Hempfield Elementary Schools
2026-27 Kindergarten Student Handbook

Revised: August 2026

WELCOME TO YOUR SCHOOL!

The Hempfield School District's kindergarten program is designed to aid in the development of the whole child–intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. Because each child is different in a variety of ways, kindergarten instruction is carefully organized to provide for the individual needs and stages of development. Kindergarten also helps each child acquire the good habits that are necessary for success in school.

This handbook is designed to help make the step to kindergarten a more natural, easy and happy experience for both parents/guardians and children. Since two-way communication is vital to a child's successful school experience, please contact the school whenever questions or concerns arise. Working together can provide what is appropriate and necessary to ensure success for your child.

Should you have any questions regarding our kindergarten experience, please feel free to contact your child's respective teacher or principal.

We encourage families to watch the **Welcome to Kindergarten video!**

BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS

Required Registration Information

The Hempfield School District uses an online student registration program, which allows parents/guardians to input student information and upload forms for review from any web-hosted location. You must complete all requested registration information online and upload the following documentation:

- Proof of residency for parent/guardian who resides in the Hempfield School District (deed, lease/rental agreement, current HSD real estate or Lancaster County real estate tax bill, or current utility bill)
    - Lease/rental agreements must be signed by the tenant and landlord within 30 days
- Student birth certificate or passport
- Student immunization record (must include first name, last name, and date of birth)
- Photo ID of parent/guardian

Custody Agreement

In the event of a shared custody arrangement, please include a copy of the custodial order. In the absence of a court order of custody, the district has a custodial affidavit that can be generated, but can only be used for educational purposes.

Physical Exams and Immunizations

In Pennsylvania, it's mandatory for all school-age children to undergo a physical examination before starting school. This exam can either be completed within 12 months before the school year begins or during the first year of schooling for the entrance to school assessment. If done by your child's own physician, the examination comes at your expense. However, the school physician can conduct the examination for free at the school if preferred. It's important to note that the school physician isn't authorized to administer immunizations. Therefore, any necessary immunizations should be arranged with your child's physician or a local immunization clinic.

The following immunizations are the PA immunization regulations for school attendance in ALL GRADES in the 2025-26 school year. All doses must be properly spaced in order to be counted as valid.

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis
  (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

On the first day of school, unless the child has a medical or religious, philosophical exemption, a child must have had at least one dose of the above vaccinations or risk exclusion. If a child does not have all the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive that dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the next dose is not the final dose of the series, the child must also provide a medical plan within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion. The above immunizations can be obtained by visiting your family physician or the State Health Center (717-299-7597).

Dental Exams

The state of Pennsylvania also requires all school-age children to have a dental examination upon entry into school. Like the physical exam, the dental examination may be completed within the first twelve months before school starts, or during the first year in school, for entrance to school exams. If completed by your child's dentist, the examination is done at your expense. If you are unable to obtain a dental exam for your child, a dental screening can be arranged for your child at school free of charge. Please contact the school nurse for additional information.

Health Screenings

Schools are required to provide health services for all enrolled students. The health team will screen your kindergarten student for vision, hearing, and growth (height and weight). You will be notified of the results, as well as any concerns indicating the need for further evaluation. If you prefer that your child does not receive health screenings at school, please notify the school nurse. Any questions regarding health requirements should be directed to the nurse in your child's building.

Building Phone Numbers

- ➔ Centerville Elementary School - (717) 898-5575
- ➔ East Petersburg Elementary School - (717) 569-1211
- ➔ Farmdale Elementary School - (717) 898-5595 | (717) 684-2206
- ➔ Landisville Primary Center - (717) 898-5519
- ➔ Mountville Elementary School - (717) 285-5501
- ➔ Rohrerstown Elementary School - (717) 299-7126

KINDERGARTEN READINESS SKILLS

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Listed below are skills we will work on throughout kindergarten. Working on these areas at home may help your child be prepared. All children progress at different rates.

Language & Communication

- Knows and says first and last name
- Uses complete sentences when speaking
- Expresses frustration/anger with words
- Follows two to three-step directions
- Understands questions and responds to them

Pre-Reading/Literacy

- Matches some letters to sounds or sounds to letters
- Recognizes own name when it's written or typed
- Writes own name and can identify the letters in his/her name
- Recognizes rhyming words
- Listens to stories/books
- Holds a book correctly
- Can use cover and pictures to talk about a book
- Plans and tells, draws, or writes a story

Math

- Counts from 1 to 20
- Knows written numbers from 1 to 10
- Identifies basic shapes
- Identifies colors

Behavioral

- Able to initiate and participate in school tasks
- Usually able to follow rules and multi-part directions
- Understands right and wrong and takes ownership for actions
- More independent and able to take on more responsibilities at home
- Sticks with chosen activities, even when they get hard

Self Care

- Responsible for personal belongings
- Uses the bathroom without help
- Includes washing hands
- Gets dressed on own, sleeps in own bed at night, brushes teeth

Fine Motor

- Traces lines and basic shapes (square, circle, etc.)
- Is able to copy basic shapes and lines
- Holds a writing utensil with a non-fisted grip
- Uses scissors to cut on lines and around shapes/simple objects

Social

- Able to play with others as well as alone
- Able to interact appropriately with other children
- Able to share/take turns/wait for turn
- Able to wait for adult

Emotional

- Separates from caregiver easily or without undue stress
- Knows own preferences and abilities
- Can suggest simple solutions to conflict
- Can follow rules and routines

MY ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT, TOO!

Much of a child's attitude towards school and learning is formed before reaching kindergarten. The attitudes and practices of parents/guardians are crucial, because you're the most important people in your child's life.

Children learn by watching and imitating the people around them, especially those they look up to. For example, if kids see adults reading and have books at home, they're more likely to see reading as important. As a parent, if you show your child that reading is fun and valuable by reading to them often and having books around, they're more likely to develop a love for reading too.

When parents or guardians approach new situations with openness and calmness, it helps children feel more positive about their own experiences, like starting kindergarten. Are adult attitudes significant? Absolutely! Keep in mind that you are your child's very first—and most influential—teacher!

HOURS AND TRANSPORTATION

Kindergarten Sessions:

A.M. Session: 9:00-11:45

Children in the morning session may enter the school at 8:40 a.m. Students should not arrive prior to 8:40 a.m. as no adult supervision is provided prior to that time.

P.M. Session: 12:45-3:30

Children in the afternoon session should not arrive more than 5 minutes before the opening of the session, since there will be no supervision before 12:40 p.m.

Transportation to and from School

Kindergarten students living in areas now serviced by buses will be transported one way. Parents/Guardians are responsible for transporting children one way. Buses will pick up a.m. students in the morning and transport them to school. Make sure a reliable person takes your child to the bus stop. Bus riding can be one of the most anxious first-time experiences of the kindergarten year.

Parents/Guardians of students assigned to the afternoon session will be responsible for transporting their child to school. Buses will transport these students home in the afternoon. Students of all ages are permitted to exit the bus at their designated stop without a parent or guardian present.

Students may only use the bus and bus stop to which they are assigned.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND EARLY DISMISSALS

Regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for communication between teachers and students, and establishes habits to help students now and in the future.

Absences

If your child needs to miss school, it's important to notify the teacher promptly. You have three (3) days to turn in an attendance note stating the date of absence and the reason needed for it to be considered excused. You may either turn in a doctor's note or handwritten parent note to the building office or email the building attendance office at the address listed below (a phone call is not sufficient for the absence to be excused):

CES_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
EPES_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
FES_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
LIC_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
LPC_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
MES_attendance@hempfieldsd.org
RES_attendance@hempfieldsd.org

Notes received after three days will be considered unexcused absences. If your student will be absent for a pre-planned trip or event, please submit a Pre-Approved Absence Form, which can be found in building offices or on the district website. This form should be handed in at least one week before the event/trip. You will then be notified of approved or unapproved dates. Forms will not be accepted after the absence, and the dates will remain unexcused.

For the benefit of all children attending school, please keep your child home when the following symptoms are observed: an acute cold, swollen glands or sore throat, skin rashes or sores, pink eyes, abnormal temperature, general signs of illness, such as vomiting, ear ache, headache, listlessness or weakness. Remember to consult with your physician when in doubt. Children should not return to school until their temperature has returned to normal.

Early Dismissal

If it is necessary for your child to be dismissed from school early, please send in a note for that day. Indicate on the note the time you, or an emergency contact, will pick your child up from school. If your child arrives late to school, please bring them to the office to sign them in so we can then change the absence to a late arrival. Be sure to provide an excuse note upon arrival.

Compulsory School Age

The compulsory school age in Pennsylvania requires all students to begin school no later than age 6 and attend school until age 18 or until graduation. A child who has attained the age of 6 before September 1 must enroll and attend school or begin a homeschool program that year. If a child turns 6 during the school year, they must enroll in school at the beginning of the following year.

DELAYED OPENINGS OR EARLY DISMISSALS

Delayed Openings

When school is delayed two hours due to inclement weather, both sessions of kindergarten will operate on the following schedule:

- A.M. Session: 11:00-12:55
- P.M. Session: 1:35-3:30

Scheduled Early Dismissals

Periodically throughout the school year there will be days when early dismissals are scheduled. On these days, both sessions of kindergarten will operate on the following modified schedule:

1:00 p.m. Dismissals

- A.M. Session: 9:00-10:40
- P.M. Session: 11:20-1:00

1:30 p.m. Dismissals

- A.M. Session: 9:00-10:50
- P.M. Session: 11:40-1:30

Note: If we experience the need for a school closing or a two-hour delay on the morning of a regularly scheduled early dismissal day, the early dismissal day will be canceled and rescheduled on a different date. Parents/Guardians will be notified of any rescheduled dates as soon as possible after a decision has been made.

EXTENDED DAY KINDERGARTEN

How the Extended Day Kindergarten Program Works

The Hempfield School District currently has an Extended Day Kindergarten (EDK) program for selected students from our six elementary buildings. The intent of this EDK program is to provide an intense language and literacy-based environment for eligible students. The EDK classroom teachers focus on: time-on-task, language development, emergent literacy skills, working independently, as well as quality instruction in the components of school that will ensure students are prepared for entry into first grade.

Hempfield provides an EDK classroom in each Elementary school. Students assigned to this program spend their entire school day at school. They participate in core content areas: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, as well as all special area classes: Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library. Students will also eat lunch at school and have time for recess and other play-based activities. Upon successful completion of the program, students are prepared to join their peers for first grade.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will I know if my child is ready for school?
If this is something you are questioning, please discuss your concerns with your child's daycare provider, school teacher, physician, or a children's specialist. The district Reading Specialists will also be administering an early literacy screening. You may ask if the specialist gained any information that may help you to make your decision.

What kind of clothing should my child wear?
It is desirable that children wear practical, washable clothing so they can participate in all activities. Since outdoor play is often incorporated into our program, it is recommended that children be dressed according to the weather when they arrive at school. It is strongly encouraged that children wear sneakers to school on the day of physical education class. Mark all clothing that will be removed at school clearly with your child's name (coats, umbrellas, mittens, sweaters, etc.).

What kind of clothing should be kept in school for projects?
Please send an apron, smock, or a large old shirt to use when painting. The object of this garment is to cover the child's clothing. It need not be a thing of great beauty, but rather functional.

Families and Teachers Working Together

When Does a child feel secure?

A child feels secure when:

- Families and teachers know and respect each other.
- Families and teachers work together.
- Families and teachers talk about the child's problems and progress.
- Families visit the school during appropriate times.
- Your child's teacher is the first contact if a concern arises.
- Families know special services are available through speech clinicians, remedial reading teachers, psychologists, instructional support teams, clinics and service agencies.

May I participate in the classroom?

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will receive information concerning serving as a room helper or a school volunteer. You may volunteer to donate an item for a project or party or share a talent, hobby or information concerning your work, if applicable. Please see specific information related to volunteering and the requirements for clearances on the district website.

Are birthdays celebrated?

Due to food allergies and federal regulations on child nutrition, the Hempfield School District has developed policies and guidelines that are designed to help promote healthy eating habits for students. When your child has a birthday, we encourage you to coordinate celebrations with the school administration and/or classroom teacher such as colorful pencils and erasers, sticker baskets, or teacher's helper for the day.

How will I learn about my child's progress in school?

An electronic report of progress is prepared three times a year (at the end of each trimester).

Parent/Teacher Conferences can be found on the school calendar yearly. Other conferences, either at your request or at the teacher's request, may be scheduled at a time that is convenient throughout the school year. Please contact the teacher, if you desire a conference.

The school district uses a web-based student information system (PowerSchool) that provides electronic access to student data, including grades and attendance. Visit the district website to learn how to establish a portal account.

The Hempfield School District, is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability, in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title II of ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. Inquiries should be directed to:

Karen Hall, Chief Financial & Operations Officer/Compliance Officer

Hempfield School District, 200 Church Street, Landisville, PA 17538, 717-898-5561

Dr. Tab J. Musser, Assistant Superintendent/Title IX Coordinator

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