



LANCASTER MENNONITE

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Attendance Policy

This policy was updated in July 2018 to reflect changes to the Pennsylvania School Code. Please read the following carefully.

- **School Day**

Classes begin at 8:15 a.m. and end at 3:05 p.m. The main lobby doors open at 7:45 a.m. Students should be in their classrooms by 8:10.

- **Excused Absences**

A maximum of 15 days of cumulative excused absences with parental/caregiver notification are permitted during a school year. Parents/caregivers must notify the school of their child's absence and the reason in writing or by leaving a message on the attendance line, 717-299-0436, option 1. All absences are considered unexcused until acceptable notification is received. If notification, including excuse cards, is not received within five days after the student returns to school, the absence will be unexcused. **If students miss more than 20% of any given class, credit will not be earned.**

All absences beyond 15 days (excluding absences excused by a physician) require documentation from a physician in order to be excused.

In accordance with Pennsylvania School Code, LM considers the following reasonable causes for absence from school with proper documentation:

- **Illness:** Administration may require a physician's note when absence is excessive.
- **College Visits:** Juniors and Seniors can take up to three days to visit colleges/universities per year. College trip forms must be completed and turned in to the office at least five days prior to the day of visitation.
- **Educational Trips and International Home Visits:** Trips require written parent/caregiver request and completion of an Educational Trip Form and prior approval. Educational Trip Forms must be turned in to the office at least five days in advance of the trip. These forms can be found online or in the school office. A maximum of seven days will be excused.
- **Observation of Legitimate Religious Holiday:** Requires written parent/caregiver request and prior approval.
- **Death in the Family**
- **Administrative Discretion**

- **Unexcused Absences**

Any absence not included in the above list is considered unexcused. LM does not give a penalty for the first two unexcused absences during the school year. Each additional unexcused day results in a 2% point deduction from the quarter grade in each course. Absences are unexcused until proper notification is received.

***Seniors who have fulfilled the academic requirements for graduation but fail to meet the minimum attendance requirements will be allowed to participate in commencement; however, these students will not receive a diploma until make-up days are completed.**

- **Tardies**

A tardy is arrival to school after the start of the school day but before 3rd period. Arrival after 10 a.m. will be counted as a half-day absence. Tardies are excused using the same criteria as absences. Students are permitted three unexcused tardies per year without penalty. After 3 unexcused tardies, students will receive an after school detention and after each additional two tardies, students will be charged with a half-day unexcused absence. **If students miss more than 20% of any given class, credit will not be earned.**

- **Early Dismissal**

Students must have written parent/caregiver permission to leave school prior to dismissal. Students leaving more than two hours early will be charged a half-day absence.

- **PIAA Attendance Policy**

Per PIAA policy, if a student athlete is absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, the student will lose eligibility until the student athlete attends school for a total of 45 school days following the 20th day of absence.

In order to participate in an after school activity, LM requires all students to arrive for the school day no later than 10 a.m. Students who arrive after this time will not be permitted to participate in the day's scheduled practice or competition. Prior made medical and legal appointments may be an exception.

- **Notification of Excessive Absence**

- **Official First Notice:** When a student has accumulated three unexcused absence (current school year), the state views this as truant behavior. A written notification is sent home. If the student continues to accumulate unexcused days, a Truancy Mediation Conference will be held to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.
- **Habitually Truant Status:** Under Pennsylvania law, if a student accumulates six unexcused absences during the course of a school year, the school must identify the student as “habitually truant” and the school must take further action immediately based upon the age of the student:
 - For students under the age of 15: Truancy Mediation Conference and Attendance Improvement Plan, a referral to Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency and may include truancy citations. As a private school, LM reserves the right to require withdraw from school or proceed with expulsion due to excessive absence.
 - For students under the age of 18: Truancy Mediation Conference and Attendance Improvement Plan, truancy citations, and may include a referral to Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency. As a private school, LM reserves the right to require withdraw from school or proceed with expulsion due to excessive absence.
- **10-Day Letter:** Notification that a student has accrued 10 absences during the current school year. This letter is for information only.
- **15-Day Letter:** Notification that a student has accrued 15 absences during the current school year that were not excused by a physician. All subsequent absences require a doctor's note in order to be excused.