



Hinkletown
MENNONITE SCHOOL

HMS Parent Handbook

***Hinkletown Mennonite School
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Introduction

On behalf of the HMS teaching and support staff, welcome! It is our mission to provide a quality Christian education for your children and help them grow as they find their place in God's plan. We also aim to work as partners with you in the nurture of your children. Children thrive best when the adults around them are on the same page.

This handbook is one tool we use to communicate expectations and outline the structures we have in place to help our school function well. It will hopefully answer some of your questions related to the logistics of a school day and how you can best get help or support.

I recommend that you read the entire handbook carefully and discuss its content with your children. If you have any questions that are not adequately explained, always feel free to contact someone in the office at office@hinkletownschool.org or (717) 354-7100.

Hinkletown Mennonite School will continue to strive to be a blessing to your family. We want to see our students learning and living God's purposes so that they can carry on the work of God's Kingdom in our community! We are grateful for your partnership in that calling!

Serving with you,

Sherry Martin, Board Chair
board@hinkletownschool.org

STATEMENTS THAT GUIDE OUR PROGRAM

Vision Statement

We want to see: *Students learning and living God's purposes.*

Mission Statement

Education at HMS:

- ◆ Inspires students to be life-long learners
- ◆ Integrates Christ's teachings and Anabaptist values of peacemaking, service, and community into everyday learning
- ◆ Shapes a Christ-centered worldview
- ◆ Develops each student's God-given gifts
- ◆ Adapts holistic instruction to meet the needs of each student.

Core Values

Hinkletown Mennonite School provides a quality education within the context of an Anabaptist interpretation of the Christian faith for students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. This is a Christ-centered school community where students are called to acknowledge Jesus' presence in their lives. Jesus is the center of life, the world, creation, and all learning. As a supportive school community, we:

1) Emphasize experiencing God's presence

- Students are encouraged to develop a personal relationship with Christ
- Students are taught Anabaptist values and to respect the beliefs of all families in the school community
- Each person is called to model Christ's love in their daily life
- The school community places Christ at the center of all learning

2) Nurture the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical development of all learners

- Students discover an awareness of their spiritual gifts and God's unique plan for their lives
- Students make a personal connection between classroom learning and everyday life
- Students receive a well-rounded education resulting from high quality instruction
- Teachers integrate faith and knowledge to encourage students to become lifelong disciples of Christ
- Parents and teachers reinforce a faith-based education by supporting each other through a team effort

3) Believe each person is both a learner and a teacher

- Students learn from and teach other students as well as adults in the school community
- Teachers learn through professional development and their interactions with students and parents
- Parents teach and learn while sharing their gifts with students and teachers

4) Provide opportunities for individuals to discover their unique interests and develop their natural talents

- Students explore their emerging interests in core academics, the fine arts, and sports
- Students relate to Christian friends, teachers, and organizations
- Students of all ability levels are given the resources they need to grow
- Students learn to meet other's needs in the school and the wider community as modeled by parents and teachers

5) Encourage students to be reflective, caring, and responsible servants for Christ in the global community by working together to be

- A Christ-centered community where the Bible and prayer guide our daily lives and actions
- A mentoring community where students learn from their peers and the generations that preceded them
- A caring community where students, parents, and teachers respect, trust, and nurture each other in the faith
- A reflective community that calls for stewardship of God's creation and empathy for people around the world
- A life-giving community where we strive for hope, peace, and justice at school and in the world
- A redemptive community that resolves conflict and restores relationships according to biblical principles
- A compassionate community where students are free to express themselves as they grow within the framework of a faith community

approved: 5/12/05

Educational Philosophy

The philosophy of education at Hinkletown Mennonite School reflects two major considerations. First, we view what we do as one part of a child's life under the larger plan of God's Kingdom on earth. Therefore, in every part of our planning, motivation, and actions, we view ourselves and the children as part of God's plan and purpose. Second, we believe we have the responsibility to provide an education that will help children acquire values and skills that will make their lives full and purposeful, ultimately leading to a commitment to Christ and service in His Kingdom.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Children are individuals created by God. Each one is unique and precious to us as parents and teachers and to God as part of His creative act. Each child has developmental needs that must be considered in planning for his/her learning: i.e. learning in orderly sequences, moving from concrete to abstract, building on what is already learned. God has planted in each child the desire to learn and a curiosity about his/her environment in our curriculum we place high value on students' active involvement and hands-on opportunities in the learning process.

A child's learning is maximized when his/her particular learning style is respected. All aspects of development are interrelated and must be considered in creating a learning environment. Learning is most effective when home and school work as a partnership to ensure that the child's basic needs are met. Children learn by experiencing success, whereas frustration and failure tend to reduce the desire to learn and lead to a negative self-concept. Learning that is intrinsically motivated (generated from within) is more lasting than learning that is extrinsically motivated (forced on from outside).

The teacher is responsible for planning experiences that are appropriate for the learning needs of each child. The role of the teacher needs to be that of a mediator between what the child is supposed to learn and what he or she wants to learn. By being sensitive as a Christian and skillful as a teacher (facilitator, manager or instructor) the teacher will help children value their uniqueness and the uniqueness of others (we all need each other. I Cor. 12).

HOW CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT

Educational Objectives:

- Students will experience a variety of learning activities and tasks such as manipulating materials, going on field trips, participating in class activities and being exposed to various media.
- Students will be encouraged to strive for academic excellence according to their individual potential.
- Students will be given opportunities to explore directed topics as well as topics of their individual interest.
- Students will develop a healthy self-concept by becoming aware of their worth as a special part of God's creation.
- Students will be provided with an environment in which they will see the importance of making the decision to commit their lives to Christ.
- Students will develop understanding and appreciation of all persons, (including those who belong to different social, cultural, and ethnic groups.) through resource persons, assemblies, and special projects.
- Students will be encouraged to develop good study skills that will assist them in their individual learning programs.
- Students will develop a desire to learn and begin to realize that learning is a lifelong process.

It is our belief that children need to learn a sense of God's place in their lives and ultimately Christ's purpose for them as individuals. We also want children to look on life and service with anticipation and excitement. Children need to have the important reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math skills to deal with their world. We believe that learning specific information is not as important in the long run as is developing the skill of learning independently. In addition, we believe it is important for children to be able to organize new information with larger concepts. In the process of becoming a caring and helping Christian, the child needs to learn the aesthetic (beautiful) and orderly nature of God's creation.

WHAT CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT

Educational Objectives

Students will:

- Develop knowledge of the Bible and be able to apply Biblical principles to their daily lives
- Develop an appreciation of Anabaptist beliefs and Christian discipleship
- View the world with a global perspective
- Value the importance of Christian service
- Develop core skills in language arts (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
- Develop core skills in mathematics (computation and problem solving)
- Develop an understanding of and stewardship for God's creation through science
- Learn to appreciate culture, beauty, and develop their creativity through the fine arts core
- Grow in physical and emotional health and stability
- Develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to be responsible world citizens

SCHOOL DAY ITINERARY AND PROCEDURES

Daily School Schedule

7:30 - 7:45 am	Faculty Devotions
8:10 - 8:20 am	Buses arrive at HMS
8:20 am	Official start time for grades K-12
9:00 am	Official start time for Pre-K
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch/Recess Hour (times may vary slightly for different classes)
12:00 noon	Pre-K morning class dismissal
2:40 pm	Pre-K extended day dismissal time
2:50 - 3:00 pm	Grades K-12 dismissal time

Alternative Start and Dismissal Times

Early Dismissals*	11:40 am (K-12) / 11:30 (Pre-K)
2-hour Delays	10:20 am start time (Pre-K-12)

* *Pre-planned early dismissals are noted on the school calendar and occur on our first day of school, report card workdays near the end of each trimester, parent-teacher conferences and usually the last two days of the school year.*

Attendance Policy and Procedures

According to the Pennsylvania School District Code, all children between the ages of six and eighteen are required to attend school. Regular attendance at school is needed for your child to experience academic success. It is the parent's responsibility to know and account for a child's absentee record. HMS will use the following guidelines:

ABSENCES

There are typically 180 days in a school year (except 3-day Kindergarten and Pre-K). With proper procedures, students are permitted to have up to 18 days of absences in a year, which include 10 excused non-trip absences, 5 excused trip absences and 3 unexcused personal days.

Sick Days, Appointments & Emergencies (Excused absences up to 10 days)

This can include reasons such as illness, funeral, medical/dental appointments and emergencies.

Trips & Family Events (Excused absences up to 5 days)

Any trips, short or long including cabin or hunting trips, and absences due to family events such as a relative visiting or attending wedding fall into this category. (see *EXCUSE NOTES* and *FAMILY TRIPS* below). A Student Trip Request form is required for a trip longer than two days and strongly recommended for a one-day & two-day trip to communicate with the principal/head of school.

Personal Days (Unexcused absences up to 3 days)

All absences other than the above are considered to be Personal Days (unexcused absences). They include absences that did not have an excuse note submitted in a timely manner and trip absences exceeding the allowed 5 days.

If a student arrives later than 10:20am, leaves earlier than 12:50pm, or leaves in the middle of the day missing more than two hours, it is considered to be a half-day. Two half-day absences are counted as one full-day absence.

Once ten non-trip absences have been accumulated, a notice will be sent to parents. Any further absences need to have a physician's note for the absence to be excused. Without a physician's note, any further absences will be marked personal days (unexcused).

HMS is required to report any student to the school district when he/she has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences. The district may take further action, including legal means to improve student attendance.

**The principal/head of school always makes the final decision if any additional days can be granted. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the principal/head of school immediately should any special circumstances arise.*

TARDIES & EARLY PICK-UPS

When a student misses less than 2 hours of school, he/she is considered to be present but marked as tardy/early pick-up in the attendance record. It happens when a student arrives to school late between 8:21 am and 10:20 am, leaves school early between 12:50pm and 2:49pm, or leaves school and returns during the day missing less than 2 hours.

Students should be signed in/out at the front desk when arriving late or leaving early. Parents who sign their child in/out at the office for a late arrival or early pick-up do not need to complete a separate excuse note as the sign-in/out sheet serves that purpose. If a student was not signed in/out, an excuse note needs to be sent to the office. Venture Program students are allowed to sign themselves in/out unless otherwise directed by the parent.

**Students who arrive late to school on an HMS bus that experienced delays will not be marked tardy.*

**Tardies and Early Pick-ups are not accumulated to be counted as absences.*

EXCUSE NOTES

Excuse notes are required for full-day or half-day absences within five (5) school days of the absence. For any tardy/early pick-up, an excuse note needs to be sent to the office only if the student was not signed in/out at the front desk.

**If a student is sent home due to illness, parents should just sign-out the student at the office at the pick-up time. They do not need to present an excuse note for that day's illness.*

An excuse note should include the followings (more than one student can be put on one note):

- student name(s) & grade(s)
- date(s) of the absence
- reason
- parent's name & signature (if handwritten)

Printed attendance excuse notes are available at the front desk or on the HMS website but any written note with the above information is acceptable. We also accept email messages as excuse

notes as long as the above information is included (except signature). If a parent talks to a staff person or leaves a message on the school voice mail with the above information, it is accepted as an excuse note as well. Phone calls and email messages in the morning to let the office about a student not being at school are appreciated. For sick absences longer than five consecutive days, a doctor's note is required.

STUDENT TRIP REQUEST

Family trips of 3 days or longer require a Student Trip Request. This helps students and teachers plan ahead for the long absence to minimize the negative effect of missing classes and also to facilitate communications between the parent and the principal/head of school

Parents must submit a completed Student Trip Request form at least five school days prior to the trip to the school office for the trip to be excused. Click on the *CONNECT > Handbooks & Forms* link on the HMS website or contact the school office for a printed copy.

Parents are asked to limit family travel to no more than five (5) days per year. Trip absences exceeding 5 days are counted as personal days (unexcused). However, depending on the nature of the trip, the principal/head of school may grant extra days.

It is the student's responsibility to request assignments from their teachers at least three (3) days prior to their trip.

Students must return all assigned work the day they return to school. Incomplete work may be counted against students' grades.

EXCUSED OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Special parent permission forms are used for school-sanctioned trips, high school classes at partner locations or high school shadow days or internship work. When going as a group, teachers will facilitate getting permission notes from parents ahead of time. For high school students who may have a daily or weekly schedule of study or work off-campus, a signed permission note by both parents and the Venture Program Coordinator will provide sufficient permission for a semester schedule of absences during the school day. Students coming or going for these type of off-campus activities do not need an additional day to day excuse note but should sign in/out at the office when coming or leaving

REQUIRED EVENING ATTENDANCE

Because we emphasize community, hands-on learning and the performing arts in our HMS programming, there are a few evening events that students are required to attend in addition to their daily attendance. Students and/or parents must notify their teachers if their child will not be able to attend. The absence could affect the student's academic grade depending on the student's grade level.

These events are noted on the school calendar, which is distributed in May for the following year. Please mark school events on your personal calendars.

- Christmas program (Pre-K – grade 12)
- Middle School dinner theater (grades 6 - 8)
- Academic Fair (Kindergarten – grade 12)
- Fine Arts Program (Kindergarten – grade 8)
- Spring Concerts (Kindergarten – grade 5 & grades 6-12)

Dress Code

HMS has a dress code that we have agreed upon as a school community. The *dress code policy* below was approved by the HMS Board of Trustees:

“Dress and personal appearance is a personal matter. It reflects our attitudes toward ourselves, other people and God. We respect the ability and authority of Christian parents to make decisions with respect to dress. We believe that all clothing should be clean, respectful, and of modest length and design.”

Students are asked to be discreet and considerate of the many different groups represented in our school community. Additionally, HMS parents and staff members are asked to make sure their students are following the specific guidelines listed below which apply to school days as well as when participating in any public programs associated with the school:

GENERAL DRESS CODE EXPECTATIONS

1. Students should be well groomed and clothes should be neat.
2. Loose-fitting jeans and slacks are appropriate to wear at HMS. Leggings may not be worn as pants alone but may be worn under a long top or skirt.
3. Dresses and shorts are acceptable if they are no more than two inches above the knee when standing or seated.
4. No halter tops, spaghetti straps, tank tops, or muscle shirts are permitted. No midriffs or cleavage may be exposed in movements common to everyday activities.
5. Messages on clothing must be acceptable, not representing anything that is contrary to Anabaptist Christian beliefs, practice or values.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

1. COLD WEATHER: Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather including clothing to cover their arms and legs during sub-freezing temperatures.
2. ELEMENTARY PE CLASSES: All students are expected to wear tennis shoes/sneakers for days that they have PE classes. Teachers will provide parents with the weekly schedule so they can help students come prepared.
3. MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PE CLASSES: Students in grades 6-12 have uniform expectations for PE classes. The teacher will provide order forms for purchase of shirts and/or shorts. Students are responsible to come dressed or prepared to change for PE classes.
4. MUSIC PROGRAMS: Students representing the school in music programs will be given specific guidelines for dressing nicely or wearing specific colors of clothing. The music teacher will communicate those expectations to students and parents in advance and it will be publicized in *NewsLink*.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

One warning will be given if the dress code policy is violated and students may be asked to wear sweat pants or shirts provided by the office for that school day. Parents will be called to drop off appropriate clothing or pick up students for a second offense during any given school year.

Field Trip and Extra Curricular Activities

The school makes it possible for students to participate in extra-curricular activities. Some of these activities require transportation. When parents or staff members provide transportation in their own vehicles, it is expected that these basic rules will be followed:

- Drivers must be age 18 or older and must have a copy of their insurance and driver's license on file in the HMS office
- Passengers will keep the noise at a conversational level and be polite
- All students must wear seat belts at all times (PA law)
- Students under 8 must ride in a child restraint seat as designated by Pennsylvania law
- Students under age 12 must ride in the back seat if vehicles have passenger seat air bags (PA law)

Snacks and Lunches

Students do their best academically when they receive consistent and nutritious food options. Teachers give students time for a nutritious snack sometime mid-morning. Pre-K students make a snack or it is provided by the teacher. Other students may pack a nutritious food item for a snack.

There are weekly lunch options available for purchase at the beginning of each trimester. Students are expected to pack lunches unless they are purchasing a meal option at school and we ask that parents provide nutritious supplements to meals such as hotdogs or pizza.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Foods that are discouraged::

- Sodas, energy drinks or sugary drinks
- A lunch made up of only snack foods
- Food from a fast food restaurant

The following can be purchased for lunch:

- Milk - on a daily, weekly or yearly basis (order forms sent out in summer mailing)
- Hot dogs – available Tuesdays (order forms sent home at the beginning of each trimester)
- PTF lunches – available on Wednesdays (menu sent out with order forms at the beginning of each trimester)
- Pizza - available on Thursdays (order forms sent home at the beginning of each trimester)

Recess

Students are required to go outdoors for recess when the weather is suitable. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for recess on cold days.

- HMS has restrictions based on students' grade level for outdoor recess depending on weather conditions. Feel free to contact your child's teacher if you have questions about this.
- If a student should not be outdoors for a physical reason, please send a note stating the reason to the teacher.
- A doctor's written statement may be required if there are limitations on a student's ability to participate in recess.

Students love to see their parents at school and so parents are invited to volunteer to help with recess or read books to the students over lunch in the elementary grades. Contact your son/daughter's teacher if interested. Parents who volunteer are asked to have background clearances on file with the office.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Bus Transportation

HMS owns and operates its own fleet of buses that provides transportation to and from school each day for students in grades K-12. Each student will be assigned to a bus route before the beginning of the school year.

BUS LISTS

Lists with pick-up and drop-off times are sent out in the summer mailing the first week in August. The lists also include the name and contact number for the driver and the names of each family on the bus route. Students should be ready at their stop 5-10 minutes earlier than the time listed on the bus list.

BUS ROUTES AND STOPS

Routes and stops are established by the Transportation Committee in July of each year. Unless parents inform the office otherwise, their bus stop will be set at or near to the family's home address. Once routes are finalized, mid-year changes may be made if possible in the current route. Families who move mid-year may be asked to utilize another HMS stop.

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Parents should make any special requests of stops other than their home address by July 1 of each year. Alternate stops will be approved or denied by the Transportation Committee based on route length and time. Parents may request to use a different pick up or drop-off point during the school year only if it is already an existing stop on an HMS route.

BUS NOTES

Since HMS provides our own transportation, we are able to provide some flexibility to assist families with childcare arrangements. That flexibility requires clear communication between parents and HMS. Our expectation is that every student will ride the bus from and to their home stop unless we receive communication from parents in the form of a bus note. Bus notes are a way for parents to communicate with the office of any changes to their students' transportation.

- Bus notes must come from the parents/guardians in order for a student to ride a different bus or get off at a different stop. We do not rely on verbal information from students (except Venture Program students).
- Bus notes to the office may be given by email (preferred), phone call, or a written note in backpack mail. Only one note is needed for all students in your family. The office will communicate with all classroom teachers, staff, and drivers.
- Bus notes should arrive at the office by 1:00 pm to give us adequate time to process the information and send it to classroom teachers, bus drivers, and office staff.
- If your student(s) will regularly get on/off the bus at a stop other than your home stop, you may send a standing bus note to the office, including how to handle early dismissals.

- If you determine your child will not be riding the bus in the morning, you may call or text the bus driver in the evening (prior to 8:30 pm) or just wave them on by in the morning. *Please note: The drivers may not talk or text while driving their route. If you call them after they are on the road, they will not receive your message.*

PROCEDURES FOR BOARDING BUSES

Students are to board the bus only at the designated bus stops unless other arrangements are made with the office. Students should be ready to board the bus when it arrives, preferably being ready five to ten (5-10) minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.

Students should wait for their bus outside, at a reasonable and safe distance from the edge of the road and should not move forward until the bus has stopped completely and the door opens. Students should not wait for the bus inside the house, as drivers are unable to see them and may not stop.

Students who cross a road to board their bus should not assume that it is safe to cross just because the red lights are flashing on their bus. They should wait for the driver to direct them to cross **AND THEN CHECK THAT TRAFFIC HAS STOPPED IN BOTH DIRECTIONS THEMSELVES** before walking onto the road. Pupils must walk **IN FRONT** of the bus at a distance where they are completely visible (approximately 10 feet) to the driver when they cross the highway. Electronics and/or earbuds may not be used while getting on or off the bus.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Bus transportation is a privilege that requires students follow the bus rules to ensure safe and pleasant experience for all passengers. Inappropriate behavior on the bus will result in disciplinary action.

Drivers will review safety procedures and rules at the beginning of the year and during evacuation drills twice a year.

Students are expected to abide by the following rules:

1. Students must stay seated in their assigned seats. No standing or kneeling on a seat.
2. Keep all body parts and objects inside the bus at all times. Do not reach out the windows.
3. Talk quietly with the students next to you. No yelling.
4. No eating or drinking on the bus.
5. Keep the bus clean. No littering inside or outside the bus.
6. Be polite to others. No name calling, teasing, harassing, or bullying others.
7. Obey the bus driver at all times.
8. Use appropriate language.
9. Do not damage or deface any part of the bus.
10. Keep the aisle and emergency door clear at all times.
11. Electronics are discouraged, but may be used during a long bus ride.
 - a. Electronic devices may not be shared with other students. (Earbuds should be used to keep audio private.)
 - b. Photos and videos may not be taken or shared on the bus.

- c. No web browsing or internet access while on the bus.
- d. Electronics/earbuds may not be used while getting on or off the bus. Only one earbud should be used during the bus ride so the driver's announcements can be heard.

These rules apply to all situations when students are riding the bus (transportation to and from school, field trips and extracurricular events) unless the bus driver or teacher gives other directions prior to the trip.

If the above rules are broken, the driver will:

- Speak to the child about his/her behavior
- Possibly move the child to another seat
- Notify the Principal

The Principal will:

- Remind the student of expected behavior
- Possibly contact the parent/guardian
- Suspend bus privileges
- In the case of a serious offense (a threat to the health or safety of an individual), appropriate action will be taken by the bus driver and/or principal without warning.

Questions or concerns about transportation should be referred to the principal.

Car Transportation

DAYTIME PARKING

- Parking spaces are reserved near the main entrance of the school for parents to use throughout the day.
- The carport area is NOT to be used as a parking area, only for quick drop-offs.
- Student drivers should use designated parking areas above the soccer field.
- No parking in the lower lot near the gym lobby entrance during bus drop-off and loading times (8:00-8:30 am and 2:30-3:00 pm).

TIMES AND LOCATIONS FOR DROPPING OFF STUDENTS

- **REGULAR ARRIVALS FOR GRADES K-12:** The morning drop-off time and location for students in grades K-12 is between 8:10 – 8:20 am at the main entrance of the school. Parents should drive up to the entrance where a faculty or staff person will be standing to open the door for students.
- **PRE-K REGULAR ARRIVALS:** Pre-K students should be dropped off at the Early Childhood entrance between 8:50 and 9:00 am. If arriving on a 2-hour delay, Pre-K students should be dropped off at the main entrance.
- **EARLY ARRIVALS:** Students may not be dropped off at school before 8:00 am without special permission from the office. Students arriving between 8:00 and 8:10 am must remain in the front lobby until 8:10 am.
- **LATE ARRIVALS:** Students who are tardy for any reason must be dropped-off at the main entrance and be signed in by a parent/guardian at the front desk. High school students may sign for themselves, in lieu of a parent/guardian.

TIMES AND LOCATIONS FOR PICKING UP STUDENTS

Car pick-up for regular K-12 dismissals happens at the main entrance beginning at 2:50 pm. Cars should form a single line and may begin lining up at 2:45. K-12 parents should note that Pre-K cars are given priority in line on Tuesday and Thursdays as their dismissal happens at 2:40.

To ensure student safety at dismissal time, students will be dismissed to cars directly in front of the entrance first, not to cars parked in the parking lot. Any student who needs to cross the front drive or walk between cars in the line should be accompanied by an adult.

- **REGULAR DISMISSALS:** Students in grades K-12 who are to be picked-up by a parent/guardian will be dismissed at 2:50 pm to the main entrance. They will wait there with a teacher supervisor until a parent pulls up at the door.
- **PRE-K NOON DISMISSAL:** Car pick-up happens at the main entrance at noon.
- **PRE-K EXTENDED DAY DISMISSAL:** On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Pre-K extended day students are dismissed at 2:40 pm at the main entrance. Pre-K parents should be given priority in the pick-up line.
- **EARLY PICK-UPS:** If a student needs to be picked up early for an appointment, a note must be given to the office the morning of the appointment (or an email can be sent to office@hinkletownschool.org). Parents/Guardians of students in K-8 should park and enter the front entrance for early pick-ups. Students will meet their parents at the front desk where the parent/guardian must sign-out his/her child before leaving. High school students may sign themselves out to leave.
- **LATE PICK-UPS:** Any student who has not been picked up by 3:00 pm will remain in the front lobby to wait for their ride.
- **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:** Parents should arrive promptly at the time and place specified by the coach or teacher in charge of the activity.

COMMUNICATIONS

Backpack Mail & Newsletters

While an increasing amount of school communication happens electronically, via our school website or email, some paper mailings are also sent home as “backpack mail.” The oldest child (with the exception of 11th and 12th graders) enrolled at HMS is assumed to be the family mail carrier unless parents request an alternate sibling. If families do not have email, they should notify the office so that copies of electronic communication can be sent via backpack mail.

The school newsletter, *NewsLink*, is sent via email, 2-3 times each month in August through May and monthly during June and July. It includes pertinent information about upcoming school events, important announcements, and interesting stories to keep parents informed and connected to school life. Families can request that *NewsLink* be sent to multiple email addresses. Contact the office to have additional email addresses included in the distribution list.

A second publication, *Handprints*, is published two to three times a year and is distributed to friends of HMS, alumni, local churches, and grandparents, as well as patron families. *Handprints* highlights stories about school events, students, patron families and alumni. *Handprints* is also posted on our website.

Calendar of Events

The HMS school calendar is made available in May and included in the summer mailing. A link to our school calendar is located under the “Current Families” section of our school website. It notes pre-planned early dismissals, parent teacher conference days, teacher in-service days and the dates of many school events. The calendar also notes which events are required for student attendance. *NewsLink* will provide more details about each event as it approaches.

Concerns, Issues and Questions

Concerns, issues, and questions are usually best handled if they are dealt with promptly and openly. If you have any questions regarding classroom procedures, program, or your child's progress, please contact the classroom teacher first. Parents can ask for a conference with teachers at any time. The principal is ready to assist in resolving issues as requested. A grievance procedure is outlined in Appendix A.

Emergency Cards

An updated emergency card must be on file for every child to ensure that contact can be made with a responsible adult in the event of illness or injury. Please notify the school of any change in address, home or work telephone numbers, and medical information such as allergies, so that our information will always be accurate. It is imperative that parents identify multiple emergency contacts.

Emergency Closings

HMS generally follows the cancellations of Eastern Lancaster County, Cocalico and Ephrata Area School Districts. However, since HMS has its own bussing system there may be times that HMS will make a cancellation decision independent of the area districts. The primary determining factor is safety on the roads.

If for any reason there is a delay or students need to be dismissed early, a notice will be sent out using the school's *Parent Alert System*. *Parent Alert* will text or call the phone numbers on file at the office typically between the hours of 6 am and 9 pm. Notices will also be posted on the school's website and *Facebook* page as well as on the following stations:

- WDAC FM Radio 94.5
- WJTL FM Radio 90.3
- WGAL TV Channel 8

Parents should discuss emergency arrangements with their child in the event that no one is home when he/she arrives.

Pre-K parents may receive separate information from the Pre-K teacher regarding arrivals on 2-hour delay days.

Orientation Events

An orientation time will be scheduled for new families during the summer months. The first events of the school year are back-to-school nights for families where students can bring their school items, meet their teachers and learn a bit about their new classroom routines.

Middle school students have additional orientation days the first week of school that include fun community building activities as well as instructional times that introduce them to the expectations of a new program, the variety of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, the organizational requirements for their team of teachers and how to follow a new type of schedule.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences play an important line of communication between home and school. There are two pre-planned conference times, one in the Fall and one in the Spring, on the school calendar every year, but parents are welcome to call teachers or the principal to set up a time to meet any other time as well.

Parents for students in grades K-12 are required to attend the Fall conferences which are held at the mid-term mark of the first trimester. Spring conferences are encouraged but not required unless requested by teachers. See the school calendar for dates. Pre-K parents are required to attend the spring conferences while the fall conferences are optional.

Parents will be notified in *NewsLink* of when to call the office to schedule a conference.

Parent Directories

HMS provides a parent directory to each family, listing address, phone number, email address, student(s) names and grade levels and church affiliation. These directories are to be used for school related matters only. Please do not pass information on to third parties or use address/email addresses for personal profit.

Website

The HMS web site (hinkletownschool.org) has information on the educational program that you can access online. Use it as your main source of information, forms, documents, or access to the HMS calendar of events.

Classroom Communications

Classroom teachers may choose to send home classroom newsletters on a weekly or monthly basis. Class page links are located on our website for general classroom information. Information may include upcoming events, class projects, long-range assignment documents, etc. It is not required that daily homework be posted on this site.

STANDARDS OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline and Rules

Parents and teachers work together to promote good behavior. A well-disciplined student will direct their interests, efforts, and abilities toward greater achievement. Those who are well disciplined often take advantage of opportunities offered in school and help create an environment conducive to learning.

Parents should expect to be informed of any discipline problem that is serious or persistent. Communication between all persons dealing with the discipline problem is vital for the issue to be dealt with effectively.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that children are born with an innate desire to please the adults around him/her. As a child grows and develops, he/she learns ways to behave in many of the same ways a student will learn reading or math. It is our role as parents and educators to teach a child and reinforce appropriate ways to conduct him/herself within the community or family so that we can maintain a positive and nurturing learning and living environment.

We also believe that as children grow, they experience challenges to learning and communicating. Out of these challenges children develop patterns of behavior that may or may not be positive or helpful to themselves or those around them. It is our role as educators to identify what might be the reasons for particular behaviors so that we can effectively help children “undo” certain inappropriate or unhelpful patterns of behavior and “relearn” better ways and more positive ways of responding to and meeting expectations.

As an Anabaptist school, HMS is intent on both teaching and modeling conflict resolution skills that reflect peaceful practices and reinforce the values of being part of a community. Disciplinary actions include ways to help students see how their actions not only impact themselves, but also those around them. The restorative discipline model works toward resolution where a student must face consequences for misbehavior, but also must make things right with those around him/her, including parents, teachers and other students.

So discipline is three-fold at HMS:

1. **TEACHING** behavior in ways that a child can understand.
2. **REINFORCING** positive behavior and expectations consistently.
3. **RESTORING** relationships when trust or respect is broken in a way that helps students realize that personal behavior and actions affect not only themselves, but also the community at large.

STUDENT RIGHTS

Students have the right to due process, the right to an education, the right to express their opinions in an appropriate manner, and the right to be free from discrimination and harassment. In addition, students have the right to be treated with dignity by others member of the school community and the right to contribute to the educational program.

At the same time no student has the right to interfere with the education of other HMS students. Students should follow the school wide expectations and be respectful of others and property.

SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

The following are examples of how we expect students to live out the school wide expectations:

- Respect property rights and personal space of students and teachers
- Walk slowly and quietly in the classrooms and in hallways
- Respect ALL teachers, support staff, volunteers, and peers
- Be welcoming to all members of school community and our guests
- Be courteous and helpful when you interact with all adults and students
- Follow directions given by ALL teachers, support staff, and volunteers respectfully the first time they are given
- Talk with the classroom/homeroom teacher later if you do not feel a direction was appropriate. Exception: students should not follow a direction that makes him/her feel is unsafe.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

REMINDERS: When a student's action violates HMS behavior expectations, students will be reminded of expectations and asked to review them or practice them in formative ways with the teacher, school counselor or principal.

TIME-OUTS: Time outs can include such things like sitting out of an activity, having a quiet time to reflect on inappropriate behavior, a silent lunch in the office, a meeting with the principal and/or parents, or an in-school or out-of-school suspension for serious or cumulative offenses.

RESTORING: Discipline is a chance to teach students the right way to do things. Restorative work might include coaching a student on accepting consequences but also making amends in areas where trust was broken and harm done. It might include a Respect Plan which is shared with both parents and teacher. Restorative Circles are places where adults sit with students and help them discuss events that broke trust and caused harm in the community, take ownership for poor or hurtful actions, apologize and extend forgiveness, and decide on ways that can help make things right.

REGISTRATION

Re-enrollment

Registration begins in February for the upcoming school year. The dates will be announced via backpack mail and NewsLink as well as posted on the school website. Parents are asked to complete a Family Re-Enrollment Form which includes the Parent Covenant each year. Current families have priority in re-enrollment if submitted by March 1st.

Pre-K or Kindergarten Registration

Children registering for Pre-K must be 4 years of age as of September 1 and potty trained. Upon acceptance as a student, parents must submit the student's immunization record.

Children registering for Kindergarten must be five years old as of September 1 of that school year. Upon acceptance as a student, parents must present the student's immunization record. Contact the office for an up-to-date list of immunizations required by the state of Pennsylvania.

Immunization exemption forms are available upon request from the office. The school nurse must approve exemption requests.

Registration Fees

The board sets the registration fee for students on an annual basis. Registration fees are required in order to process an application form or scholarship application. Registration fees are non-refundable should you choose not to send your child to HMS after you have registered.

DISCOUNTS

- Registration discounts are available for current families who register by March 1st.
- New family registration applications are processed starting on March 1st. New families are eligible for a discounted registration fee if paid by June 1st.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition

HMS strives to make our excellent education affordable by seeking various ways to subsidize the cost. Tuition covers only about 2/3 of the total cost of education. Families at HMS depend on the generosity of many donors and fundraising efforts of the HMS community to raise the remaining funds.

DELINQUENT TUITION

It is important that parents commit to paying their tuition on time so that HMS can pay its teachers and keep the doors open to our students.

Administration and the Board of Trustees monitors the family tuition accounts and will be in communication with families as necessary to follow-up on late payments. HMS asks families to be aware of the following expectations of communication regarding tuition payments:

1. If, for any reason, a family is unable to make a tuition payment, the family should contact the Business Manager and provide an explanation as soon as possible.
2. Tuition is due the 15th of each month, with a 14-day grace period. If payment is not received at the end of the grace period and no communication has been received, the account will be assessed a 1% finance charge.
3. When a family is sixty (60) days past due on their tuition payment, they will be contacted by the Business Manager or administration staff to negotiate a payment schedule.
4. When a family is ninety (90) days past due on their tuition payment, they will be contacted by the Head of School who will require a review of the special payment agreement and will discuss the delinquent account with the Board of Trustees.
5. The Board of Trustees may request specific action if:
 - A satisfactory arrangement is not worked out between the family and the Head of School.
 - The family fails to comply with the arrangements that were made.
6. A student will NOT be allowed to attend HMS if the previous year's tuition is outstanding. The Board of Trustees may grant special exceptions.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Each family is expected to sign a payment plan and submit to the Business Manager each June. Payment plans available are:

- 1 annual payment due August 15
- 2 semi-annual payments due August 15 and February 15
- 10 monthly payments due on or before the 15th of each month (Aug-May)
- 12 monthly payments due on or before the 15th of each month (June-May)
- Other arrangements made by contacting the Business Manager.

TUITION RATES

The Board of Trustees establishes tuition rates on a yearly basis. Standard tuition rates apply to all students admitted to the school.

Non-Tuition Fees

Additional fees may be charged to help cover additional costs of educating your child not covered by tuition. This includes sports fees, club or Enrichment Cluster fees, or money for field trips and school supplies. A transportation fee may be assessed if out-of-area transportation is provided.

Fundraising

Patrons are asked to support fundraising efforts at HMS by participating in three main school fundraising events:

The annual HinkleFest and benefit auction in October is a highlight of the school year where everyone contributes time and items for the auction. Students do class projects and parents are asked to sign-up to volunteer at the auction. This event is fun for the whole family and also raises money for operations and capital expenditures.

Fall Fundraiser and **Spring Fundraiser**: The November fundraiser sells quality poinsettias and wreaths as well as desserts. The Spring fundraiser is conducted in April and May and includes a chicken BBQ and student Servathon. HMS follows an invitational fundraising model in which parents are invited to participate in fundraising activities in ways that fit their family and support the school's needs. There is not a required fundraising minimum per family. If each family raises \$500 (combined between these fundraisers), the school will meet its goal in this area.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to families who complete the HMS scholarship application form and are eligible under our scholarship plan guidelines. Information on the scholarship process, eligibility and application forms can be found on the HMS web site under the *Admissions* link. Information and applications are also available from the school office.

Parents need to apply for scholarships by April 15 each school year to be eligible. Applications received after this date will be reviewed on an individual basis. The Scholarship Committee reviews requests and recommends assistance in a highly confidential manner. All families are invited to apply.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND SERVICES

Grading Scale

Students in grades K-2 are evaluated with a number scale translating to the following:

- 1 = Exceeding expectations
- 2 = Meeting expectations
- 3 = Approaching expectations
- 4 = Needs remediation

HMS uses the following grading scale for grades 3-8:

93 - 100	A	Superior
85 - 92	B	Above Average
73 - 84	C	Average
65 - 72	D	Below Average
0 - 64	F	Failure

HMS uses the following grading scale for grades 9-12:

90 - 100	A	Superior
80 - 89	B	Above Average
70 - 79	C	Average
60 - 69	D	Below Average
0 - 59	F	Failure

Elementary Art, Music, Spanish and Physical Education are evaluated as:

S - Satisfactory or N - Needs Improvement.

Homework

The parent's role in the educational process is vital to a child's success in school. Over the past 20 years, research has consistently indicated that positive parent involvement increases student academic achievement. If parents have a positive attitude toward homework, support the concept, and work with their children, there is an excellent chance that the child will also have a positive attitude toward homework and school. HMS follows a general guideline of 10 minutes per grade level for a suggested time allotment for nightly homework – i.e. 1st grade (10 minutes), 8th grade (80 minutes), etc. (see Appendix C)

Suggestions for Parents:

1. Provide a quiet, study area with a desk or table and chair and good lighting
2. Keep a tool supply handy: pencils, pen, crayons, paper, and ruler
3. Establish a regular time for homework
4. Limit TV and screen time

5. Talk to your children about assignments and help them budget their time
6. Encourage step-by-step work on a long-term project to avoid last minute careless work.
7. Share your own interest in reading, writing, and learning. Set a positive example!

Technology – Acceptable Use

Students learn to use technology both responsibly and effectively in learning at HMS. Students will be asked to sign an acceptable use contract for both device use and internet usage each year. Parents will be given passwords and are encouraged to help monitor student use of technology at home as well.

Report Cards and Mid-term Reports

Mid-term reports and report cards are issued each trimester for grades K-8 and by semester for high school. Check the school calendar for the dates when report cards are sent home with students in K-8. Report card envelopes for grades K-8 should be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school as soon as possible after the 1st and 2nd trimesters.

Library Media Center

BORROWING BOOKS

Each student has the opportunity to visit the library at least once a week. Books can be signed out for fourteen days. A receipt indicates when the book is due. When students sign out books for school projects, he/she is responsible to renew them if needed longer than two weeks. Kindergarten students borrow one book at a time, grades one and two may borrow two, grade three may borrow three, and grades four on up may borrow an unlimited number. Parents may check the online portal to see the books their children have checked out. Check with the librarian for portal log-in information.

BOOK FINES

Students in grades three and higher must pay fines for overdue books. All grades receive overdue and fine notices on Tuesdays and Fridays. Students with fines are not allowed to sign out other books until the fine is paid. It is up to the student to keep track of their overdue status and return or renew books as needed. Fines stop as soon as the book is returned. A fine notice is then generated for \$.10 per day per book. To pay a fine, students bring the notice with money attached (taped) and place it on the circulation desk or give it to the librarian on duty. If your child has been asked to pay a fine on a book he/she feels he/she did not sign out, ask him/her to talk to the librarian as soon as possible.

LOST OR DAMAGED MATERIALS

If a student loses a book, tell the librarian as soon as possible so the fine can be stopped. The student will be asked to pay for the lost book, plus any fine that has accumulated up to \$3.00. Replacement costs vary and are dependent on the book lost. The librarian will communicate with the student and parent/guardian regarding the actual cost at the time of replacement. The replacement cost can also be found on the online catalog.

Physical Education (PE)

Physical health is an important aspect for healthy living and active participation in the world around us. All students are required to participate in the health and physical education program at HMS. Students should wear sneakers on PE days and may be required to follow other dress guidelines depending on their grade level. Middle school and high school students must change into HMS shirts and shorts for PE class.

If a student has a medical reason for non-participation, he/she must present a note to the office or P.E. teacher from the parent/guardian stating the reason for the exclusion. If the student is to be excluded for more than one PE period, a doctor's statement with the reason and the length of time of the exclusion must be provided. Under most circumstances, the student will be required to attend the class even though he/she will not be expected to participate.

Student Services

EDUCATIONAL TESTING

HMS can provide educational testing for struggling students through the Intermediate Unit 13's nonpublic school services division. This service is used when classroom teachers need additional assistance to design a program that will meet a student's needs. Classroom teachers and/or the principal will speak with parents to recommend such testing. This service is provided at no cost. Educational testing is also available through your local school district or through private services.

LEARNING SUPPORT

HMS has a program staffed by a certified special education teacher for students who need additional support because of learning disabilities or other factors that impede educational progress. These services are provided at an additional charge. The learning support teacher and/or the principal will contact parents should they feel students would benefit from the program.

REMEDIAL READING AND MATH SUPPORT

IU 13 provides a reading/math specialist to help struggling students. Classroom teachers and/or the principal will contact parents to recommend the services for students. These services are provided at no cost.

SPEECH THERAPY

IU 13 provides a speech therapist to work with students who need these services. Classroom teachers and/or the principal will contact parents to recommend the services for students. These services are provided at no cost.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

IU 13 services provide a school counselor to work with students on school related issues or personal issues that directly affect the student's performance at school. These services are provided at no cost.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

HMS has a student support team to help teachers and parents design and implement an action plan for students whose behavior is impeding academic progress. A member of the student support team or classroom teachers will contact parents if they feel students would benefit from an SST action plan. These services are provided at no cost.

ACADEMIC EXTENSION

This program is offered to students in grades 3-8 who are above-average academically and/or intellectually. The program is designed to:

- provide additional academic challenge in the areas of student's strengths
- develop social skills
- provide opportunity for like-minded students to meet together
- develop higher-level thinking skills
- retain and develop an inquisitiveness in daily life

Students meet weekly for both group activities or an individual project. Many of the projects are student-interest driven and are tailored toward the academic strengths of the group, so the emphasis of the program changes each trimester.

Testing Program

In addition to tests used in the daily program, standardized tests are administered to students regularly. The results of these tests are used to provide support for individual students and evaluate the overall HMS educational program. Tests include:

BENCHMARK TESTING

Benchmark testing is done three times a year in grades K-6 to evaluate student growth in reading and math. It helps teachers design individual instructional programs based on the results. Primary instructional aides and teachers work with students in small groups to maximize student growth and success.

TERRA NOVA TESTING

Terra Nova testing is given to students in grades 3-8 to determine their performance levels in core subject areas. Teachers evaluate the results to design teaching strategies for students and review the overall instructional program. Parents are given test results and are encouraged to contact the principal to review this information if they wish.

KEYSTONE EXAMS

Keystone exams are given to middle school algebra students in late May. Exam results are returned in July and will be forwarded to the student's high school for math placement.

Textbooks

Students are responsible for all textbooks issued to them during the school year. Students should contact the teacher whenever a textbook is lost so that a replacement can be given to the student. Lost or damaged books must be paid for before final report cards are issued at the end of the school year. The office will provide a cost for replacement. A refund will be given if a lost book is found and returned to HMS.

Music Lessons

In addition to the HMS band and string ensemble program, private music lessons on a variety of instruments are available through private instructors. Fees for the private lessons are set by the instructor and should be paid directly to them. Instruments are also available for rent through outside companies. Contact the music teacher for more information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Services and Requirements at HMS

Healthy children make better learners! A certified school nurse from ELANCO school district works in partnership with HMS so we can achieve optimum health for students in our school community.

The PA School Code requires that school districts provide the following health services for school age children. These services are available upon request at the office.

- Medical examinations upon entry to school, grade 6 and grade 11
- Vision screenings annually
- Hearing screenings annually for grades K-3 and grade 7
- Height and weight measurement annually
- Maintenance of medical and dental records
- Scoliosis screening
- Tuberculosis screening
- Dental examinations upon entry to school, grade 3 and 7

Submit completed forms from medical and dental examinations to the office on the dates requested. Failure to submit the forms in a timely fashion can result in exclusion from school. These standards are established in the PA School Code.

Taking Medications at School

Our staff is willing to cooperate with families and doctors when a child needs to take medication during school hours. Please follow the guidelines below to help protect your child as well as all the children in our school community:

- Prescription medication must be in the original labeled container from the pharmacy with the student's name, medication, dose, time interval, prescribing doctor's name, medication, date of prescription, and name/phone number of the pharmacy.
- Medications should be delivered to the office by parents/guardians with a note signed by the parent/guardian giving directions for administering medication.
- If they prefer, parents may come to school to administer medication to their own children.

Contact the office you have any questions.

School Attendance for a Sick Child

HMS adheres to the following recommendations of the Communicable Disease Center:

- Sick children should be kept at home to avoid contact with other students and staff. Any child with flu-like symptoms (fever, nausea, diarrhea) should stay at home for at least 24 hours after they are fever free without the aid of fever-reducing drugs or 24 hours after other symptoms have gone away.
- If one child in your family is severely ill with flu conditions (such as the H1N1 virus), other school-aged family members should also be kept home for 5 days from the time someone in the home became sick. The 5-day period provides enough time to know if someone else will become ill.

What to do to prepare for Flu Season

- Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick
- Plan to monitor the health of the sick child and any other children by checking for fever and other flu symptoms.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Have your family vaccinated for seasonal flu when vaccines are available.
- Educate your child(ren) about good hygiene practices – using tissues and washing hands frequently, especially after covering their mouth when coughing or sneezing,
- Use antibacterial soaps over flu season

Release of Students to Adults

School staff members will only release students during the school day to parents/guardians unless given permission to do otherwise by the parents/guardians of a student. Parents or guardians can send a note or call and talk to one of the office staff giving permission for children to go with another adult. Office staff will use their judgment on whether to accept or not accept notes or calls and may request identification as needed. The safety of students will take precedent over convenience.

Personal Safety

Children should feel safe at school. Students may not use physical or verbal actions to intimidate or hurt other students. Violations of the above standard will be handled as stated in the HMS harassment policy. The harassment policy and procedures are found in Appendix D.

Clearances for Adults at School

Community is important to the educational experience at HMS. Because of that, HMS welcomes parents and volunteers to actively participate in the education of our students. In order to raise the sense of security and accountability for adult-student interaction, HMS's Child Protection Policy outlines standards for allowing adults in the building and interacting with students. The following points are a summary of the policy:

- All guests and parents must sign-in at the front desk and wear an identifying badge while in the building.

- Parents/guardians who have enrolled students at HMS, faculty and staff, and contracted workers will have badges with their names on them.
- Employees are required to have child abuse, criminal record checks and FBI checks on file with the school office.
- Contracted service workers must have clearances on file with the office in order to work in the building unsupervised by HMS staff.
- Classroom or school-wide volunteers who work with students unattended by HMS staff must have a child abuse and criminal record check on file with the school office.
- Classroom volunteers who do not have clearances on file may help with activities at school providing they remain under the supervision of HMS staff or faculty.

Safety Drills

Safety drills, such as fire, tornado, and lock-down drills, will be held at the school several times each school year. Specific instructions for the safety drills are described in faculty safety manuals.

Security System

Our property is protected by an electronic security system that is activated each night and on weekends and also includes outside surveillance cameras. Police officers will be dispatched to investigate should the alarm go off. Police departments charge a fee for false alarms. To minimize false alarms, please make special arrangements with the office if you need to be in the building outside of regular office hours.

Weapons

According to Act 26 of the PA School Code, schools are to report and suspend any student who brings a weapon or any instrument or tool that can be construed to be a weapon onto school grounds. Weapons are not allowed to be on the HMS campus, buses, or at school-sponsored activities. This includes but is not be limited to: loaded or unloaded firearms (including any pellet guns, BB guns or look-alike firearms), knives (including kitchen knives or pocket knives), any type of cutting instrument or tool, clubs, slingshot, straight razor, explosives, firecrackers, noxious or irritating gases, poison, or any other tool, instrument, implement or chemical capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Students carrying weapons on campus can be suspended or expelled on the first offense based on the principal's judgment and established disciplinary guidelines.

PARENT OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Board Meetings

HMS is owned and governed by parent families who send their children to this school. The Board of Trustees is made up of up to ten people, of which at least seven should be current patrons. The Board of Trustees is the HMS governance body.

Board meetings are open to the patron body; parents, teachers, and support staff are welcome to attend. Dates are listed on the school calendar and the HMS website calendar. Approved minutes are included in *NewsLinks*.

Patrons are encouraged to attend Board meetings. The Board of Trustees welcomes input at the meetings regarding policies, procedures, and operations of the school. To address the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting, you must submit a written request that includes your name and the topic you wish to address. Requests may be submitted prior to the meeting by e-mailing board@hinkletownschool.org. Requests to address the Board shall not be accepted after the meeting has been called to order.

Annual Meeting

Every April the Board of Trustees convenes a meeting of school members to share about the major happenings of the year, introduce new initiatives and conduct a vote on new policy or Board members. The Board may call other meetings of the members as is needed to conduct any formal business of the school.

Parent-Teacher Fellowship (PTF)

Parents support community events and the HMS teachers through the organizational work of the PTF committee. Parents are encouraged to become active members of the Parent-Teacher Fellowship committee, but even more, families are invited to attend the events it sponsors.

PTF-sponsored events include:

- Hot Lunch meals every Wednesday
- Back-to-School Night in August
- Grandparents Day in October
- Pastors Day in November
- Christmas gifts for faculty and staff in December
- Board-Staff Appreciation Dinner in January
- Roller skating in March or April
- Teacher Appreciation Week in April
- Movie Nights and other fun events throughout the year

Volunteers

HMS strongly encourages and welcomes parental involvement. Volunteer opportunities available may include:

- working in the library
- lunch monitors in classrooms
- working as a classroom aide
- office assistant.

Parents can also volunteer to assist in various committees, such as:

- Fundraising events
- Technology
- Transportation
- PTF activities
- Maintenance to the school ground.

Volunteer sheets are included in the August mailing and committees will also include sign-up sheets throughout the year through backpack mail or *NewsLink*.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

Electronic Devices

The school day is an important time for academic and social learning. Parents may use their discretion in providing electronic devices to their children, however, they do so at their own risk of loss or damage. The use of such devices must follow the guidelines below when at school:

1. Cell phones may be brought school, but are to be turned off during the school day. They should be kept in lockers or backpacks. If parents wish to contact their son/daughter, they should do so through the office. Students who need to contact their parents should do so at the office.
2. Parents may decide it is acceptable for their children to use electronic games or personal music players during the bus rides to and from school. However, we request that the devices are not loaned to other students. Headphones/earbuds must be used whenever possible. The devices are to be stored in a backpack or locker and remain there for the duration of the school day.
3. HMS does not approve of electronic media that promote violence or music that does not promote Christian values. HMS reserves the right to deny students the privilege of any electronic devices used on the HMS campus or on our buses if the contents do not meet school standards.
4. The exception to allowing personal electronic devices out during the day is if a student is using it with teacher permission and in conjunction with a class activity. The device must be returned to a backpack or locker as soon as the activity is completed.
5. Venture Program students receive specific instruction about electronic device use from the Venture Program faculty team.

Lost and Found

HMS office staff will put misplaced items in the lost and found. Throughout the year a large amount of hats, coats, and gloves are often accumulated. If your child has lost an item, ask him/her to check the lost and found in the school office or to speak with his/her teacher.

Lost and found items are also placed on tables by the main lobby for students and parents to check during first and third quarter parent-teacher conferences. Items not claimed at the end of the school year are donated to local organizations that sell used items.

Renting School Facilities

Requests for community use of school facilities can be made by contacting the office and completing the appropriate forms. The HMS gym and kitchen are available to rent. Contact the school office for rental fees. Patrons of HMS are eligible for a discounted rental rate.

School Phone Use

Students may to use school telephones located in the upper lobby or the gym lobby for emergencies or other essential reasons. They must ask permission and provide a reason for the call. We discourage phone calls to parents for forgotten items such as books or homework.

Cell phones must remain in lockers during the school day unless given permission by a teacher to use it.

Student Photos and Yearbook

A professional photographer takes student photos in October. Refer to the school calendar for the dates. All students will be photographed regardless of whether or not parents purchase a photo pack because all student photos are included in the HMS yearbook. The photo company also gives complimentary class photos to each student even if no packet was purchased. The school does not make any profit from either the photo days or yearbook sales. Yearbooks are available for purchase in the spring.

Political Positions

HMS does not endorse one political party or candidate over another. If during an election season, political parties or candidates are discussed as part of the classroom curriculum, the teacher may discuss with students the political views or issues that various parties or candidates endorse, but it will be done within the context of demonstrating how American democracy functions. Teachers may also hold debates in the classroom when students are knowledgeable about various political views in an effort to teach them how to follow proper debate format and report from unbiased sources.

Neither teachers nor students should be publicly displaying flyers, posters, bumper stickers, buttons, or any other promotional materials at school in support of a particular political candidate.

Property Damages Fee

HMS charges a minimum \$25 property damage fee for any damages intentionally imposed upon school property such as furniture or the physical building. We reserve the right to request additional money or replacement of the damaged property depending on the severity of the damage.

Promotional Advertising

HMS does not distribute promotional materials for patrons or other community organizations in regards to advertising private businesses or special events unless they are educational in nature or have a close connection to the HMS family. If you have an event you wish to promote, please contact the office.

HANDBOOK APPENDIX ITEMS

Handbook Appendix Items

- A. Grievance Procedures
- B. Grievance forms
- C. Homework Guidelines
- D. Harassment Policy
- E. Standards of Communication
- F. Parent Input at Board Meetings

Appendix A: Grievance Procedure

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a framework for settling misunderstandings or complaints that involve members of the school community. It is the intentions of these procedures to attain, at the lowest possible administrative level, in the shortest amount of time, solutions that bring restoration. Confidentiality is essential at all levels of this procedure for effective restoration. It is suggested that each level of the procedure be completed within a two to three-week time frame.

Level 1

Patrons or staff members with a grievance are encouraged to settle it in the spirit of Matthew 18:15. The essence of this verse is that if a staff person or patron offends you or your child, go to him or her and work it out between the two of you privately. We encourage you to initiate the contact by choosing one of the following options:

- A. Use the *Level 1 Grievance Form* provided online to communicate your concern to the individual.
- B. Make a phone call or send an email to the concerned party.

We expect the majority of the misunderstandings or complaints between believers can be resolved at this level.

Level 2

If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, the dissatisfied party submits a *Level 2 Grievance Form* (see HMS Parent handbook appendix) to the Principal/Head of School* after notifying the other party as in Matthew 18:16. After receiving the grievance form, the Principal/Head of School will talk to both parties individually to clarify the situation.

The Principal/Head of School* will then decide upon a course of action that could include a joint meeting with both parties, where he/she serves as a mediator, providing guidance toward restoration. An advisory team will be available to the principal at all levels of the grievance procedure.

Level 3

The Principal/Head of School* will call a meeting where a restorative justice format (see Parent handbook appendix) will be used, facilitated by an appointed, neutral mediator should the misunderstanding or complaint continue to be unresolved. Both parties will be permitted to bring in support people.

Level 4

If an agreement is not reached in the restorative justice meeting, the dissatisfied party may appeal to the board.

**If the Principal/Head of School is involved in the grievance, the form is submitted to the board chair who then acts as the mediator.*

Approved by HMS Board 5/02

Appendix B: Grievance Forms

Level 1 Grievance Form

For use by parents, teachers, principals, support staff and board members

Dear _____ ,

I have a concern I would like to discuss with you. This concern is *(be brief)* _____

I can be reached at _____ *(phone/e-mail)*

I am available _____ *(days and/or times)*

I look forward to following the grievance procedure as outlined in the HMS Parent and Staff Handbooks to bring resolution to this concern. I will keep this concern in prayer until we have an opportunity to discuss it. Thank you in advance for working on this with me.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Level 2 Grievance Form

For use by parents, teachers, principals, support staff and board members

Dear _____ ,

I have a concern I would like to discuss with you. This concern is *(be brief)* _____

- The level 2 grievance procedure assumes you have used the level 1 procedure to resolve this concern. If you have not used level 1, please explain why: _____

- Please state reason for raking this issue to level 2: _____

- What action or communication would make this situation right for you? _____

I look forward to following the grievance procedure as outlined in the HMS Parent and Staff Handbooks to bring resolution to this concern. I will keep this concern in prayer until we have an opportunity to discuss it. Thank you in advance for working on this with me.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Homework Guidelines

HOMework GUIDELINES

HMS developed this homework guideline policy to help parents understand the:

1. Reasons why we assign homework at each grade level
2. Amount of homework they can expect children to have on a given evening
3. Expectations and responsibilities for both students and parents

Parents sometimes wonder if the amount of time their child spends on an average school night is in line with the school's goal. Look over the homework time guideline supplied here for each grade level. We encourage parents to contact the classroom teacher if your child consistently spends more time than we recommend for their grade level to complete homework assignments. The teacher and parents can look at the individual situation and then determine together what course of action to take.

Early Childhood Department (Kindergarten – Grade 2)

Homework assignments for students in kindergarten through second grade include: nightly reading bag assignments, studying spelling words, reading/writing activities and occasional Bible memory work. Students will have math homework as well as homework in other core subjects some days. Homework is always used to reinforce learning that has taken place during the school day. It serves to promote reading skills and development. Homework is also a way for parents to keep in touch with their child's academic progress and provides opportunities to talk about a student's daily "job" that we call school.

Intermediate Department (Grades 3-5) and Middle School Department (Grades 6-8)

Some research in the last decade focused on the relationship between homework and student achievement and it has greatly strengthened the case for homework. There are three types of homework in grades 3-8:

- **Practice** - Practice assignments reinforce newly acquired skills. For example, students who have just learned a new method of solving a math problem should be given sample problems to complete on their own. Having students practice their spelling words is another example of this.
- **Preparation** - This type of homework assignment helps students get ready for activities that will occur later in the classroom. For example, in fourth and fifth grades, students might prepare to lead discussion in their reading group, or third through eighth grade students might study for upcoming tests.
- **Extension** - These assignments require longer-term research, or they are projected assignments. An example of this might be fourth or fifth graders preparing their history projects, or middle schoolers preparing for the science fair.

Suggested average amount of homework time per school night:

- Grades K & 1: 10-15 minutes (*remember, this includes recreational reading*)
- Grade 2: 10-20 minutes
- Grade 3: 20-30 minutes
- Grade 4: 25-35 minutes
- Grade 5: 35-45 minutes
- Grades 6-8 45-60 minutes
- Grades 9-12 60-100 minutes

Here's How Parents Can Help

1. Provide a good study area for your children to do their assignments.
2. Plan a homework schedule with your child. Set specific time when homework is done.
3. Check to see that assignments are completed on time and done well.
4. Limit after-school activities to allow time for homework.
5. Encourage your child to write assignments in their homework planner (grades 4-8).
6. Get involved as your children do homework. Guide them through the work as needed:
 - Go over homework assignments with them.
 - Monitor their progress. Do they need assistance? Nudge them along if they get stuck.
 - Talk with them about their reading assignments. Have them tell you about a passage. Did they understand it? Can they tell you about it?
 - Do some problems with them. Then observe your child doing the next one or two problems. Do they understand the process?
 - Talk to your child's teacher if they regularly spend more time than suggested to work out a satisfactory solution.

Appendix D: Harassment Policy and Procedure

HARASSMENT POLICY

Hinkletown Mennonite School is committed to providing a safe and caring learning environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. HMS seeks to follow the commands of Jesus in Matthew 22:37-39:

“... You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Harassment is a form of discrimination and aggression. It is unacceptable in a Mennonite school community. For the purposes of this policy, harassment is synonymous with an established pattern of intimidation, bullying, taunting, and teasing that is reported to school administration.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Harassment includes behavior that may be verbal or physical as well as deliberate, unsolicited and unwelcome. It is commonly a repeated behavior, but may be a single incident if grievous.

Harassment may include but is not limited to:

1. Verbal abuse or threats
2. Unwelcome physical contact and/or coercing or influencing third parties to harass others
3. Derogatory remarks, jokes, and innuendos including taunts about a person's body, attire, age, gender, ethnic or national origin, socio-economic status, and religion
4. Displaying pornographic, racist or other offensive or derogatory photos, pictures or slogans
5. Sexual comments, invitations, requests or demands (indirect or explicit)
6. Inappropriate gestures
7. Intimidating others to participate in unlawful or unethical activities
8. Intimidating others to participate in activities that contradict school and/or board policy

Revised: 8/11/05 CDC

HARASSMENT PROCEDURES

HMS shall have measures in place to prevent harassment, which include one or more of the following:

1. School policy development on related topics to be communicated to students, parents, and staff
2. Professional development activities on related topics for teachers
3. Information sections in both the parent and teacher handbooks on how to handle harassment
4. A program designed to develop and maintain positive school climate
5. Conflict resolution or peer mediation programs
6. Programs or presentations on relevant topics for parents

Harassment reports will be reviewed and incidents will be classified as level one, two, or three offenses and handled as indicated below. Reports are to be directed to members of the coordinator team (principal/head of school and department coordinators) when harassment begins. Reporting is intended to help the victim and the first concern of the principal/head of school will be the needs of the victim.

LEVEL ONE OFFENSE

A member of the coordinator team will interview those involved and assess the situation and take notes. Whether the situation is a result of a misunderstanding or not, those involved must agree to cease any offensive behavior. The complainant must be willing to supply names, circumstances, and approximate dates. The complainant must expect that the principal will inform the offender of the allegations. Consequence: Coordinator team will notify parents involved and take action warranted.

LEVEL TWO OFFENSE

The principal will take a written statement from the complainant that includes names, dates, and circumstances. The principal will inform the offender, complainant and their parents of the situation and consequences of any further harassment. Consequence: Coordinator team will meet with the parents involved and present an action plan to correct the behavior. Parent input will be sought and considered for inclusion in the action plan.

LEVEL THREE OFFENSE

The principal will suspend the student until the offender's parents meet with a committee appointed by the principal to review the situation. The review committee will include the principal, a board member, a parent, and at least one teacher. Consequence: Following this meeting, the review committee will recommend the student be reinstated, suspended for a specified period of time or expelled. This committee will establish conditions for reinstatement. The principal will make decisions on suspensions and the Board of Trustees will decide on expulsions.

APPENDIX E: STANDARDS OF COMMUNICATION

Standards and Expectations for Communication with Parents

- Teachers are expected to maintain and keep current a classroom page on the school website.
- Parents need to be informed about field trips or any event in which students will leave the HMS campus.
- Any time a child is injured at school, the teacher or adult present is responsible for completing a "Incident Report" found in "Forms" on the Faculty Shared Drive. The form must be completed and turned in to the office the day of the incident occurred.
- When a student is failing tests or is falling behind in a subject area, the teacher is expected to be in communication with parents prior to reporting a grade on a report card or discussing the concern at school-wide Parent-Teacher Conference days.
- When a student has a behavior issue that requires a special reprimand or correction plan, the teacher is expected to be in communication with the parent(s).
- School news or announcements shall be communicated through classroom newsletters and *NewsLink*.
- Emergency situations will be communicated to parents by the administrative team phone calls or the parent alert system.

Appendix F: Procedure for Parent Input at Board Meetings

(approved 2/13/03)

Patrons are encouraged to attend HMS board meetings to listen and learn. The Board of Trustees also welcomes input from patrons. Input from patrons helps the Board make decisions with the benefit of additional opinions and viewpoints.

To address the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting, you must submit a written request that includes your name and the topic you wish to address. The request may be submitted prior to the meeting by sending a message to board@hinkletownschool.org

You may also submit the request immediately prior to the meeting on the form provided at the meeting. Requests to address the Board shall not be accepted after the meeting has been called to order.

Each patron will be given up to 10 minutes to address the Board. The amount of time given to each patron may be reduced depending on how many patrons wish to address the Board at a given meeting. The Board will generally not take action on items presented during this segment of the meeting.

- The Board of Trustees will consider the input for making decisions about agenda items
- The topic may be scheduled for a future meeting
- The Board Chair may refer the topic to staff or a committee

Written copies of your comments or other supporting documents may be presented to each of the board members when you address the Board of Trustees. At the conclusion of patron input, members of the Board may ask questions for clarification.

The Board of Trustees welcomes input at board meetings regarding policies, procedures, and operations of the school. Concerns about personnel must be addressed by following the steps outlined in the grievance procedure.

Request to Address the Board

Name: _____

Meeting Date: _____

Topic: _____