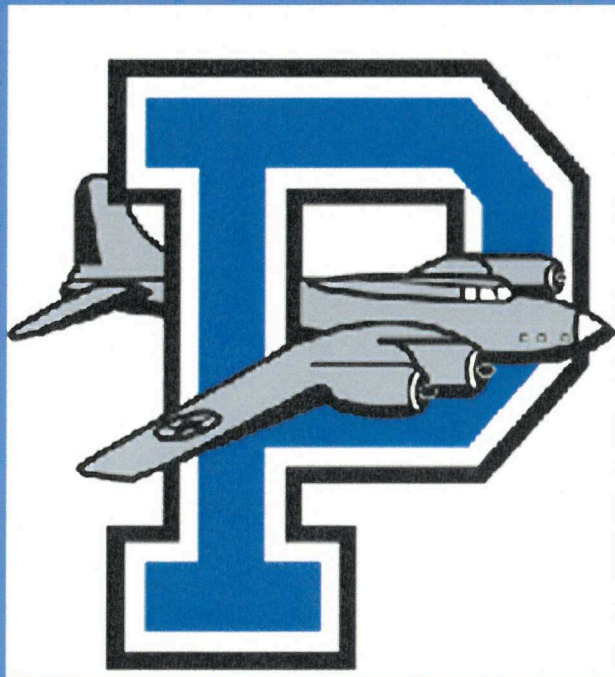


PALMERTON AREA
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2024-2025



Principal

Richard DeSocio

Assistant Principal

David Sodl

Guidance Counselor

Kevin Carroll

Secretary

Lori Schaffer

Teaching Staff

Suzanne Black
Brianna Carroll
Jennifer Harrison
Melissa Hoffman
Christopher Kery
Brad Landis
Amy Morgan

Christine Owens
Nellianne Parr
Joshua Rake
Laura Reichard
Lauren Salerno
Kimberly Seiler

Ryan Sharkazy
Sarah Smith
Brian Stevko
Zach Tofany
Kevin Young
Jacob Zurn
Kathryn Zurn

Paraprofessionals

Stephanie Bleebs ~ Annette Gruber ~ AnnMarie Ross ~ Mary Stahler

School Nurse

Laura Thomas

Office Hours

7:10 AM to 2:40 PM ... during the school year
8:00 AM to 1:00 PM ...summer

School Address

3529 Fireline Road
Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-2492
FAX 610-826-2366

Office email – lschaffer@palmerton.org

PALMERTON JR HIGH SCHOOL

2024-25 SCHOOL CALENDAR

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|--|
| AUGUST | 27 (Tuesday) | In-Service for Teachers – No School for Students |
| | 28 (Wednesday) | In-Service for Teachers – No School for Students |
| | 29 (Thursday) | In-Service for Teachers – No School for Students |
| SEPTEMBER | 2 (Monday) | Labor Day Holiday |
| | 3 (Tuesday) | First Day for Students |
| | 10(Tuesday) | Meet the Teachers Night –6:30-7:30pm. Student Picture Day |
| OCTOBER | 14 (Monday) | In-Service for Teachers – No School for Students |
| | 23(Wednesday) | Student Picture Make-Up/Re-Take Day |
| NOVEMBER | 15 (Friday) | Act 80 – No School for Students |
| | 25 (Monday) | Early Dismissal – P/T Conferences |
| | 26 (Tuesday) | Early Dismissal – P/T Conferences |
| | 27 (Wednesday) | Early Dismissal |
| | 28 (Thursday) | Thanksgiving Holiday |
| | 29 (Friday) | Thanksgiving Holiday |
| DECEMBER | 2(Monday) | Thanksgiving Holiday |
| | 20 (Friday) | Early Dismissal |
| | 23 (Monday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 24 (Tuesday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 25 (Wednesday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 26 (Thursday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 27 (Friday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 30(Monday) | Winter Holiday |
| | 31(Tuesday) | Winter Holiday |
| | JANUARY | 1 (Wednesday) |
| 20 (Monday) | | Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday |
| FEBRUARY | 14 (Friday) | Presidents’ Day Holiday/Tentative Snow Make-up |
| | 17 (Monday) | Presidents’ Day Holiday |
| | 18 (Tuesday) | Act 80 – No School for Students |
| MARCH | 14 (Friday) | Act 80 – No School for Students |
| APRIL | 17 (Thursday) | Spring Break/Tentative Snow Make-up |
| | 18(Friday) | Spring Break |
| | 21(Monday) | Spring Break |
| MAY | 2 (Friday) | In-Service for Teachers – No School for Students |
| | 23 (Friday) | Memorial Day Holiday |
| | 26 (Monday) | Memorial Day Holiday |
| JUNE | 9 (Monday) | Early Dismissal for Students/Tentative |
| | 10(Tuesday) | Early Dismissal/Tentative Last Day for Students |
| | 11 (Wednesday) | In-Service for Teachers/Tentative |

Appointments

If a student needs to leave school early, he/she must have a signed note from a parent/guardian. This note should be presented to the office before 7:45 AM. The note must include a telephone number where the parent/guardian can be contacted. The student must sign out of school in the office and wait for the parent/guardian; students are not permitted to wait in the parking lot and **will not be released with anyone other than a parent/guardian unless the note specifies otherwise.**

If a student leaves school before 10 AM and does not return, it will be considered an absence. A student needs to arrive/depart between 10 AM and noon for at least a half-day present.

Once a student arrives on school property, he/she may not leave without prior written approval.

Attendance

The "Compulsory School Age" in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is that period of the child's life from the time the child's parents elect to have the child enter school, which shall not be later than the age of eight until the age of seventeen. The Commonwealth of PA requires students to attend school regularly until they are seventeen years of age. School districts are held accountable for compliance, and regular attendance is a vital component to education. Regular attendance will enable a student to successfully complete courses required for promotion. Research has proven that regular attendance can have a direct effect on student achievement so unnecessary absences must be avoided. Attendance is both a student and parent responsibility.

The State Law is very strict in regard to children's absences from school. Sickness of the child, death in the family, and extreme emergency reasons are the only reasons for absences that the state will accept as legal excuses. Within three school days of the absence, a parent needs to either email the office directly at lschaffer@palmerton.org with the reason for the absence or write a note on any piece of paper and have your child turn it in to the office. You may call the office to report your child off, but you must still either send an email to the office or send in a written absentee excuse. You will receive a call from our automated system if your child is not in period one.

Excused and unexcused absences are determined by our school policy and the school code. If a child between the age of entry into school and age 17 is absent without valid excuses for three days in any one school year, the absences will be deemed **Truant**. A warning letter indicating consequences of "**Habitual**" truancy (unexcused absences for more than six days) will be sent home. After a warning letter is sent home and the child is absent without a valid excuse for even one day, the parents/guardians will be invited to a "**School Attendance Improvement Conference**".

Excessive Absenteeism = 10 absences. If a student is excessively absent from school, the school principal will notify the parent/guardian that all future absences for the remainder of the school year will be counted as unexcused absences unless the absences are excused by a doctor. The doctor's note must be provided upon the student's return to school and must include the date the student was seen by the doctor and the date the student is able to return to school.

Truant = a child subject to compulsory school laws, "having three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year."

Habitually Truant = a child subject to compulsory school laws, "having six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year."

Procedures for Truancy Intervention & School Attendance Improvement: When a student is truant (accumulated 3 unexcused absences), the school principal will send a written notification to the

student to student, or student to employee. Any student who alleges sexual harassment by any staff member or student in the district should immediately report the complaint to the principal, assistant principal, counselor, nurse, team leader, or teacher.

Ethnic Harassment consists of inappropriate verbal or physical conduct when made by an employee to a student, student to student, or student to employee. This includes verbal harassment or abuse, reported remarks to a person with demeaning implications, other verbal or physical conduct, or written communications of a hostile or offensive intimidation.

Cafeteria

A cafeteria service is provided to the Palmerton Junior High School student body. This includes a breakfast program. Students must use their student ID #s to purchase meals or snacks. Parents may prepay by sending a check (payable to PASD Cafeteria Fund) in an envelope w/the student's name, grade, & ID # on the front to any cashier in the cafeteria with the student. Sending your child in with cash is highly discouraged. On-line payment can be made through the SchoolCafe.com link on the district's website; simply click on Café' Services and you will see the logo. A convenience fee of approximately \$2.75 is charged per deposit. Students have the choice to bring their lunches or to buy the prepared lunches. Regardless of this choice, students are required to eat their lunches in school. They may not leave the building for lunch. Students are expected to conduct themselves in the same manner as if they were eating in a public restaurant setting.

Applications for free or reduced meals are available at the Junior High office, from cafeteria personnel, or can be downloaded and printed from the District's website. Students must reapply yearly. Any questions, please call 610-826-2492 ext. 2237.

Cell Phones & Ear Buds

Cell phones are a major disruption to the educational process. While we certainly recognize the importance of the phone for communicating with parents or for use during an emergency, we insist that all cell phones be turned off and out of sight during the "academic school day"; cell phones may be used during lunch. Ear Buds may be used when required in class. Ear buds are not to be worn in the hallways. The district is not responsible for any damaged, stolen, or lost cell phones or any other electronic devices (including Chromebooks). Students are 100% responsible for their devices.

If a cell phone is seen, the student will be asked to put it away. For a second offense, the phone will be confiscated, turned off, and returned at the end of the school day. As with other discipline issues noted in this handbook, the consequences of this offense will be progressive in nature. We simply want our students to respect the rights of others to receive an education.

Cheating / Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism of any type by a student will result in a failing grade for the particular evaluation or paper/project for the student caught cheating. If another student voluntarily provides information (homework, etc.) to another student to aid in cheating, this student may also receive a failing grade for the particular evaluation or paper/project. Depending on the severity of the violation(s), failure of the course for the marking period is also possible.

Code of Conduct

Denial of Privileges

Privileges at the Junior High School must be earned. They may also be temporarily withdrawn for improper behavior. The administration and the teaching teams reserve the right after communication and attempted interventions to withhold a student from field trips, dances, and socials.

Conference with teacher
Parental contact
Detention (Teacher)
Detention (Office)

Level II

Violation of Jr High Code of Conduct Policy

Tardiness to school
Truancy
Class Cutting
Leaving the building without permission
Forgery
Use of profane or obscene language, gestures, or materials
Defiant, continuous disruptive behavior (including on a school bus and/or at a school event)
Discourteous acts directed to a staff member
General disruptive behavior
Inappropriate use of Technology including social media
Tobacco/e-cigarettes/vape pen
Throwing food or other objects
Failure to serve assigned detention or extended detention
Trespassing

Disciplinary Action (Progressive)

Parental contact
Parental conference
Loss of privileges
In-Class Suspension
In-School Suspension
Referral to appropriate community agencies
Disorderly conduct charges
Restitution for damage/stolen property (report card held until payment received)
Out-of-School Suspension

Level III

Violation of Jr High Code of Conduct Policy

Possession, using or being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs as defined by the laws of the Commonwealth of PA and the United States Congress
Theft, possession, or sale of stolen property
Vandalism of employee or school district property
Fighting, assault, and/or battery
Threatening or intimidating any school personnel / students
Possession, use, or transmittal of firecrackers or fireworks
Harassment including and not limited to social media

Disciplinary Action

Out-of-School suspension
Loss of privileges
Immediate referral to appropriate authorities
Recommendation to superintendent for possible expulsion

Level IV

Violation of Jr High Code of Conduct Policy

Continuation of unmodified Level I, II or III behavior
Assaulting a staff member
Extortion

Grading Policy

Teachers calculate grades using a numerical system. The calculated grade is then translated into an alpha grade equivalent. The alpha grade is posted on the report card.

| | | | |
|----|--------|----|-------|
| A+ | 97-100 | C | 73-76 |
| A | 93-96 | C- | 70-72 |
| A- | 90-92 | D+ | 67-69 |
| B+ | 87-89 | D | 63-66 |
| B | 83-86 | D- | 60-62 |
| B- | 80-82 | F | 0-59 |
| C+ | 77-79 | | |

| | | |
|------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Principal's List | 90 - 100 | (No grades lower than an A-) |
| Honor Roll | 83 - 89.99 | (No grades lower than a B-) |

For Junior High students going from 7th to 8th grade, student working sections will be generated based on students meeting 4 of the 5 criteria below:

- Quiz/Test/Year Average of 90% in Math
- Minimum of 85% on Research Paper in ELA
- Minimum B average in CORE subjects
- IXL 4th Marking Period Diagnostic Score of at least 750 in Math and ELA
- Proficient on PSSA in Math and ELA

The guidelines above are used to ensure that students are appropriately placed academically and/or if placed into Algebra I, students will be prepared for the Algebra I Keystone Exam.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued within a few days of the close of each marking period.

Promotion / Retention Policy

In order for a grade 7 or 8 student to be promoted, the student must pass a minimum of three major subjects and 75% of their unified arts classes. A student who does not meet both portions of this promotion requirement will be retained. The major subjects are language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Examples of the unified arts classes are art and music.

Guidance

The Junior High School guidance counselor is charged with improving each student's self-image. The primary function is to promote emotional maturity in each student and, in cooperation with the other professional staff, to promote the physical, intellectual, and moral maturity of each student.

- To coordinate a system of maintaining and interpreting student records for use by our students, their parents, and the school staff.
- To strive to consult and follow-up with each student, parent, school staff member, and administrators regarding the program of testing and pupil self-appraisal.
- To make individual counseling available to students.
- To strive to coordinate orientation activities for students as they move to each new level of education.
- To maintain a system of referrals and follow-ups with agencies and resources available outside the school which support the goals of the school's guidance services.

Students who wish to go to the Guidance Office are encouraged to schedule an appointment.

A homework project is assigned by a teacher to ...

- promote good study habits.
- develop a sense of responsibility and independence.
- help a student master a new skill.
- enhance and stimulate a student's creativity.
- ensure that a student understands the class material.
- inform parents of what is being taught in the classroom.

Cooperation and communication between the home and school are essential if homework assignments are to make a significant contribution to a student's education.

Illness/Injury/Immunizations - First Aid

Students who become ill during the day should request a pass from their teacher and report to the school nurse. Reporting to the nurse without a pass is only permissible in the case of an emergency. In the event of an illness or injury that requires the student to be sent home, the **nurse** will contact the parents to make the arrangements for them or their designee to pick up the student. It then becomes the responsibility of the parent to arrange for further care. ***Students are not permitted to call home to be picked up because they are not feeling well, they must report to the nurse's office for dismissal due to illness.***

Injuries or illnesses that happen at home should be taken care of at home.

All parents are responsible for assuring that all students will have proper immunization. The immunization guidelines are below.

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, & acellular pertussis (usually given as DTP or DTaP), one dose on or after the 4th birthday.
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after the 4th birthday & at least 6 months after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella (usually given as MMR)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or evidence of immunity

Additional immunizations required for 7th grade students: 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) and 1 dose of meningococcal vaccine (MCV) required on the first day of seventh grade. For attendance in 12th grade: 1 additional dose of MCV on the first day of 12th grade. If one dose was given at 16 years of age or older, that shall count as the twelfth-grade dose.

These requirements allow for the following exemptions: medical reason, religious belief, or philosophical/strong moral or ethical conviction. Even if your child is exempt from immunizations, he/she may be excluded from school during an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease.

Medication Policy

Medications cannot be dispensed by any school district personnel without the knowledge and verification of the school nurse. This regulation will be strictly enforced.

All required medications are to be kept in the Health Suite, unless otherwise designated by the school nurse. **Medicines of any kind (pills/syrup/etc.) cannot be in the possession of a student.** This includes lunch bags, purses, lockers, etc.

If health or safety conditions require medication to be given to a student during school hours, the medications will be dispensed by the school nurse.

However, the following rules apply.

- Upon arrival at school, the student shall give the medication and a doctor's note to the nurse.

expectations. At the end of every month, we hold Bomber Pride Day for all students eligible to participate. Eligibility is based on major/minor discipline referrals. Matrix of expectations:

Palmerton Area Junior High School ~ Bomber Traits

| Expectation | Classroom | Hall | Bathroom | Cafeteria | Social Media | Bus |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| Respect | <p>Raise your hand</p> <p>Accept feedback</p> <p>Come to class and follow classroom expectations</p> | <p>Keep hands and feet to yourself</p> <p>Use inside voices</p> <p>No running</p> | <p>Honor the privacy of others.</p> <p>Use the facilities in an appropriate manner.</p> | <p>Come in and sit down</p> <p>Use inside voices</p> <p>Three to a bench</p> <p>Clean up your own mess</p> <p>Be polite to all cafeteria staff</p> | <p>Do not send anything you would not send to your grandmother</p> <p>Do not cyber bully</p> <p>Delete others from your account if necessary</p> | <p>Use inside voices</p> <p>Keep hands and feet to yourself.</p> <p>Do not change your seat</p> <p>No throwing objects</p> <p>No eating</p> <p>Respect all bus staff</p> |
| Responsibility | <p>Come prepared: pens, pencils and CB charged</p> <p>Respond appropriately</p> <p>Stay in your seat</p> <p>Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</p> | <p>Walk on the right side of the hallway</p> <p>Arrive on time</p> <p>Phones away</p> <p>No ear buds</p> | <p>Do what you need to do and return to class as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Keep belongings in the classroom.</p> <p>Make sure paper towels end up in the trash</p> | <p>Do not touch the food unless you plan to purchase it</p> <p>Pay for the food you take</p> <p>Leave no trace of trash</p> <p>Show ID to purchase snacks</p> | <p>You are responsible for your accounts</p> <p>You are responsible for all your devices</p> <p>You are responsible for what you send and create</p> | <p>Stay seated</p> <p>Share your seat</p> <p>Follow all adult directions</p> <p>Keep your area clean</p> |

The informal hearing also encourages the student's parents or guardians to meet with the principal to discuss ways to ensure that future offenses can be avoided.

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality between students and guidance counselors, school nurses, the school psychologist, other school employees or contracted employees of the district.

Surveillance

Palmerton Area School District is committed to the implementation of initiatives and surveillance cameras at various locations on the Junior/Senior High School campus that promote and enhance the safety of the school environment.

Technology / Computer Policy

Chromebooks are issued through the technology department. Any questions or concerns should be directed to tech.dept@palmerton.org or 610-826-7160 extension 2334. It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the Technology / Computer Policy. All parents will receive a copy at registration.

Transportation

Bus transportation is a privilege. Failure to observe district rules may result in denial of transportation. Students must ...

- stay seated at all times.
- not throw anything in or out of the windows.
- not extend their arms, legs, or heads out of the bus.
- not smoke on the bus.
- not eat or drink on the bus.
- not bring any weapon or weapon-like object onto the bus.
- not litter the floor of the bus
- not board or debark at any stop but their designated bus stop unless given permission by a school official
- not ride another student's bus unless it's been approved by a teacher for educational purposes only

Additionally, the school code of conduct is in effect on the bus. Students who do not abide by the rules may receive detention, suspension from the bus, or out of school suspension. Also, citations might be issued with corresponding community service requirements for each infraction.

Proper bus behavior is critical for everyone's safety and well-being. Any infraction will be reported immediately to the school principal. Misbehavior on the bus cannot be tolerated. This includes buses used for school activities such as field trips and athletic contests. Bus drivers have the responsibility for maintaining discipline on their buses.

At bus stops, students must not play games on the street, trespass onto private property, or misbehave in any manner. (Disciplinary action could be taken)

Visitors

All visitors coming into the building including parents, other district staff, outside service workers, delivery people, salespeople, or anyone not registered as a junior high student, teacher, or staff member must enter at the main office. The visitor will be issued a pass and must sign the registration sheet.

NOTIFICATION OF AHERA INSPECTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE

The purpose of this notification is to inform interested parties such as teachers, school personnel and their representatives, as well as parents, concerning the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requirements and the actions that the Palmerton Area School District has taken to comply with the AHERA regulations. The regulations were published in the October 30, 1987 Federal Register, pp. 41826 under the title "Asbestos Containing Materials in Schools" and call for an inspection of the schools to find asbestos containing material (ACM) with the inspection conducted by EPA accredited Building Inspectors. The regulations also require that a Management Plan be written by an EPA accredited Management Planner for any ACM found and that both the Management Plan and the Inspection Report be available for public inspection.

The Palmerton Area School District contracted with Spotts, Stevens and McCoy, Inc. for both the Building Inspections and the Management Plans and these reports were submitted to the State of Pennsylvania in compliance with the AHERA regulations. These reports are available for public review at the Administration Office. The individual building reports are available for public review at each school and include the schedule for periodic surveillance of ACM and re-inspections conducted by an accredited EPA Building Inspector.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In its programs, activities, and/or employment, the Palmerton Area School District (PASD) does not discriminate based on race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, primary language, marital status, pregnancy, handicap/disability, or any other protected characteristic or designation.

The PASD shall make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Coordination of these efforts shall be the responsibility of the district employee listed below and/or his/her designee:

Mrs. Karissa Belcher, Human Resources Director
680 Fourth Street
Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-7101
kbelcher@palmerton.org

Title IX:

In compliance with Title IX, the PASD has a designated Title IX Coordinator. For questions/information, please contact the PASD's coordinator:

Mrs. Karissa Belcher, Human Resources Director
680 Fourth Street
Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-7101
kbelcher@palmerton.org

The District's Title IX Coordinator should be contacted regarding any inquiries as to the application of Title IX, issues related to discrimination, or filing a harassment complaint.

Policies: