the early 2000's land development work was done, and more parking was added as well.

In 2017 a portion of the school's exterior was redone.

We thank God for His blessing in the past and seek His presence in the future.

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 aims to meet the needs of students with a normal range of learning ability to prepare them for lives of service in the kingdom of God.

ADMISSIONS

Gehmans Mennonite School admits students of any race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all 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 constitution, student handbook, and admission forms. After reading these materials, complete the appropriate forms and return them to the GMS office along with the registration fee. Thereafter, both parents will be scheduled for an interview with the principal and/or board representative. The Board will make the final decision on admission.

Student Entrance Policy

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

1. Student's must 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 shall be transferred to GMS. Junior high students shall fill out a questionnaire and 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.

However, there is a cleaning detail prior to the beginning of school. Every family is expected to participate in the preparation/cleaning of the school for the beginning of the year.

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 fundraising activities as deemed necessary to meet the school's 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 expected to participate.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

These conferences are scheduled once each year to provide constructive communication between parents and teachers. Evidence indicates 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 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 process.

Interscholastic Activities

Each year interscholastic ball games are planned for junior high with other Christian schools. This provides a broader acquaintance with the life of other Christian schools. In the past junior high has 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 scramble, etc. make up the fun.

ATTENDANCE

Summary of State Requirements

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 chickenpox, 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 specified 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—illness, injury, death in the family, health care emergencies, etc.

Non-Emergency Situations

(e.g., Educational Trips, Weddings, Family Vacations)

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

Unexcused Absences

These absences will be noted on a student's permanent record. Any unexcused absences are illegal and leave a poor testimony. 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. 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 principal and bus driver of changes in transportation needs.

DISCIPLINARY CODE

Personal Appearance

Extremes in dress merely draw attention to the pupil. Good judgement should be exercised at all times in choosing clothing appropriate for the occasion and weather. Students shall dress in neat, clean clothing. Students shall not wear clothing that is immodest. We ask that clothing that portrays pictures or words that are connected to the sports and film industry not be worn as school attire.

This type of clothing can be distracting and takes away from the learning environment.

Decorative jewelry and noticeable make-up shall not be worn.

Students need to wear shoes that are appropriate for school, recess, and PE activities.

Boys: Boy's hair shall be neatly combed and trimmed so that it does not cover the ear or hang on the collar. All boys must wear full-length pants and shirts with sleeves. Athletic pants are permitted for Grades 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in gym class and in games against other schools.

Students need to wear shoes that are appropriate for school, recess, and PE activities.

Girls: The wearing of the Christian woman's veiling is to be encouraged for all Christian girls. Junior high school girls not wearing their hair up shall keep it tied to the side or back.

Girls shall be required to wear dresses or skirts that cover the knee when sitting. Slacks and skorts are not acceptable as girls' attire during school class time.

Athletic Dress Code:

If athletic shoes are worn they should not have metal spikes. Plastic spikes are acceptable.

Boys: Athletic pants may be worn by 6th, 7th, and 8th grades for **athletic activities only**.

Girls: School approved culottes are permitted for girls in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades for athletic activities. **Approved skorts** are the ones available to be purchased through the school.

Students are expected to respect these guidelines while at School. If a student is not dressed accordingly, they may be removed from the classroom until they can conform to the school's standards. The administration of the school has the final authority as to what is acceptable attire at School.

Social Conduct

Students and teachers are encouraged 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 show respect, show appreciation, and obey the staff at all levels of interaction. Students need to respect school property, exercise care in the 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 or 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—radios, headphones, electronic toys and gadgets, musical media—tapes & discs, computer games, or programs.

Any person introducing or possessing obscene literature, tobacco, harmful 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, assignments to work projects, paying for or restoring broken items, making or writing an apology, and in or out of school detentions. 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 becomes defiant, 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.

If a student persists in disorderly conduct, he/she may be expelled.

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 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 program of the school.

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 circumstances, shall assume the responsibility to restore or replace the damaged property. You may 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 students 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" are placed on first and second honor rolls each quarter.

99-100	A+
95-98	A (Excellent)
93-94	A-
91-92	B+
88-90	B Above Average
86-87	B-
84-85	C+
79-83	C Average
77-78	C-
75-76	D+
72-74	D Below Average
70-71	D-
0-69	F Failing
I	Incomplete
O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory

K-2 may use I, O, S, U grades.

Kindergarten

A kindergarten handbook is available from the school upon request.

Library

The central library will be open daily from 8:15 to 3:00 PM. Books may be checkouts 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 study, 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 staff and students.

Announcements

Announcements will be given after morning devotions. The staff will post announcements on the bulletin

boards. Students wishing to post announcements shall receive permission from the office.

Bicycles

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

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held monthly. Teachers will acquaint pupils with evacuation procedures.

Disaster Drills

Disaster drills will be held at least one time per year.

Office Permission

Office permission is required for students to leave school property and also to use the phone. All long-distance 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. 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. Students will need to bring their own ball gloves.

However, hockey sticks, baseballs and bats, and various other items are not to be brought to school without the principal's permission.

Work Permits

Parents cannot obtain work permits for minors from Gehmans School. These permits must be obtained from your local public school superintendent's office.

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 days provide an excellent opportunity to see the school in action.

Shop and Home Economics

Technology education, shop, and home economic 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 purchase 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.

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.
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 principal.
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, pocketknives, electronic devices, toys and gadgets, media, e.g., players, tapes, earphones, radio, discs, records, computer programs, etc. unless it is by specific permission or their teacher or the principal.

Classroom Rules

1. Since posture affects us physically and mentally it is essential to practice good posture.
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.

Gym Rules

1. All games played shall be official games with recognized rules. This rules out any nonsense games without rules.
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.
4. Students who are involved in property damage may be asked to pay for such damage.
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.

Recesses

Children are expected to play outside when the weather is favorable. Please dress them appropriately.

Lunch

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

Lunch periods are generally thirty minutes long allowing 15 min. to eat and 15 min. for recess.

One day each month the auxiliary committee organizes a hot lunch. Some of these are designated as fundraisers.

Also, every Wednesday, pizza is available for purchase.

SCHOOL 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 in a portion of the school day and does not impact on the bus schedules.

School Trips

Full day trips are 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

The teachers are responsible to obtain chaperons and to orient them for their task. These are usually volunteers, e.g., parents. Teachers or the principal will 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 will be reimbursed at the standard rate set by the school unless they wish to donate their expenses. The school cannot pay compensation time.

SERVICES

Bus

GMS provides bussing for patron families Links to our bus route will be established by those outside our range. A transportation fee is due every year to provide for this service.

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.

Parental permission (verbal or written) is needed for any changes related to students riding on a bus that is not their designated bus.

Bus Rules

1. Stay at least ten feet away from the bus until boarding.
2. Remain seated in forward position while the bus is moving.
3. No eating.
4. No yelling or loud noises.
5. Keep heads, hands, and feet inside the bus.
6. No throwing objects.
7. No destruction to property.
8. Do not do or say things that disturb 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 closing will be aired on 94.5 WDAC-FM. There will also be a phone call blast by DailMyCalls.com. Please make sure that the most convenient number(s) is kept on file with the school for this program.

Lost and Found

Parents should remind children to take good care of their clothing

while at school. All unclaimed articles will be placed in the lost and found box and in due time disposed of at the discretion of the principal.

Supplies

Most classroom supplies are provided by the school and distributed by the teacher. Junior high students are asked to provide their own calculators.

TUITION

Tuition schedules will be given to each family at the beginning of the school year or at the end of the preceding year. Regular notices for tuition will not be sent out. Therefore, each patron is responsible to be faithful and prompt in meeting his obligation for his regular tuition payments. In times of financial difficulty, we ask patrons to contact the school treasurer to establish a workable policy for meeting their obligation.