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- NEW HIGH SCHOOL TEAM INTRODUCTIONS
- HISTORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM AT HMS



## The Revive To Thrive Capital Project: Investing In The Next Generation

August 20<sup>th</sup> was the first day of the 45<sup>th</sup> school year of Hinkletown Mennonite School!

When the first HMS students and teachers entered the original school building in the fall of 1981, they walked into what is now known as the Early Childhood wing. Sixty-two students, four teachers and one administrator/part-time teacher, shared the space.

The original building has seen many changes over the years. The Common Area held the first gymnasium before the current gymnasium was built in 1986. It later became the library before the Elementary/Middle School wing was completed in 2009. HMS began to offer a Pre-K option in 2010 and, since then, the Common Area has been home to exploratory play for our youngest students.

Today, four of the original classrooms and the Common Area house the Early Childhood Wing which includes Pre-K, two Kindergarten classes and one of our 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes, representing approximately 70 students. We believe that our youngest students' learning happens best through play, so on any given day you might hear little voices singing about a letter sound, witness children working together to build a complex city with large wooden blocks, or experience their excitement as they get ready to play in the snow outside. These

classrooms also function as chapels throughout the week when teachers and classes gather to worship, read a Bible story and pray together. The original building where Hinkletown Mennonite School began is now the perfect layout for our youngest students to learn and grow.

Earlier this year, the Board and the Building and Advancement Committees recognized the need to give this original part of the school a top-to-bottom refresh. Thus, the Revive to Thrive Capital Project was launched in March! This \$300,000 project includes new insulation, lighting, ceiling tiles, paint, flooring and storage solutions. It also included a remodel of the girls' bathroom and a permanent wall around the Common Area.

We can't wait to fulfill the aims of this project to 1) give our youngest students and their teachers a refreshed space in which to learn and grow, 2) offer a bright and welcoming space for new families as they join the HMS community, and 3) bring a unified and updated look throughout our entire campus so that HMS students can continue to thrive while learning and living God's purposes!



Maria Chase  
Director of Advancement

# Investing in Young Hearts: The Legacy of Our Pre-K Program

Pre-K at HMS is a very special place! It began over fifteen years ago with the vision of Phyllis Horst Nofziger, former 2nd grade teacher and librarian at HMS. While writing Bible curriculum in 1990-1991, she came across the *Peacemaking Skills for Little Kids* curriculum. She envisioned those peacemaking skills as the cornerstone of the Pre-K program at Hinkletown and was able to make her vision a reality. Through *Peacemaking Skills*, children learn the five “I-Care Rules” for interacting with others, guidelines which have remained constant throughout the years the program has been offered. Phyllis shared, “I wanted to create a classroom where everyone who entered felt cared for, that they were important and knew they were loved by God.”

Phyllis was heavily influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach to education, a philosophy that encourages children to be more involved in choosing what they learn. Many of these concepts remained part of the Pre-K program while Mrs. Julie Aeschliman taught from 2019-2022, and are still evident today. Pre-K learning focuses heavily on social skills and how to be a part of a group as well as active play and exploration. Learning centers, STEM activities and kindergarten readiness skills are also emphasized a part of Pre-K at HMS.



We are so thankful to now retired HMS teacher, Phyllis Horst Nofziger, for bringing her gifts and talents to invest in HMS students!



Julie Aeschliman (2019-2022) brings letters to life during a fun and engaging phonics lesson!

Initially, Pre-K was offered two half-days a week either M/W or T/Th and families could add a Friday morning if they chose. By the second or third year, Pre-K added a full-day option on Tuesday and Thursday along with the optional Friday morning. This model continued until 2024. Parents were asked for their input and it was evident that many families desired a three full-day program. Currently, Pre-K offers two options: M/W half-days or T/Th/F full-days.

Who else played a significant role in Pre-K over the years? For many school years, the IVEPer (MCC’s International Volunteer Exchange Program) would serve as a Pre-K assistant. As class sizes grew, so did the need for a more consistent teacher’s aide. Since the role became a regular part of the Pre-K program, we have had several aides serve in Pre-K, including Michelle Brubaker, Connie Stauffer, Karen Lapp and Lynne Brubaker.

Pre-K is the first school experience for many children and sets the stage for their future learning. At HMS, we want children to have an inviting, caring, and Christ-centered experience in the classroom, rooted in the program’s perennial theme verse since it started: Be ye kind, one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)



Erin Lichty  
Pre-K Teacher

(with input from Phyllis Horst Nofziger)

**SAVE THE DATE!**

## 2025 HinkleFEST & Benefit Auction

Friday & Saturday October 10 & 11

- Family Fun Run
- Delicious Food
- Dairy Farm Showcase
- Benefit Auction
- KidsFEST
- & More!

Join us for family, fun, & community!



# Expanding The HMS Team To Better Serve Our Community

The operation of a school can be compared to the way an athletic team functions. It takes a group that works hard to improve, is loyal to one another and puts the team above self to accomplish its mission. Jesus formed a close team around him as he called the disciples to give up their lives and follow Him as they radically changed the world for Christ.

In providing a safe, healthy environment for children; *"it takes a village to raise a child."* Every Hinkletown Mennonite School staff member has an important role to play as we educate and equip our school community so that all may know Christ as we expand God's Kingdom! At HMS we are blessed



*Miles Yoder & Justin Weaver teamed up to hand out awards at the Friends of HMS Golf Tournament!*

to have an amazing team of custodians, bus drivers, IU13 staff, teachers' aides, faculty members and of course our office staff who serve everyone and help the school operate smoothly.

You will notice some new faces in this issue of Handprints! We are so thankful to the Lord for providing for HMS

by sending additional people to join the HMS team, including our Administrative team. We welcome Justin Weaver as a part-time Assistant Principal for the 2025-26 school year. Justin has served our school well as a Physical Education Teacher and Athletic Director the past 12 years. This past spring Megan Chambers assumed responsibilities as Director of Enrollment & Marketing as we have been blessed with many new families expressing interest in enrolling at the school. Sarah Weaver joined the team as our Fundraising Coordinator, using her gifts to help us share what is happening at HMS with the broader community. We are extremely blessed that each of these persons have joined the administrative team so that we can better serve students in our school community. Please join us as we continue praying regularly for all school staff members during the 2025-26 school year!



*One of Megan Chambers' first assignments as the new Director of Enrollment was to visit WJTL to announce Open Enrollment!*



**Miles Yoder**  
Principal

## New ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM SPOTLIGHTS



**Megan Chambers**  
Director of Enrollment & Marketing



**Justin Weaver**  
Assistant Principal



**Sarah Weaver**  
Fundraising Coordinator

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### Hinkletown Mennonite School

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**Assistant Principal:** Justin Weaver

**Director of Advancement:** Maria Chase

**Director of Enrollment & Marketing:**

Megan Chambers

### HMS Board of Trustees:

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Stephanie Zimmerman, Secretary

Tyler Brubaker

Heidi Charles

Kaitlyn Hurst

Jordan Smucker

Marc Yoder

# Hinkletown Mennonite High School: Shaping The Future

Over nine years ago, Hinkletown Mennonite School committed to the future by establishing a high school program. Beginning in the spring of 2017 with one student, the dream to be a Pre-K-12<sup>th</sup> grade school began to become a reality. Now, what started with one student has grown to an enrollment of over 40 high school students. This year, we look forward to some new changes that we believe will strengthen and support the growth of our high school program and students.

First, we are excited to partner with Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community (WAFC) beginning this fall. The high school will be operating out of the lower level of the church four days a week. This expansion into a new space provides necessary



room for students beyond what could be accommodated by the two-room modular the program had been operating from the past few years.

Additionally, the Lord has provided a larger team of teachers and staff for this next stage of development in our high school



*HMS High School students got a hands-on look at agricultural technology and innovation during their visit to Agriteer!*

program. From teaching to mentoring, to building relationships through clubs and activities, this new team is excited to pour into the rising high school students beginning this fall.



The new teachers and expanded space will provide new opportunities for investing in students. We are excited to see how God will use us to continue to grow disciples for His service in the world. Families desire a place where their students can continue seamlessly from elementary, into middle school, through high school graduation. HMS desires to continue serving its high school students by offering opportunities to learn their identity in Christ and His purpose for their lives. We believe that students will leave HMS ready to serve the Lord wherever in the world He calls them to serve!

## MEET OUR NEW HIGH SCHOOL TEAM

TEACHING STAFF



Jess Hoover  
Science



Sierra Becker  
English & Bible



Beth Lenko  
Math



Jonathan Dukeman  
History & Government



Jess Hoover  
High School Coordinator

“Being able to encourage students and show Christ's love to them at such a formative time is very exciting and humbling.”

-Sierra Becker

SUPPORT STAFF



Elisabeth Fry  
Learning Support



Sheila Kurtz  
Secretary



Kim Martin  
Mentor

# Over 25 Years of Learning Support: Unwrapping the Gift of Each Student

At HMS, the inception of a Learning Support program started with Mrs. Carmen Martin in 1999. When I joined the Learning Support team in 2006 as a long-term substitute teacher for Carmen, it consisted of Jean Baliles, Marcia Good, and Anna Ruth Martin. It was easy to see that Carmen loved teaching Learning Support. Her passion was felt by anyone who worked with her, including the students.

As I worked alongside Carmen for a week to learn the ropes of Learning Support, I knew this job would quickly blossom into a passion. Every student is unique, but when working so closely with individual or small groups of students for a year or several years, one develops an especially deep appreciation for who God created each of them to be.

The Learning Support Program continues to grow as the school expands. Jean Baliles remains an integral part of the Learning Support team, which has also welcomed Bethany Umble (2023), Amanda Martin (2024), and Chelsea Reinford (2025). After teaching eight years in an emotional support classroom, Chelsea joined the HMS family five years ago as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. She recently shared that, “Getting back into Learning Support, I feel like I’m back ‘home.’”

As I embark on my 20th year at HMS in the role of Learning Support teacher, I have had the opportunity to invest time, energy, and passion mixed with a little humor to guide students in unwrapping their gifts, talents, and ambitions. One

of my favorite parts of teaching at HMS is when students visit years after graduating to chat about their lives and experiences. As the team looks to the future, we are eager to see what changes, and “curve-balls” are ahead for the Learning Support program. As Bethany affirmed recently, “God will be faithful to meet the challenges, supply the grace, and give direction as it’s needed - He hasn’t failed us yet!” We know for sure that God has a plan for the future of every student that walks through the doors of HMS, regardless of how they learn, and are excited to support them on their journey.



**The Learning Support program provides a compassionate, tiered system of academic, emotional, and developmental support—designed in partnership with families—to help every student thrive and succeed.**



*Elisabeth Fry  
Learning Support*



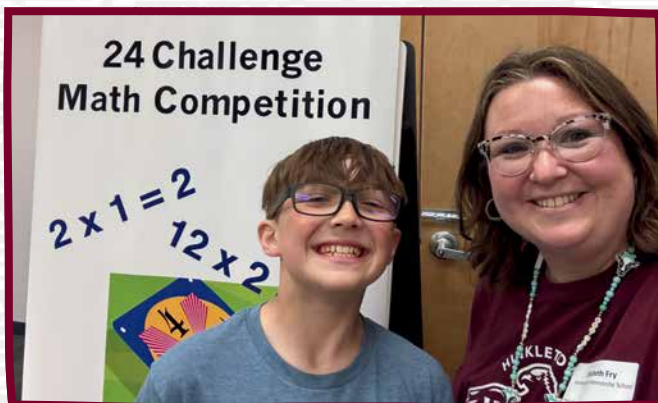
## BECOME AN ATHLETIC SPONSOR!

**Your sponsorship helps provide essential equipment, uniforms, and opportunities for our teams — all while promoting your business to our school community.**

- Multiple sponsorship levels available
- Great visibility at home games and more
- A meaningful way to invest in student growth and teamwork

**Show Your Support. Make A Difference.**

Contact Justin Weaver or Maria Chase  
at 717-354-7100



*One of Elisabeth Fry's highlights of the year is to take students to the annual 24 Challenge Math Competition to give them the opportunity to continue learning outside of the classroom!*



**Hinkletown**  
**MENNONITE SCHOOL**

272 WANNER RD, EPHRATA, PA 17522

# CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2025!



**2024-2025 8th Grade Class (L to R):** Back Row  
 Maksim Chuprin, Paxton Martin, Aslan Umble, Jonas Chase,  
 Owen Eshleman, Zackary Martin, Drew Burkholder, Luke  
 Horning, Dawson Fisher, Nathan Smoker, Jason Kalash,  
 Aaron Hurst  
 Middle Row: Kiana Weaver, Riley Ament, Madelyn Maher,  
 Stephy Sensenig, Mae Beidler, Ainslee Quillen, Diana  
 Beamer, Sierra Ishler, Keiffer Hess, David Peck  
 Bottom Row: Ashlyn Martin, Jule Kuhn, Rachel Martin, Alicia  
 Bauman, Alea Martin, Adreah Horst, and Rae Good

**2024-2025 Graduating Class (L to R):**  
 Devin Musser, Dominic Baker, Owen Chase, Matthew  
 Tlumach, Matthew Degan, Evelyn Vyotsky

At HMS, the high school program offers students the option to earn enough credits to graduate by the end of their junior year—a path that Dominic Baker and Devin Musser chose to pursue this year.

