

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2010-2011

PALMYRA AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

50 West Cherry Street
Palmyra, PA 17078
717-838-2119

www.pasd.us

Mrs. Anne Hoover
Principal

Mr. Anthony Hoffman
Assistant Principal

I have read and discussed with my student the 2010-2011 Student Handbook
and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Student Name

Student's Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

SIGNED FORM DUE in school office: September 10, 2010

I. Spirit of Palmyra Area Middle School



School Colors - Orange and Black
School Mascot - COUGARS

School Pride

Each student is encouraged to take pride in the building. Please use common courtesy by showing the proper respect for posters and signs placed throughout the building. Your assistance to the custodians is greatly appreciated by keeping your lockers neat and clean and by picking up paper and litter in the halls and the cafeteria.

As the persons in charge of the building, teachers and adult staff members are to be treated courteously and respectfully by the students at all times. When asked by an adult to perform in a certain manner, the student is expected to comply immediately just as you are expected to do at home.

School Spirit

School spirit may be divided into three categories:

1. Courtesy - Toward adults and fellow students.
2. Pride - In everything our school endeavors to accomplish.
3. Sportsmanship - The ability to win and lose gracefully.

School spirit means loyalty to all functions of the school. A loyal student supports his school and does his utmost to keep his scholastic and activity standards at the highest possible level.

II. Daily Routines

Attendance Information

When you are absent from school, you must notify the office personnel, as soon as possible, as to the reason. A note from your parent or guardian giving the date and the reason for your absence **is required** the day you return. If the note is not received within three days the absence will be considered unexcused/unlawful.

To be considered a full day of attendance, students must report to school prior to 10:45 A.M., and may not be dismissed from school before 10:45A.M. In accordance with PIAA regulations, PMS Athletes with an excused tardy must report to school by 10:45 A.M. to be eligible for participation that day. Any student with an unexcused tardy after 8:30 A.M. cannot participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity or practice scheduled for that day.

Building Use

You will not be permitted in the building until 7:45 A.M. If you enter the building prior to that time, you must remain in the lobby near the gymnasium. At 7:45 you must go to your locker, then immediately proceed to your homeroom. **Once you enter your homeroom in the morning, you may not leave unless you have permission from your teacher.** At the end of the school day, you must exit the building by 2:45 unless you are accompanied by a teacher. This restriction also includes the lobby near the gymnasium. Bus riders are to enter their buses immediately. Walkers are to exit the property immediately. It is suggested that those students who are waiting for a ride should be picked up after 2:50 P.M. under the canopy in the front of the school.

Cutting Classes

Cutting class is a serious violation of the school program and will be treated as an offense punishable by suspension. Following three offenses, a referral will be made to the Superintendent of Schools for review and disciplinary recommendation.

Early Dismissals and Medical Appointments

In order to leave school early due to an illness, you must obtain permission from the school nurse. If you have a medical appointment during the school day, a note from the doctor or your parent/guardian is required to allow you to leave the school building. Give this note to the office at the beginning of the school day. The office personnel will notify your teachers through the use of the daily bulletin. When it is time to leave, get a pass from your teacher and go to the main office and fill in the sign-out sheet. Upon your return to school from your medical appointment, a **doctor's note is required**. You must present this note to the office personnel.

III. Student Routines

Extra Help

You may always seek extra help from your teachers if you do not understand an assignment or if the work is too difficult. Arrange a conference with your teacher before or after school or at a time convenient to both of you during the day.

Making Up Work



When you are absent from school, it is your responsibility to contact your teacher and to make up the work that you have missed. You should do this within three days after you have returned to school. Your teacher will give you a reasonable amount of time to make up the work missed. If this time extends beyond a report period, you will receive an incomplete in the subject and receive a corrected grade on your next report card. If your work is not made up within a time period, determined by the teacher, the grade will automatically become an "F".

School Day

You will be permitted to enter the school hallways at 7:45 A.M. and will be required to be in your homeroom by 7:51 A.M. Due to the nature of our team middle school environment, the time blocks for classes will vary. Therefore, it is important to move through the hallways as quietly as possible.

The time designated from 2:40 P.M.-3:15 P.M. is listed as remedial work time. Your teacher will use this time for you to make up work and for disciplinary measures. You are expected to attend these sessions, when your teacher requests them. If you do not attend these sessions, your teacher will refer you to the office for disciplinary review.

Daily Opening Exercises

All students are encouraged to participate in opening exercises. Opening exercises include the Pledge of Allegiance (flag salute) and a moment of silent meditation. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance on the basis of religious conviction or personal belief. A student who declines to participate in opening exercises shall maintain a respectful attitude throughout the exercises. If a student is disrespectful during opening exercises, such students shall be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the Student Disciplinary Code.

Tardiness

If you arrive late to school, you are required to report immediately to the office. Students must be in their seats when the tardy bell rings. Tardiness may be excused under extenuating circumstances. These circumstances will be determined by the Pennsylvania School Code and the office personnel.

Cafeteria

The middle school offers a breakfast program every morning. When students arrive at school they can proceed to the cafeteria to purchase breakfast. Only those students who are purchasing breakfast may go to the cafeteria. Students who do participate in the breakfast program will remain in the cafeteria until 7:45 a.m.

It is important that you follow the rules listed below for lunch so that a pleasant atmosphere is available for everyone.

1. Before entering the serving area, place your binder and books on the shelves provided in the area located around the entrance to the serving. No binders and books should be left on the floor.
2. Enter the serving area immediately when directed by a supervisor. Do not loiter in the hallway waiting for other individuals.
3. You may go through the serving area one time.
4. All seats will be assigned by supervising personnel. You will also be dismissed or excused from your table at the appropriate times.
5. It is important that you know your ID for the Point of Sale System or you bring money with you to the cafeteria, because **no money** may be borrowed for lunches.
6. You must deposit paper products in the trash containers and take your tray and food waste to the tray return area.
7. You are required to leave the table and floor around your seated area in a clean condition.
8. No food or drinks may be taken from the cafeteria.



Class Dismissal

Classes will always be dismissed by your teacher. Upon dismissal, you should leave promptly and quietly report to your next class. So that you are not late for your next class, you should not stop at the lavatory or locker.

School Functions

There will be a variety of school functions held throughout the school year. These school functions will be open only to Palmyra Middle School students. No guests will be permitted from other schools. The rules and policies for that particular function will include all the regular school rules and any additional rules that pertain to the activity. Any conduct that is unacceptable will result in your parents being notified and possible loss of school function privileges for a period of time. Parents will be required to pick you up immediately. You will not be permitted to leave the function early unless you bring a note from your parent or guardian and present it to a chaperone.

Hall Passes

You will be given a hall pass when you leave the classroom during the class period. This pass must be carried by you, and shown to any member of the school staff upon request.



Hallways

Keep hallway noise to a minimum so as not to disturb classes in session. Conduct yourself in an appropriate manner while walking in the hallways remembering to stay to your right. You must refrain from "horseplay" or disturbing others in any fashion.

Homeroom

You will be assigned to a homeroom, which can be considered your home at school. Any problems that arise in school can be discussed freely with your homeroom teacher.



Lavatories

Please keep the lavatories neat and clean because other students will be using them throughout the day. If you detect any problems with the lavatories, inform the office at once.

Lockers

You will be assigned a locker for storing your coats, hats, textbooks, bookbags and other school materials. Keep the combination to your locker *a secret* and never store valuables in your locker. Make sure that your lock is always secure when you leave your locker area. You will be responsible for keeping your locker clean. Only locks provided by the school may be used to secure your locker, unless administrative approval to do otherwise has been granted. Any personal locks will be removed by school authorities. The school is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen from your locker.

If there is suspicion that something of an illegal nature is in the locker, the locker will be searched. As defined by Section 1317 of the School Laws of Pennsylvania, principals have the authority to search lockers.

Physical Education

The physical education program is designed to meet the individual differences of everyone, therefore you are expected to attend all classes. However, we will accept one excuse from home each marking period for unexpected illness or injury. During this class, an alternate activity will be assigned. A doctor's note will be honored, but it must first be approved by the school nurse. You are encouraged to take home your gym clothes every weekend to be laundered. Any valuable items should be kept at home, or stored in your gym locker at your own risk. You will be assigned a locker and lock for your personal items. If you do lose your lock, you will be required to pay for a new lock as soon as possible. Remember to keep your locker secured at all times.



Student Government

There is the opportunity to be chosen to be a member of your team's student government and the school's central government. Team governments are present at the seventh and eighth grade levels with each team organizing their own structure. Subsequently, one person from each team, grades six through eight, is chosen to serve on the school's central government. The central government meets one time each month. The focus for both governments is to serve the school and community by providing activities and promoting school pride, spirit, and cooperation. This will develop leadership and good citizenship skills.



Telephone Use

You may ask the office personnel to use their telephone to call parents or guardians for school related emergencies. They will make the determination for the authorization for telephone use.

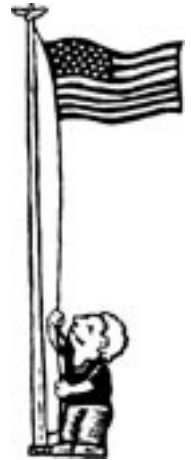
IV. School Citizenship

Punishment Practices

Alternative Education Room

When it becomes necessary to place you in the Alternative Education Room (AER) for an infraction of the school regulations, the length of time will be dependant upon your infraction and your previous actions. This will enable you to remain in school, but in a different setting. You will be required to complete assignments given to you by your teachers. You will not be readmitted to your regular classes until this work is completed. You are also **required to bring your lunch**, including a drink, **from home**.

Students are not permitted to attend and/or to participate in any district or middle school sponsored activity or event on the days he or she has been assigned to AER.



Detention (Administrative)

You may be assigned to after school detention by the principal, assistant principal or dean of students. This assignment takes precedence over all after school activities that are occurring. While you are in detention, you are expected to be quietly working on assigned school work. If you are not working to the supervising teacher's satisfaction, you may be assigned to complete a detention learning packet or later be referred to the administration for additional punishment. Detention hall will begin promptly at 2:45 P.M. and will last until 3:45 P.M. Any student who was present for school the day of his/her detention and misses detention because of illness, must have an excuse from the school nurse. If you are absent from school on an assigned detention hall day, you will be required to attend the next scheduled detention hall.

Detention (Teacher)

You may be assigned to after school detention by a teacher for a violation of classroom rules. This detention will be part of the teacher's discipline policy and will take place in the assigned room of the teacher under that teacher's supervision.

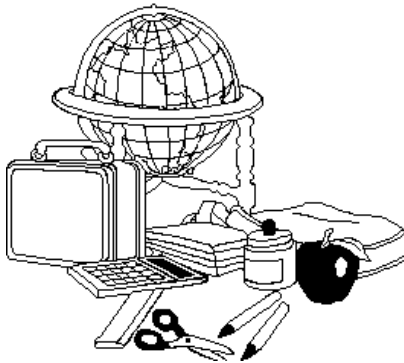
Visitors

The school policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business to attend to at the school. Guests and visitors must register in the office. Parents are always welcome and should register in the office. Guests, visitors, and parents should stop in the office so a visitor's pass may be issued. You are discouraged from bringing a guest to school. Guests will not be permitted into the school without the permission of the principal, and under no circumstances will a visitor be permitted to attend school the same day as the request. Permission must be granted by all the teachers of the classes to be visited. Visitors are expected to leave promptly when their business is completed.

Withdrawal from School

If it becomes necessary to withdraw from school, the following steps must be taken:

1. Report your intent to the guidance office and receive a withdrawal sheet. This withdrawal sheet must be signed by all the teachers with whom the pupil has been involved, including the librarians, homeroom teacher, and guidance counselor.
2. As you contact each teacher, return to him/her all school property that you have and were using with the teacher. Pay any bills that you owe. Contact the librarian to be sure that you have returned all books you borrowed and paid all your fines.
3. After contacting all your teachers and returning your supplies and equipment and paying all bills, take your withdrawal sheet to your appropriate guidance counselor and get his/her signature.



Exclusion from School

Exclusion from school may be effected by temporary suspension; full suspension; or expulsion. The following is a brief description of these exclusions:

1. **Temporary Suspension** shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to three school days, by the principal or assistant principal, without a hearing, in accordance with policies of the board of school directors.
2. **Full Suspension** shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to ten school days, after an informal hearing before the principal or assistant principal is offered to you and your parents, in accordance with policies established by the board of school directors.
3. **Expulsion** shall mean exclusion from school for a period exceeding ten school days for an offense, and could also be permanent expulsion from the school rolls.

Courtesy and Responsibility

Much of what you may or may not do in public places, such as your school, is directly related to your consideration of others. Everyone should be treated respectfully out of thoughtfulness for their personal feelings. It is your responsibility to demonstrate nothing less than the highest standards of courtesy at all times. Learning to be well mannered and thoughtful of others is not only a worthwhile goal, but it can help make life in school a comfortable experience for everyone, especially you!

Being responsible simply means that you are reliable, trustworthy and able to govern yourself in a manner that does not offend other people. In other words, you should be self-disciplined. You should never say or do anything to be ashamed of, and should always try to do what is expected of you to the best of your ability. It is important to remember that:

1. Nobody is perfect. It will pay you to be honest with yourself, fellow students, your teachers, and other school personnel.
2. School can be a pleasant experience. You will get out of it exactly what you put into it.
3. Rules and regulations are for your benefit and safety. They apply to everybody in the school.

Dress Code

You are requested to dress with good taste and personal neatness. Modesty and decency are two important considerations for your personal attire. Examples of clothing not permitted are: undershirts, muscle shirts, halter tops, tube tops, tops which expose the midriff/cleavage, shoes with wheels in them, mesh shirts without something underneath, head coverings, and sunglasses. Dresses with spaghetti straps (or straps of any kind) and dresses, skirts, shorts and skorts under a fingertip in length are not permitted. It is suggested that shorts not be worn from November 1 through February 28, inclusive. In addition, any lettered clothing, jewelry, or personal items should not exhibit or promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or sexual related items. Clothing must not be offensive to a person's race, color, creed, or personal beliefs. If clothing of this nature is worn to school, these articles will be taken away (parents may be called to bring in appropriate clothing). Students attending events sponsored by the PTO must follow the school dress code. Parents are an important part of a child's education and thus parents should ensure that their child is dressed appropriately.

Drug or Alcoholic Beverages

The Palmyra Area School District in compliance with Public Law 101-226, acknowledges that the use of illicit/cosmetic drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. It is therefore the policy of this School District that the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit/cosmetic drugs and alcohol by students and employees on school premises or as part of any of its activities is strictly prohibited.

Students in violation of this policy will be punished according to the discipline regulations of the District, which may include suspension, conditional re-admittance, expulsion and referral for prosecution.

Students with abuse problems can receive help through a referral to the LIFT team.

Eligibility

Eligibility checking is a measure of your week to week individual effort in a particular course to determine if you can participate in extracurricular activities. This includes and shall not be limited to participation in sports. When you are placed on the ineligibility list, you will not be taken off the list until the next ineligibility reporting period. The only exception will be errors made by teachers, and these must be corrected by noon, Tuesday.

Gum

Gum chewing is not permitted while in the building complex of the middle school.

Laser Pointing Devices

Laser pointing devices are not permitted on school property.

Long Key Chains, Chain Wallet Holders and Choker Necklaces

The long key chains, chain wallet holders, choker necklaces, studded bracelets and studded necklaces are not permitted on school property.

Collector Cards

Due to the disruption of the educational process resulting from the use of "Magic" cards, "Pokemon" cards and/or similar materials, they will not be permitted in the building complex.

Personal Listening Devices and Cell Phones

You are not permitted to carry or use cell phones or personal listening devices (i.e.-radios, walkmans, etc.) during the school day. **They must be kept in your locker for the entire school day.** Any violation of these rules will result in you not being permitted to bring these devices to school and/or confiscation of such devices. Furthermore, it is strongly advised that you not bring these items to school due to the possibility of theft.

Public Display Of Affection

Any signs of public display of affection are not permissible.

V. Transportation

Bullying

All forms of bullying by students are hereby prohibited. Any student who engages in bullying is in violation of the school district's policy #249 and shall be subject to appropriate discipline, which includes, but is not limited to, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Sexual Harassment

Students are not permitted to engage in actions of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments, conduct, or implications. Violation of this policy will result in consequences consistent with the offense.

Tobacco Products

You are not permitted to possess or use tobacco products or any tobacco paraphernalia, such as lighters or matches, at any time while you are on school property. Violation of this policy will result in suspension, fines, and parent contact/conferences. This is consistent with the Palmyra School District's School Board policies and the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.



Use of the Law

There are times when normal school punishments do not do the required job, and we seek help from community agencies or apply laws available to us through the use of citations administered by our local police agencies and the District Justice.

Vandalism

If you vandalize furniture, equipment, or any part of the building, you will be required to pay the cost of restoration and you may possibly be prosecuted for institutional vandalism. If you have damaged school property as a result of an accident, you should report this to the office immediately.

Weapons

Students are prohibited from possessing, carrying, storing, or using weapons or dangerous instruments while on school property. A weapon is defined as anything readily capable of lethal use or inflicting bodily harm. The term "weapon" includes but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nun-chuck, club, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting bodily injury. In addition, the term weapon includes a firearm which is not loaded or lacks a clip or other component to render it immediately operable, and components which can readily be assembled into a weapon. The term weapon also includes devices which are made to look like the aforementioned items. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action consistent with due process ranging from suspension to expulsion. Additionally, at the time of such violations, local police authorities shall be notified and charges filed consistent with the criminal statutes of the State of Pennsylvania.

Bicycles

You may ride your bicycle to school. If you decide to do so, you must use the space provided for the proper storage of your bicycle. There are bicycle racks located around the back of the school. Please lock your bicycle to protect it from abuse. You must obey all traffic and safety regulations and ride with the utmost caution. The school is not responsible for your bicycle.



Arrival To School

Students must report directly to school property and remain in the lobby area or the outside areas on the Cherry Street side of the building. Do not stop at local establishments like the Turkey Hill, churches, parking lots, etc...

Bus Rules and Information

Students are not permitted to ride another student's bus. You are expected to remain seated at all times and to talk orderly while riding on the bus. Before loading or after unloading, students must stay off the macadam driveway. The bus driver has the right to assign seating at his/her discretion. Drivers are not expected to be disciplinarians, as their main duty is to operate the bus safely. If you fail to conduct yourself properly, a bus discipline card will be issued to you. This will result in a suspension of bus privileges for one to five or more days. If your privileges are revoked, you are expected to provide your own transportation.



Skateboards

You are not permitted to use skateboards on school property or bring skateboards to school. Any violation of these rules will result in your skateboard being confiscated.



Student Drop Off In Morning

Parents are requested to drop off their children on Cherry Street or the back of the school building. The gym door near the girl's locker room will be open in the morning during inclement weather so that students can enter the building under the canopy in the back. Please enter the back parking lot near the field hockey field, loop by the stadium and leave through the exit closest to the building.

VI. Special Services

Guidance

Your guidance counselor welcomes any opportunity to help you. At times you may want to talk over school work, personal interests and problems, or similar matters. Your counselor regards your conversation as a confidential matter and will not discuss these matters with others unless you so direct. In addition to individual counseling time, there is also group counseling.

Lost and Found

Any items that you find should be turned into the main office so that it can be displayed and subsequently be placed in a storage box area. After a reasonable length of time these items will be discarded. If you have lost any articles or books, be sure to check the storage box area. If you cannot locate what you have lost, please inform the secretary. Items of value are not displayed, but can be reclaimed through personal identification in the office.



Media Center

The Media Center is open, on activity bus scheduled days, between the hours of 7:45 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. for the purpose of reading, research, book selection, and study. Students riding the late bus will be issued late bus passes by the library aide at approximately 4:00 P.M.

All middle school students will be assigned a library card number which is used to sign out materials from the Media Center. It is important to remember that you are responsible for all materials signed out to you during the school year.

Regular collection materials circulate for a period of two weeks. Overnight material must be returned to the Media Center by 7:51 A.M. Materials kept longer than the assigned circulation time are considered overdue and appropriate fines are charged. If material is lost or damaged, full replacement cost is charged. All materials in the media center circulate to

all students with the exception of the library's Young Adult Fiction collection. Students in grade six wishing to read books from that collection are required to bring a parent signed permission slip to the librarian.



Enrollment in Elective Courses

Students enrolled in an elective course (ex: band, choir, orchestra) may have the option of dropping the course within the first ten days of school. Should a student wish to drop, they must obtain a dropout form from the teacher of that course and follow the instructions given on the form.

**Students can NOT drop any elective course after the first ten days of school and must remain enrolled until the end of the school year.

Nurse

Accident Procedures



If you become injured while at school, you should immediately report the injury to the teacher in whose class the injury occurred or the nearest staff member. They will send you to the nurse's office or notify the nurse to come to you.

Illness at School

If you become ill while you are at school, inform your teacher at once. A pass will then be issued to go to the nurse. Under no circumstances should you remain in a lavatory for an illness. You **must** report to the nurse. If the nurse is not in her office, go immediately to the main office. When the services of a physician are needed, your family doctor will be called first. When finished in the nurse's office, the nurse will issue you a pass and you must report back to class and submit your pass to your teacher.

Medicine Policy

Before any medicine can be given to you, a consent form must be completed and signed by your parents or guardian authorizing its use. At the beginning of the day the medicine should be brought to the nurse in the original labelled container marked with your name, type of medication, the amount to be given, and the times to be taken. You are not permitted to have in your personal possession or in your locker any prescription or non-prescription medicines.



Elevator Use

If it is impossible to use the steps because of a severe or disabling injury, you may go to the office and ask permission to use the elevator. You may be issued an elevator key, which must be turned into the main office at the close of the school day. You are allowed only one additional person in the elevator to carry your books or other related material.

VII. Safety and Welfare

Fire Drills

You are reminded that fire drills are serious business. The safety of all pupils and school personnel is the first consideration. Treat all fire drills as if they are actual alarms. When the alarm sounds, follow these general rules:

1. Stop all work at once.
2. Leave the room in a single file, then double file in the corridors.
3. Students must remain silent during the length of the fire drill.
4. You should close all windows, turn off the lights, and any electrical or heating equipment in use.
5. The first person at exit doors shall hold the doors until all are through and then close them.
6. Once outside, keep moving at the same rate of speed until the safety area has been reached.
7. Your teacher shall direct you under his/her supervision to the nearest exit. The teacher shall make certain all pupils have left the building and direct his/her pupils away from the building. Each student will be accounted for by taking roll.
8. In the event the nearest exit is blocked, you should turn calmly and proceed to another exit as directed by your teacher.



VIII. Recognition for Achievement

Awards

You may earn special awards for scholarship, citizenship, athletics, etc. Nomination for these awards may be made by pupils and teachers. Final selection will be determined by the faculty and the administration.

Citizenship Awards

1. *American Legion Award* is given to the outstanding eighth grade girl and boy.
2. *Woodman of the World Award* is given to an eighth grade student for outstanding achievement in American History.

Mathematics

An award will be given to the top Algebra and Pre-Algebra student on each eighth grade team.

