

HANDPRINTS

ISSUE 38 | NUMBER 2 | WINTER 2026



From Junior Hawks to High School Co-Ops: A Distinctive Journey in HMS Athletics

Sports were a significant part of my experience as an HMS middle school student from 1996 to 1999. I remember my basketball coach, Austin Beamer, and the passion he brought to every practice and game. I will never forget the emphasis he put on having a “team first” mentality, on the fundamentals of basketball, and most importantly, on keeping Jesus at the center of everything we do! As players we fed off his energy and, to this day, I desire to coach and lead with the same passion and example he demonstrated to our team!

Throughout HMS’s 40-plus-year history, students have been given opportunities to make wonderful memories through sports! The HMS Athletic Program is designed to meet students at their level of play and to provide quality instruction within a team context. Most importantly, we strive to point students to Jesus and to encourage them to show Christlikeness by how they play in games, how they build each other

up, and by their good sportsmanship through the victories and defeats of competition. Overall, HMS athletics aim to help shape the whole child, contributing toward a student’s physical, emotional, social and spiritual growth.

The HMS Athletic Program has expanded greatly over the years! In the program’s early days, athletes could play on teams beginning in middle school, with sports such as softball, basketball, soccer, and track offered. About 10 years ago we joined the Christian Commonwealth Athletic Conference (CCAC), which has given us a framework to challenge and prepare our students for higher-level competition. Our cross country program has been going strong for many years, giving students the opportunity to begin running as kindergartners and to continue participating through 8th grade. This has been a wonderful way for our younger students to gain appreciation for an active and healthy lifestyle. It has also provided

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Inside This Issue:

- Athletics at HMS
- Distinctive Learning at Every Level

Important Dates:

Family Visit Day: February 11

MS Drama: February 27 & 28

HMS Roller Skating Night: March 7

Interested in HMS?



Enrollment is now **OPEN** for the 2026-2027 school year!



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(continued from cover)

a great cross-grade-level experience, as older runners have opportunities to lead and be positive role models for younger runners! Athletic options for younger students continue to expand, most recently with the start of our Junior Hawks programs for 3rd-5th graders in winter basketball and spring soccer.

The journey of HMS athletics continues to bring new and exciting developments for our older students as well. A few years ago, we became members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and started a co-op partnership with Conestoga Christian School. Our athletes are able to participate in Conestoga's varsity-level programs for a variety of athletic options. HMS hosts boys volleyball for the co-op, which has allowed both schools to form teams during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 seasons. Also during the 2024-25 season, we formed a new co-op with Lancaster County Christian School for girls soccer. We are excited to provide our students with these formative experiences which create life-long memories!

Additionally, athletic opportunities recently increased even more with a new PIAA ruling. For the 2025-26 seasons, private school students in grades 7-12 are now able to join sports teams in their school district for sports their school does not provide itself nor through co-ops. Sports such as football, field hockey, wrestling, swimming, girls softball, and boys lacrosse are now options for HMS students at their local district schools. Even so, we will continue offering co-ops to our high school athletes, since we value the community and playing environment of HMS's own sports programs!

We give thanks for the ways the Lord has expanded the HMS Athletic Program over the years, which allows us to provide athletic opportunities for students across grade levels. It is such a privilege to walk alongside athletes as they grow in ability and, even more importantly, as disciples of Jesus, on and off the field! May we all continue to run the race God prepared for us, individually and as a school community. "Go, Hawks!"



Justin Weaver
Assistant Head of School, Athletic Director & Phys. Ed Teacher



The 2017-18 season, HMS joined the CCAC which challenges students for higher level competition



2024: Sophomore Alyssa Smucker playing via co-op with LCCS that was started during the 2024-25 season



2024: 4th grader Robert Rodriguez playing in the Jr. Hawks program for 3rd-5th graders

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HMS Middle School Performing Arts *presents*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

and the First Baker Street Irregular



Friday, February 27, 2026
Dinner Theater: 5:30pm
reservations required

Saturday, February 28, 2026
Shows: 2:00pm & 7:00pm
reservations recommended

TICKET SALES OPEN IN FEBRUARY

The HMS Journey: One Path, Distinct at Every Stage



4th grade student, Jackson Weaver, enjoying a field trip to the Whitaker Center

It's common to see our youngest students out of the classroom and in the halls, visiting places such as the library, the nurse's office, and Mr. Moore's art room at the beginning of the year. You will also see lots of activity in the Common Area where our youngest students "work" by learning how to play together. These are some of the first steps an HMS student takes.

That work matures as students continue through elementary school. Hands-on learning experiences replace play and are a distinctive part of the elementary experience at HMS. Students may conduct grade-specific science experiments or join together to build STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) projects across grade levels. They work together to lead their classmates through morning devotionals. These interactive activities increase student engagement and interest and are key to their growth.

Over the course of their elementary career, students venture out to various museums and sites such as the Hans Herr House and Oregon Dairy, which enrich what they learn in the classroom. In this way, they begin to explore who they are and what the Lord's purposes may be for their lives, an exciting journey of discovery which continues into middle school.



*Kristie Rank
Second Grade Teacher*

As students continue through their HMS journey, middle school teachers build on the elementary foundation of hands-on, experiential learning, encouraging students to explore their God-given talents and passions.

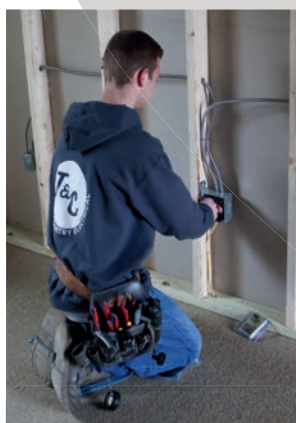
Daily elective classes are one way teachers give students opportunities to dig deeper into a variety of subjects, to have choice in their learning and to grow in leadership. During electives, students may be found deepening their understanding of an academic subject through the Book Club or Horticulture electives. Others may be practicing leadership on the Chapel Planning Team or Student Council. Still others may be pursuing their love of sports and music through electives such as Senior Choir or Basketball History.

With space to explore their interests and opportunities to try new things, our goal is for students to gain a greater understanding of what God may be calling them to pursue in the future. This experiential approach, a hallmark of HMS, will expand and develop even further for students as they continue their educational journey at the HMS high school.

*Jeremy Horning
Middle School Teacher*



Part of the cast of 'Bringing Down the House' performed in 2025



High School student, Weston Martin, learning through an internship with Town & Country Electrical

HMS's high school program began in 2017 with a desire to offer the next level of "distinctly-HMS style" education for which we are known. While mentoring has always been a cornerstone of the program, this year the high school faculty are intentionally shifting the ratio of online instruction towards more in-person learning so they can walk closely with students — supporting them academically, investing in them personally, and ministering to them holistically. For example, a new period was added at the start of each day called Uplift, where teachers intentionally invest in students through the use of discipleship and leadership training materials.

While some of its structure is shifting, HMS faculty remain committed to offering flexible pathways to help students discover their purpose in life and where God may be leading them after graduation. Dual enrollment courses, Career & Technology Center programs, and opportunities for job shadowing and internships allow students to explore their gifts outside of class and gain real-world experience while remaining grounded in a supportive school community. By combining classroom learning, intentional ministry, and purposeful flexibility, HMS aims to equip students to grow in confidence, character, and clarity as they begin to walk into God's call for their lives.



*Sarah Weaver
Fundraising Coordinator
With input from Jessica Hoover*



Hinkletown
Mennonite School

272 WANNER RD, EPHRATA, PA 17522

OPEN ENROLLMENT

for the 2026-2027 school year

IMPORTANT DATES:

Family Visit Day:

- February 11, 2026

Kindergarten Readiness Assessments

- February 17, 2026

Early Registration Discount Deadline for New Families

- June 1, 2026



Scan the code for more
information or contact
our Director of
Enrollment,
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