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## Lititz Area Mennonite's Collaborative Academy offers another high school option for Lancaster County students



ALEX GELI | Staff Writer 3 hrs ago



Lance Martin, a ninth-grade student at Lititz Area Mennonite School's Collaborative Academy, receives help from h Lynelle Kreider in fall 2018.

Jennifer Samara

**Lititz Area Mennonite School** will graduate its first high school class in 2022.

The private school at 1050 E. Newport Road in Lititz this fall opened the **Collaborative Academy**, a new high school program offered in addition to the school's prekindergarten through eighth-grade program.

Currently serving five students who advanced from the school's eighth-grade class, the Lititz Area Mennonite Collaborative Academy will serve students from grades nine through 12 by 2021.

High school Director Lynelle Kreider said she hopes the school's fresh, faith-centered approach to education will attract students from all over the county.

"I would hope that we could just be a positive option for parents who are looking for something different for their children," Kreider said. "My goal is to definitely double or triple the number (of students) next year."

The academy, Kreider said, offers more flexibility and freedom than most schools.

'I think it really motivates students to be learning things that they're actually interested in.'

Students take their core subjects — variations of English, math, science and social studies — online through the company **Edgenuity**, Kreider said. Most of the morning is devoted to online work, while the rest of the school day is taken up by elective courses, lab work and collaborative projects on campus.

Their on-campus schedule is 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Wednesdays are typically off campus, giving students the opportunity to complete makeup work or participate in a service learning or job shadow experience, Kreider said.

"I know there are a lot of opportunities in public schools, but I do think that students are looking for a more personalized learning experience, so I think that's a wonderful opportunity that we're offering them," Kreider said.

"I think it really motivates students to be learning things that they're actually interested in," she said.

With its decision to expand, Lititz Area joins several Mennonite-based schools offering high school programs in the county. They include [Lancaster Mennonite](#), which serves high school students at its Lancaster and Hershey campuses; [Hinkletown Mennonite School](#) in Earl Township; [Terre Hill Mennonite High School](#); [Ephrata Mennonite School](#); and [Faith Mennonite High School](#) in Kinzers.

“We see the LAMS addition of a (high school) as friendly competition and an opportunity for us to continue to refine what we do and keep improving,” said Pam Tieszen, superintendent of Lancaster Mennonite, which serves more than 1,000 students pre-K through 12 and 460 at the high school level.

## Potential expansion

Lititz Area’s program is currently limited to one room at the existing school, with the exception of shared space such as science and art labs, a fitness center and music room, Kreider said.

Kreider, who taught fifth grade at Lititz Area Mennonite for three years before becoming the high school director, is the only full-time staffer at the academy. The remaining staff includes adjunct teachers — experts who were brought in to teach courses related to their field — and teachers from the pre-K through eight program.

As student body grows, so will the staff, Kreider said. And, “possibly in the future,” she said, so will the school, which serves 319 total students. Kreider didn’t share further details regarding a potential expansion.

Annual high school tuition is currently \$6,900, but students may be eligible for scholarships through Pennsylvania’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program.

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