

Dock Mennonite Academy

K-8 Student Handbook 2024-2025

Dock Mennonite Academy inspires and equips each student to serve with a global perspective by integrating faith, academic excellence, and life-enriching opportunities in a Christ-centered community.



DOCK
MENNONITE ACADEMY

ACADEMICS

Schoology: Teacher/Classroom Information

- EC-8 classroom information is posted on Schoology.
- Grade 5-8 assignment and academic progress details are updated at least weekly.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

- Conferences are held in the fall for K-8. Appointments are set via Sign-Up Genius.
- Additional meetings may be arranged with parents and staff as needed.

Homework

- Homework is given to reinforce concepts and skills.
- Elementary students can expect 10 minutes per grade level, i.e., 10 minutes in 1st grade, 20 minutes in 2nd grade, etc.
- For grades 5-8, a general guideline is about 1 hour total.
- Students are expected to use Schoology to support study skills, and to hand in assignments on time.
- If homework is late, grades may be lowered.

Grouping

Our program is designed to nurture and challenge students, with an emphasis on building community and skills, with some differentiation of content, processes, and activities.

Beginning in 7th grade, students may be placed in math groups based on:

- Coursework grades and standardized testing
- Achievement, effort and motivation

Scripture for Life

Students in all grades study and memorize Bible texts as a part of the Encounter Bible curriculum.

Report Cards

- Kindergarten: A progress report is issued each semester.
- First and Second Graders receive marks each quarter.
- Third to Eighth Graders receive marks each quarter.

Grading Scale

A+ (98-100%)	C+ (77-79%)
A (93-97%)	C (73-76%)
A- (90-92%)	C- (70-72%)
B+ (87-89%)	D+ (67-69%)
B (83-86%)	D (63-66%)
B- (80-82%)	D- (60-62%)
	F (below 60%)

If necessary, an incomplete (I) may be issued. If work is not completed within one week or the designated time, a "0" will be given on the incomplete assignments and averaged in with other assignments for the quarter grade.

Standardized Testing

Standardized testing is given in selected grades to provide perspective on individual student progress and the overall academic program.

APPEARANCE CODE

The basis for Dock Mennonite Academy's policy rests on the following Christian principles:

- Our bodies are temples of God.
- Dress is an expression of God's creativity.
- Dress should be modest.
- Dress should reflect good stewardship of resources.

The following student attire is considered appropriate for the educational setting on our campus:

- Dress shirts
- T-shirts
- Pants or jeans
- Dresses, skirts, or shorts that are 2 inches above the knee or longer
- Footwear shall be worn at all times
- All attire must have sleeves

The following is considered inappropriate (and shall not be worn):

- Hats, sunglasses or hoods up inside buildings
- Revealing attire e.g., tops do not cover the torso
- Clothes that resemble or advertise the armed forces or politics
- Hairstyles/ hair color, piercings, tattoos, and logos that contradict Dock's Covenant Statement

The implementation of the above code is best achieved within a positive relationship among parents, students, and teachers.

Teachers will establish a spirit of expectation based on these standards. If violations occur, students will be asked to report to the school office for administrative discretion.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a key component of success in the school program. Dock Mennonite Academy follows Pennsylvania requirements for school attendance.

- The school nurse, counselor, attendance monitor, and principal contact families regarding attendance concerns.
- Unexcused absences exceeding 3 days may be reported to the resident school district.
- Excused absences include illness, funerals, doctor/dental appointments, family trips (see below), "Take your Child to Work Day" and other absences determined by the school.
- Unexcused absences include missing the school bus, working, or caring for someone at home, shopping trips, or other absences determined by the school.
- Upon a student's return to school, a parent or guardian must present a signed note stating the reason for the absence.
- Students arriving at school after 8:25 AM must stop at the office for an admissions/tardy slip.
- If a student is at school by 11:00 AM or until 1:00 PM, he/she is considered present for the full day.
- Students may enter their homerooms at 8:10 AM; students are considered tardy after 8:25 AM.
- Members of extracurricular athletic teams must be in attendance for regular school activities to participate in after-school events, arriving no later than 11:00 AM. Contact the athletic director with questions.

Family Vacations

- Our desire is to work with families to coordinate school and family schedules to enhance learning and growth. The calendar is published at the beginning of each year to aid in minimizing school and family activity conflicts.
- There is a limit of 5 excused vacation absences per school year.
- Please inform the teacher at least 1 week in advance.
- In most cases, assignments will need to be completed upon return. At times, teachers may reformat assignments to enable a student to learn a concept in the context of the vacation experience.
- Parents are expected to help their child complete missed work. All make-up work shall be completed within an appropriate time frame as determined by issuing faculty member.
- Student grades may be impacted if the student is unable to successfully make up work and fully understand the concepts.

CONDUCT

Dock's Covenant Statement states behavior expectations including the importance of respecting and protecting each person's belongings, body, feeling, and opportunity to learn. Restorative practices are used throughout the school program to promote a healthy climate and effective conflict resolution. See the appendices for more information.

DAILY PROCEDURES

Arrival

- The school doors open at 7:50 AM. Students arriving at school before 8:10 AM report directly to the cafeteria where they are supervised.
- At 8:10 AM:
 - Elementary students report to their homeroom.
 - Grade 5-8 students go to their lockers and classrooms.
- At the 8:20 AM bell, students move to their seats in preparation for the day's activities.

Devotions

- In elementary classes, each day begins with devotions and Morning Meeting. Elementary chapels are twice a month.
- In grades 5-8, students may have devotions in the AM or PM with their crew. Chapel is held weekly.

Lunch

- Lunches are eaten in the cafeteria with staff and parent volunteer supervision.
- Students may purchase a cafeteria lunch with a lunch account. The cafeteria does not accept cash.
- Menus are on the school website or school app.
- Students may bring a packed lunch.
- Students are to remain in their seats throughout lunch and remain there until dismissed.
- Students are responsible to return trays and silverware and clean their table.

Phone Use/Wireless Earbuds

- Cell phones and wireless earbuds are not to be used during school without permission from the teacher or administration. Any phone or earbuds used inappropriately will be turned in to the principal, and a parent/guardian contacted to retrieve the device.
- Dock observes the right to look at any device brought on campus in order to keep our students feeling safe and respected.

Dismissal

- Students remain in their homerooms until their bus is called.
- Students going by car shall bring a signed parent note to homeroom teachers giving consent. One note is sufficient if a student will be going by car on a regular basis.
- Phone or email messages regarding transportation changes should be sent to the office before 1:30 PM.
- See "Transportation" for additional guidelines.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

School Property

Students are responsible for lost, damaged, or defaced school property. If a resource is lost, misplaced, or damaged during the school year, the family is expected to pay the replacement cost. The school has procedures for repairs and purchasing replacements. Please contact the office with any questions.

School Supplies

Students are expected to provide some school supplies throughout the year. A detailed list is on the website.

Grade 5-8 - Care of Lockers

Lockers should be cleaned regularly. Decorations are limited to the interior and are to be aligned with the school mission. Locker doors should be closed when not in use.

MEDIA CENTER

Students are expected to:

- Work quietly and with purpose.
- Properly care for all borrowed materials.
- Return all borrowed materials promptly or renew materials by the due date.
- The school has procedures for repairs and purchasing replacements. Please contact the office with any questions.

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

- Interscholastic sports are offered for 7th and 8th graders in soccer, field hockey, basketball, baseball, softball, and track and field. The emphasis is on skill development, competition, performance, and preparation for higher level athletics.
- Athletes in interscholastic sports must submit:
 - PIAA Physical Exam Form
 - Emergency health consent form
 - Player contract form
- Students must be in school by 11:00 AM to practice or participate in athletic events.
- Parents are responsible to provide prompt transportation for their son/daughter after practices and games.

Spectators

- Parent attendance is encouraged.
- Children younger than grade 5 must be supervised by an adult.
- Parents should inform the daily bus driver if their child is not going home on the bus.
- Good sportsmanship is expected of all spectators. School expectations and rules are in effect.
- Follow guidelines regarding food and drink; properly dispose of any litter.
- Following the game, spectators are to wait on the sidewalk at the middle school entrance for their ride. During cold weather, spectators may wait inside the door.
- Home games end at 5:00 PM.

PARENT INFORMATION

Homeroom Activities

- Homeroom teachers work with parent volunteers who assist with special events throughout the year.
- Individual teachers will communicate classroom activities and needs via classroom newsletters on Schoology.

Volunteers

- Parents are encouraged to become involved as volunteers.
- Child abuse, criminal record, FBI Fingerprinting clearances, and the Act 153 Volunteer Affidavit are required for volunteers with direct student contact. More information is on the school website.

Visitors

- Meetings with teachers are by appointment only.
- All visitors must sign in at the office.
- Visitors will be asked to wear an identification badge.
- Items for students shall be left at the office.
- Check in at the office when picking up a student.

Lost and Found

- Lost and Found articles may be found in the office.
- Unclaimed items will go to a thrift shop at the end of each quarter.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Chapels/Assemblies

Chapels are planned with the goal of encouraging students on a lifelong journey of following Jesus. Chapels nurture a learning community where students are invited to grow in faith that is evidenced by Christ-like love, peacemaking, and service. Chapels will provide opportunities for a variety of worship experiences in the context of Christian community. Assemblies may be scheduled to enrich the school program, promote student participation, and broaden interests of the student body. Assemblies may include fire

safety, school musical performances, educational programming, Christmas, etc.

Field Trips

- Field trip fees are included in tuition. Optional fees may apply.
- Parent volunteers may accompany as needed. Admissions fees for parents may apply and parents may need to provide their own transportation depending on the circumstances.
- Siblings and other persons may not join field trips at the destination point.

Field Days

Field Days are held in the spring for elementary and middle school students.

Music

- Group Lessons are provided weekly at no charge during school hours. Students are excused from lessons for tests and special events.
- Stringed Instruments are taught 3rd-8th grade.
- Band Instruments are taught 4th-8th grade.
- Ensembles such as Beginner Band, Band, Beginning Orchestra, Orchestra, Select Strings, Handbells and Choir meet regularly.
- Select Strings, Bella Vocce, and Handbells members are chosen by audition.
- Piano lessons are available on campus with a private teacher arranged by the school. Fees apply.
- Depending on schedules, some ensembles such as Handbells may rehearse before school.
- Ensembles may perform in chapel, concerts, adjudication festivals, churches, and other events.

Spiritual Life Week for Grades 5-8

Special guest speakers and other events focus on spiritual growth and growing as followers of Jesus.

8th Grade Celebration

Students in 8th grade participate in a final celebration ceremony centered on student accomplishments.

STUDENT WELFARE

Mandated Reporting

All Dock Mennonite Academy employees are mandated by Pennsylvania state law to report suspected child abuse. Any adults working with a student, having reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect of a child may have occurred, are required by law to report the suspected abuse. Mandated reporters do not investigate abuse. The outside agency investigates and when appropriate, provides parenting resources, family interventions, and other support services.

Illness

Parents should keep students from school due to illness when needed. The nurse is available for a phone consultation after 8:15 AM.

Examples:

- vomiting during the night or in the morning before school
- fever, until 24 hours fever-free without the aid of fever-reducing medications
- Positive test for Covid-19, strep throat, influenza
- infectious pink eye
- bacterial infections with less than 24 hours of treatment

Students who are vomiting or have a fever will be sent home from school.

A doctor note is required to be excused from PE classes for health reasons.

Health Services

- Required Examinations
 - Physicals are required by state law for all students entering kindergarten and sixth grade.
 - Dental examinations are required for all students entering Kindergarten, 3rd and 7th grades.
 - Upon request, these exams may be scheduled at a local district school with a physician/dentist designated by the district.
- Each K-8 student will have his/her height, weight, and vision checked each year.
- Students in K, 1, 2, 3, and 7 will have hearing checked.
- Scoliosis screenings are done for 7th graders.

Please refer to the school website for state-required health forms and our school Wellness Policy.

Student Possessions

- avoid bringing large amounts of money or valuables to school.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be turned off upon entering the school building. The school is not liable for these items.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills and other safety drills are conducted as required by law. School personnel are trained and familiar with appropriate protocols for various safety concerns.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is a “like transportation” service provided by resident districts to private schools and is considered a privilege.

- All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of the school.
- Follow instructions given by the bus driver.
 - Remain seated, facing the front, with feet out of the aisles.
 - Speak quietly.
 - Respect others.
 - Eating is not permitted on the bus.
- Bus routes/times are established by individual districts, and all busses and drivers are managed by districts. District transportation offices establish all bus stops, and buses are authorized to stop only at those stops.
- Contact the school office if you have any changes that may affect transportation, such as a new address.
- Students should be at their bus stops at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time
- Students living on the opposite side of the road from the bus stop should wait on that side until the bus has arrived, safely stopped, and has restrained all other traffic by safety signs and flashers. Cautiously proceed across the road in front of the bus, watching for vehicles that may not have stopped for the bus.
- While waiting to board the bus, students should stand in an orderly line at least three feet from the bus.

General Information

- The opportunity for students to ride home on other buses is limited.
- Due to liability, districts do not allow students from other districts to ride their buses.
- Souderton, North Penn, Pennridge and other districts typically have more than one bus serving Dock Mennonite Academy. If a student wishes to ride a bus other than their own within the district, they must bring a note for the bus driver from both families involved. This note must be signed by the homeroom teacher, the principal, or administrative assistant. This note will be returned to the student to present it to the bus driver.
- If a child is riding home on his or her regular bus but is getting off at a different stop (for example, at the home of a classmate), the student should have a written and dated parent permission note

School Closings, Delays and Early Dismissals for inclement weather may be accessed via:

- Text message alerts
- Schoology
- Website- www.dock.org
- Facebook- [EC to Grade 8](#) and [Dock Mennonite Academy Grades 9-12](#)
- Phone System- EC- Grade 8 (215-723-1196) and Grades 9- 12 (215-362-2675)
- Bus service is determined by the resident district.
 - Check online or other media for resident school district’s decision. For example, if you reside in the Souderton Area School District and that district has a two-hour delay, your child should anticipate a two-hour delay in bus schedule.
 - When the resident school district is closed but Dock Mennonite Academy is open, parents may choose to arrange alternate transportation. Absences are considered excused from that district.
 - Early Dismissals: Follow text message alerts, Schoology, Facebook, website, and/or phone systems for Dock and the school district you live in. All bus companies will be contacted, and bus services requested. When busses arrive at either campus, students will be dismissed to their busses. Bus times will vary. EC-Grade 8 campus will post approximate bus departure times on Schoology.

**Appendix A:
Positive Behavior Framework**

Students and teachers worked together to create the following framework to describe how Pioneers LEAD at Dock.

	Love of Learning	Engagement with Community	Appreciation for God's creation	Dignity for Self and Others
Classrooms	<i>Focus and Engage</i>	<i>Learn With Each Other</i>	<i>Care for The Environment</i>	<i>Take Care of Each Other</i>
Hallways	<i>Enjoy Displays</i>	<i>Be Courteous and Friendly</i>	<i>Pick Up Trash</i>	<i>Use Self Control</i>
Playground & Gym	<i>Grow in Your Skills</i>	<i>Invite Others to Play</i>	<i>Use Equipment Properly</i>	<i>Build Teamwork</i>
Cafeteria	<i>Be A Friend, Make A Friend</i>	<i>Be Respectful and Cooperative</i>	<i>Recycle and Clean Up</i>	<i>Use Manners</i>
Restroom & Locker Room	<i>Be Efficient</i>	<i>Take Care of Facilities</i>	<i>Conserve Resources</i>	<i>Respect Privacy</i>

APPENDIX B: Responses to Misbehavior

The following strategies will be used to support the development of students across all aspects of the Dock Mission Statement and Graduate Profile. These will be applied to school and school functions, even if these activities are not on campus.

- A. The Dock Covenant Statement broadly defines expectations for parents and students. Each family will be asked to sign the Covenant Statement annually as a commitment to the Dock mission and community. These commitments include:
- Support of the mission and goals of the school.
 - Abiding by school expectations including attendance, appearance, self-control, and acceptable use of technology.
 - Engaging in classroom activities, homework, projects, and discussions with integrity and responsibility.
 - Respecting and protecting one's own and others' feelings, bodies, property, and opportunity to learn.
- B. Student behavior issues will be addressed as needed by classroom teachers, recess aides, or other staff.
- Positive relationships, co-created classroom and community expectations including the LEAD framework from Appendix A, and other proactive strategies are key for all grade levels.
 - Consequences for misbehavior will include consideration of the severity of the misbehavior, individual differences, and the age of the child.
 - As the situation merits, staff and teachers shall inform and consult with other teachers, the school counselor, parents, and administration.
- C. Logical consequences, including those outlined in Responsive Classroom training, will be used whenever possible. Restorative practices with an emphasis on "making things right" will be used whenever possible. Potential consequences may include:
- Warning
 - Loss of privilege
 - "Break It, Fix It" steps
 - Technology restrictions
 - Parent communication
 - Counseling
 - Restorative meetings or circles
 - Detention
 - Service hours
 - Problem-Solving conferences
 - Behavioral plans
 - Suspension
 - Restitution of property
 - Probation
 - Expulsion
- D. Dock's Title IX and Harassment and Discipline Policies are detailed on the [Dock website](#).