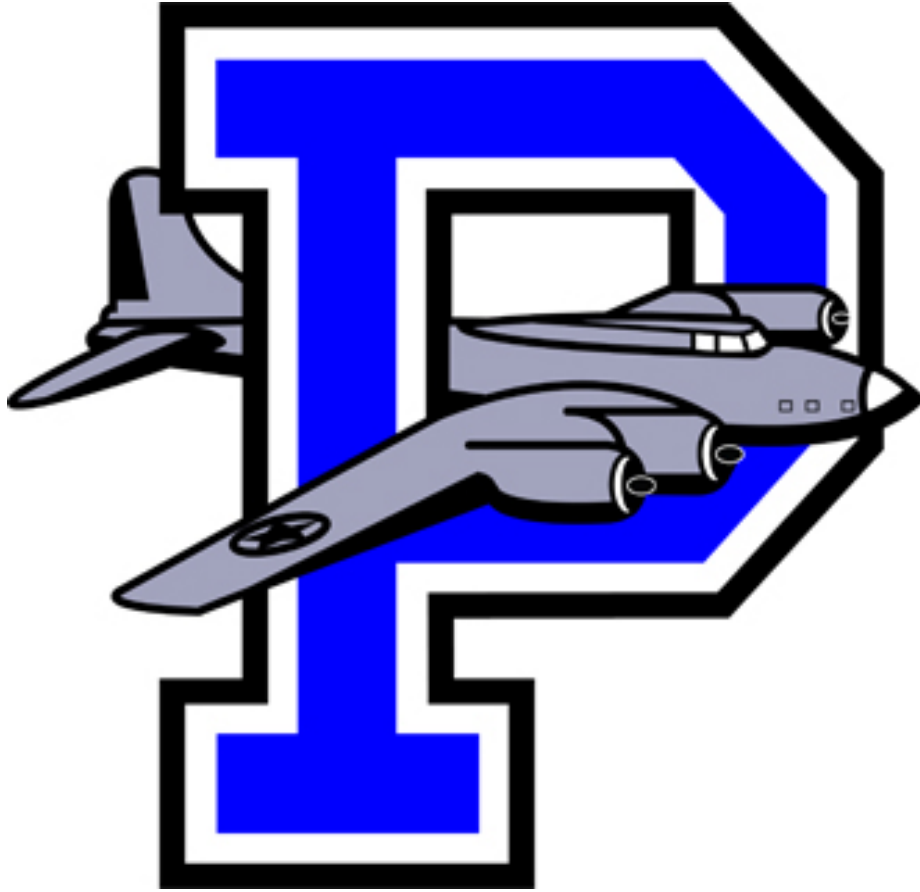


Palmerton Area School District

TOWAMENSING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



PARENT/GUARDIAN/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027

www.palmerton.org



Palmerton Area School District
Towamensing Elementary School

7920 Interchange Road
Lehighton, PA 18235

Kelli George
Elementary Principal
610-681-4024

Josh Nenscel
Elementary Dean of students
610-681-4024

August 2026

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

Welcome to Palmerton Area School District and Towamensing Elementary School! The staff and I are very excited for the 2026-2027 school year.

With assistance from many stakeholders throughout the community and school district, we took the time to re-write our mission statement, visitation statement, and revisit our educational value statements as a part of our district's new Comprehensive Plan. Our school mission statement is, "The Palmerton Area School District, in partnership with home and community, is committed to providing resources and opportunities that foster an environment where students can reach their full potential and become high character citizens in a globally competitive society." This is the foundation of our belief in how we operate our schools. Every student is important to us, and we strongly believe that we are a community of learners as well as a community committed to each and every student.

Our school handbook is designed to be informative. It contains the beliefs, practices and procedures that guide us. We know that students are most successful in an environment where there is mutual respect and a sense of responsibility among the entire school community. This is best achieved in a supportive setting where all stakeholders share ownership in learning and developing positive behaviors. All students are expected to follow our School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Program which states that "Leaders are Safe, Respectful, and Responsible."

You are an essential part of this process! Please take the time to read this handbook carefully with your child. Our goal is to create a partnership with parents/guardians to provide a safe, healthy, and happy learning environment for all students. We ask that you join us by supporting our efforts and becoming an active participant in your child's education.

Should you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Kelli George
Principal

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Staff Directory

Pre-K:

TBA

Kindergarten:

Kimberly Carlson

Shanna Koscinski

Karissa Nenscel

First Grade:

Trisha Green

Krystallynn McCutchan

Angela Rivera

Second Grade:

Kristina Himmelwright

Joyce Paulinho

Brandy Welk

Third Grade:

Adrian Ladesic

Brittany Zeky

Fourth Grade:

Alexandrea Spalding

Susan Warakomski

Fifth Grade:

Monique Hofford

Marisa Lichtenwalner

Krystle Meglio

Sixth Grade:

Jaclyn Ivancich

Nikolai Millen

Special Education:

Lindsay Fronheiser

Tammy Hoffman

Ashley Hummer

Katie Miller

Joey Roetz

Principal:

Kelli George

Dean of Students:

Joshua Nenscel

Secretary:

Christina Wilson

Security Officer:

Tyler Baez

Specialists:

Lindsey Armitage

Felicia Fischer

Kathryn Malay

Unified Arts:

Audrey Hoffman

Michael Horvath

Natalie Madeira

Michelle Muffley

Alexander Orr

Rebecca Sabo

School Counselor:

Jodi Kocher

School Psychologist:

Open Position

Social Worker:

Annetter Trittenbach

ESL Teacher:

Rachael Parham

School Nurse:

Amy Duarte

Instructional Assistants: (IA)

Trisha Buck

Dorothy Getz

Miriam Hedes

Sharon Hettler

Christine King

Amy Kline

Eileen Long

Jennifer Potoczak

Kristy Santee

IU Staff:

Joyce Adam

Michele Dailey

Kelly Heinick

Chris Hudak

Keri Lauer

Adrienne Kline

Angie Masters

Jessica Mercado

Rhea Samuels

Jared Schrantz

PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026 – 2027 DISTRICT GOALS

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

To continue a plan that sets high standards, raises levels of achievement, and ensures student success.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

To continue a positive behavior system that sets high standards and encourages an intrinsic motivation for responsible behavior.

COMMUNICATION

To continue a plan that encourages communication at the building level as well as across the district.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Palmerton Area School District, in partnership with home and community, is committed to providing resources and opportunities that foster an environment where students can reach their full potential and become high-character citizens in a globally competitive society.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Palmerton Area School District is to educate and prepare all students for success in a globally competitive society. This shall be accomplished through activities that enhance their social, mental, and physical well-being.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE STATEMENTS

Students:

- We believe that meeting all students' needs, by providing appropriate resources and supports, will allow students to reach their potential and become responsible citizens.
- We believe that students should have access to technology and relevant learning experiences to be able to access reliable information and communicate in a globally competitive society.
- We believe that students will be equipped as effective communicators, independent learners, problem solvers and collaborators through rigorous and relevant learning experiences.
- We believe that all students deserve motivated, adaptable, and well-trained staff to provide a high-quality education.

Staff:

- We believe that staff will provide a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment for student learning.
- We believe that staff should feel valued and supported in a positive and collaborative work environment.
- We believe that staff with ample training, support, and resources have a profound impact on student development.

- We believe that all staff should maintain high levels of expectations for all students while respecting their individuality and diversity.

Administration:

- We believe that all administrators will provide, safe, inclusive, and meaningful experiences that will prepare all students to become productive, dependable, and self-aware citizens.
- We believe that administrators recognize each student's qualities, differences, talents, and that their abilities should be recognized, developed, challenged, and celebrated.
- We believe that administration will provide targeted professional development aligned to school needs to support standards aligned instruction to support the highest needs of students.
- We believe that administrators should build meaningful connections between staff and students.

Parents/Community:

- We believe that education is a shared partnership between students, families, and community.
- We believe that a commitment from the entire community is necessary to build a culture that encourages student achievement.
- We believe that collaboration among home, school district, and the community positively impacts learning.
- We believe that the needs and goals of the district should be communicated and accessible to families and the community.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Board Policy 815: Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers & Network Resources outlines expectations for using our school's technology resources. This policy details guidelines for acceptable use and highlights the responsibility of each user to utilize these resources appropriately. Please review the complete policy, available at:

<https://www.palmerton.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Board-Policy-815-Acceptable-Use-of-Internet.pdf>

After reviewing, we ask both students and parents to acknowledge and agree to these terms by signing below acknowledgement form.

Additionally, you agree to the terms of service for all PASD educational resources. A full list of these resources and links to their respective terms of service can be found

<https://www.palmerton.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Educational-resources-provided-by-the-PASD.pdf>

This will ensure continued access to the district's technology resources and help promote a culture of responsible use.

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**.

ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, DROP-OFF & PICK-UP of STUDENTS

Students should not arrive at school prior to 8:15 AM. The doors will not be opened prior to 8:15AM. Students may not enter the school building before 8:15 AM. Buses will be dropping off students at the front of the building. The front driveway is off limits to vehicles from 8:15-8:45 AM. Parents/guardians who drive their children to school must enter the east parking lot and drive the perimeter of the parking lot (in a counterclockwise direction) to the sidewalk at the east doors. Students should exit the car curb side and walk to the ramp or to the stairs to enter the building. After your child has exited the vehicle, please follow the vehicle in front of you to exit the parking lot. For the safety of your children, our students, do not park in a parking space and walk to the sidewalk with your child.

Students who arrive at Towamensing by bus will be dropped off at the main entrance along Interchange Rd. Students will be guided to the designated entrance door.

If your child is late, or they need to be picked up early, please use the front entrance of the building. There you will have the ability to talk to a receptionist who will greet you and address your needs. If you are signing in a student who is arriving late, our receptionist will have you sign our sign in sheet in the office.

Note: All visitors, including parents/guardians, must enter the building through the front entrance on route 209 and obtain a visitor badge from the office and must sign in. The east doors (by the cafeteria) are not accessible by parents/visitors.

ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

Students are not to bring to school any articles or equipment that interferes with the learning process or that is hazardous to the safety of themselves or others. This includes, but is not limited to laser pointers, video games, smart watches, other electronic devices, skateboards, roller blades, water guns, trading cards (Pokémon), collectibles, yo-yos, etc. If parents require their child to have a cell phone for contact before and/or after school, the cell phone must be **TURNED OFF** and kept in the child's backpack/locker, or it may be confiscated. Cell phones should also remain in the student's backpack/locker and turned off while riding the bus. Articles that are confiscated will be held in the office for parents/guardians to retrieve. The school is not responsible for any such items should they be lost, stolen, or damaged. Defiance of this rule will result in a warning. Further violations will lead to disciplinary action.

Students are not to bring any illegal substances to school, i.e. tobacco of any kind, vapes, offensive reading material, matches, lighters, look-alike drugs, knives, guns, ammunition, weapons, or imitation weapons. To promote healthy living, energy drinks, soft drinks, coffee, and other high-sugar/caffeine beverages are prohibited in school. Defiance of this rule will result in suspension and possible legal intervention by the authorities. Aerosol containers of any kind must not be brought into school. Please see the Palmerton Area School District [Weapons Policy](#) for additional information.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE - EXCUSED

School law determines that the following excuses for absences are valid and excusable:

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth, or territory
3. Quarantine
4. Family emergency
5. Recovery from accident
6. Required court attendance
7. Death in family
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or county-wide 4-H, FFA, or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
9. Approved religious holiday
10. Educational travel with prior approval by the principal. A request should be completed at least one week prior to the educational trip to allow teachers time to gather the necessary assignments.

ABSENCE – UNEXCUSED/UNLAWFUL

Three (3) unexcused/unlawful absences are cause for further action on the part of the school. The following excuses will be regarded as unlawful:

1. Shopping trips
2. Oversleeping
3. Car failure
4. Parental business trips
5. Family educational trips/vacations without prior approval of the principal
Personal reasons must be explained to the principal

Students may not be able to make-up classwork and assessments on days that they have unlawful absences. This will impact the student's academic performance and good standing.

APPOINTMENTS

Students and parents are discouraged from scheduling appointments during school hours. If you must remove your child from school during the day, please provide a written request to your child's teacher. The child will be dismissed through the office not from the classroom. Please adhere to this practice for the safety and welfare of your child. Students are encouraged to report back to school and complete their classes for the remainder of the day whenever possible.

Students will not be able to attend school-sanctioned after-school activities, if they are not in attendance by 11:15 AM on the day of the activity unless a doctor's note is provided at that time.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

1. Be responsible for notifying the school each day your child is absent.
2. Do not keep your child home from school for minor ailments.
3. Encourage your child to develop good personal habits that deal with time schedules for getting to bed, getting up, leaving for school, etc.
4. Be aware of the school attendance policy.
5. Do not provide/write false excuses for your child/ren.
6. **PLEASE DO NOT SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS AND/OR VACATIONS DURING PSSA TESTING**

Grades 3-6	English Language Arts	April 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30
Grades 3-6	Math	May 3 & 4
Grade 5	Science	May 5 & 6
Grades 3-6	Make-Ups	May 10, 11, 12, 13, & 14

PHYSICIAN'S EXCUSE REQUIREMENT

When a student has accumulated 10 days of absence, parents will be notified, and a doctor's excuse will be required for any and all future absences. Absences without the required doctor's certificate will be regarded as illegal and all the penalties of the compulsory attendance law will be applied. All absences, whether excused or illegal, are cumulative. If you feel there are extenuating circumstances surrounding your child's irregular attendance, a conference should be arranged with the school principal.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE

When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse, district staff shall provide written notice to the person in parental relation, who resides in the same household as the student, of the student's third unexcused absence. If the student incurs additional unexcused absences after the issuance of the notice, a School Attendance Improvement Conference will be scheduled. In addition, an Attendance Improvement Conference will be scheduled for students who incur unlawful absences by not submitting the required doctor's certificate for absences exceeding ten (10) days.

SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is strongly encouraged and closely monitored. Regular attendance in school has proven to support children in academic achievement. Please note, that although kindergarten is not mandatory, once a child has been enrolled in kindergarten, attendance is then mandatory.

Attendance will be taken by the classroom teacher each morning. A child who reports to school after 11:15AM will be marked absent for 1/2 day. An excuse must be returned within 3 days after the absence. Attached is the link to our Attendance Excuse Google form [Attendance Excuse Electronic Form](#). State law requires a written parental report stating the reason for absence from school. A phone call will be made if we have not been notified by the parent/guardian of your child's absence. After 3 successive days of absence, a doctor's certificate is required. This is done to fulfill the responsibility of monitoring attendance, as well as opening the lines of communication between the school and home regarding attendance irregularities.

Arrival after 8:30 AM – Tardy
Arrival after 11:15 AM – 1/2 day AM Absence
Leave before 12:15 PM – 1/2 day PM Absence
Leave after 12:15 PM – Present for the whole day
Parents are expected to sign students in at the main office after 8:30 AM
If a parent/guardian signs out a child before 9:10 AM, the student will be considered absent for the entire day.

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students ([Policy 249](#)).

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.

4. Transfer to another school building, classroom, or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.

CAFETERIA PROGRAM

Students have the option to get a breakfast, which is available from 8:15 AM to 8:40 AM, a lunch from our cafeteria, or bring their own lunches and/or buy juice, white, chocolate, or skim milk. Each month a menu is sent home so that families can plan for their children's meals each day. This menu is also available on our district website at www.palmerton.org. Breakfast is free. The cost of lunch is \$3.15 with additional milk available for \$0.55.

We have a lunch payment program, www.schoolcafe.com, which allows the parent to put money on account for their child's breakfast and/or lunch. The appropriate amount will be deducted each day from your child's account depending on their purchases. This enables your child not to have to carry money on a daily basis. Additional a la carte items may be purchased in Grades 2-6. The school café app can be downloaded to see your child's balance, add funds, transfer funds from one child to another, and view menus. For those who qualify, there are free and reduced meal prices available. During the month of August, applications are sent home with your child's class assignment or may be obtained from the school office at any time during the school year. Applications may also be completed online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

Any questions please contact Emily Biechy at Dining Services. ebiechy@palmerton.org or 610-826-3155 Ext. 2218.

CAFETERIA SERVING POLICY FOR EARLY DISMISSAL AND SNOW DAYS

Early dismissal before noon – No lunch will be served
Early dismissal after noon – All students will be served lunch

Please note that daily menu items may change when unplanned school delays or closures occur. Please keep this in mind when planning for your child's lunch.

CHANGE OF HOME ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

Please notify the school office immediately of any change in a student's home address, parent/guardian email address, telephone number, or work numbers. Emergency numbers that enable the school to reach parents/guardians should be continuously updated. It is imperative that the school be able to reach you anytime during the school day.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Denial of Privileges

Privileges at the elementary school must be earned. They may also be temporarily suspended 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.

Detention

Office/Lunch Detention: The administration may assign office/lunch detentions. The only acceptable excuse for a student not reporting to an office detention is a doctor or dental appointment. These appointments must be reported to the office prior to the detention so that the detention can be rescheduled.

Effective discipline serves two purposes. First, it prevents the recurrence of a particular misbehavior in a student. Second, it is a learning experience for the student, permitting the student to see why certain rules have been established and why they must be followed through communications and reflections with staff. Many of our rules are developed in connection with society norms and are a function of the “real world.” We need to ensure the development of our students to provide them with the opportunity to succeed as they move from one level to another.

Our school code of conduct policy has three primary objectives.

1. preserving the kind of environment needed for effective teaching
2. dealing with disorderly conduct in a consistent manner that corrects a student’s behavior while keeping the student in school as much as possible
3. using out-of-school suspension or recommendations for expulsion as a last resort only when the educational environment of other students is significantly affected.

For these objectives to be met in school, the student must learn basic disciplinary guidelines both at school and at home. We will also not negotiate consequences. Discipline must be considered important and necessary by the student, the parents, and the school staff.

Unacceptable forms of student behavior can be organized into three categories:

Level I

Acts of misbehavior are usually resolved by the classroom teacher. (Typically considered a minor referral)

Level II

Misbehaviors, which by their seriousness or frequency, require disciplinary action at the administrative level. (Typically considered a major referral.)

Level III

Misbehaviors which involve acts directed against persons or property. This level of misconduct requires action at the administrative level. (Considered a major referral.)

Level IV

Misbehaviors which are illegal or criminal in nature. This section identifies some of the unacceptable student behaviors and cites the disciplinary action violators can expect. However, final decisions are at the discretion of the administration. (Considered a major referral.)

Level I

Violation of the Code of Conduct Policy

Minor class disruptions (3 minor referrals = a major & office detention)

Lying

Classroom tardiness

Loitering

Cell Phone violation

Dress Code violation

Abuse of hall pass / wandering

Disciplinary Action (Progressive)

Conference with teacher

Parental contact

Detention (Office/Lunch)

Level II

Violation of the Code of Conduct Policy

Inappropriate Conduct

Insubordination

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

Gambling

Tobacco/e-cigarettes/vape pen

Throwing food or other objects

Failure to serve assigned detention

Trespassing

Inappropriate Use of Technology including social media

Disciplinary Action (Progressive)

Parental contact

Parental conference

Loss of privileges

In-School Suspension

Referral to appropriate community agencies

Disorderly conduct charges

Restitution for damage/stolen property

Out-of-School Suspension

Level III

Violation of the 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
Possession of a look-a-like weapon, even if there is no intent to use as a weapon to harm
Harassment including and not limited to social media

Disciplinary Action

In-School Suspension
Out-of-School suspension
Loss of privileges
Referral to appropriate authorities
Recommendation to superintendent for possible expulsion

Level IV

Violation of the Code of Conduct Policy

Continuation of unmodified Level I, II or III behavior
Assaulting a staff member
Extortion
Bomb Threat
Terroristic Threat/Threat of harm towards others
Continual/Unresolved Bullying
False fire alarm
Arson
Furnish/selling unauthorized or controlled substances
Setting off fireworks
Possession, use, and/or transfer of weapons, including any type of knife, cutting instrument, or look-alikes on school property during school hours or activities and to or from school and/or activities, including on school buses

Disciplinary Action

In-School Suspension
Out-of-School suspension
Loss of privileges
Referral to appropriate authorities
Recommendation to superintendent for possible expulsion

Discipline: Student Rights / Hearings

Education is a fundamental right. Accordingly, students will be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving an out-of-school suspension lasting more than three days, a student will be given an informal hearing. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the principal to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show that there is some compelling reason why the student should return to school.

Behavior that disrupts the learning process or potentially the safety of yourself and/or others will be met with consequences. We strive to be as fair as possible in issuing consequences. Unfortunately, just like in life, fair is not always equal. Please do not ask to discuss any consequences issued to other students. We cannot do that.

The informal hearing process 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 school counselors, school nurses, the school psychologist, other school employees or contracted employees of the district.

CONFERENCE REQUESTS

Sometimes a parent may require additional time to meet with teachers, the school counselor, or the principal to discuss their child's progress. Please call or send a note at least one day before an appointment might be scheduled, when an individual conference is desired before, during, or after school. Unscheduled parent conferences will not be held during the instructional day. Arrival and dismissal times are not conducive to confidential parent/teacher conferencing. Our teachers are expected to remain in their classrooms, with students, until all buses have been called. Parents are urged to stay informed about all phases of the school program by accepting invitations to visit the classrooms and meet with teachers on occasions such as "Meet the Teacher" night and parent conferences.

CUSTODY

If there is a court order regarding the parental rights of your child, the court order must be submitted to your child's school immediately upon receipt. A copy will be made and filed. **Without a court order, both parents have equal access to their child and their child's records. If custodial rights change, changes must be submitted to the school immediately upon receipt. Otherwise, the school must follow the documents that are currently on file at the school.**

DISCLAIMER

As a service to our students and families, the Palmerton Area School District allows community organizations that operate activities for children and youth to provide information about their activities for take-home distribution. The use of the District as a source of such information should not be construed as District support for, sponsorship of, or endorsement of any of the activities of these organizations. Families are cautioned to investigate carefully both the organization and the activity it is offering to determine the appropriateness of participation for their children.

DISMISSAL CHANGES

Dismissal arrangements should be made in advance to avoid any confusion for children, teachers, and office personnel. If there are changes in the dismissal procedures on any given day, please put the instructions in writing to your child's teacher so that phone calls to the office regarding dismissal changes may be avoided. Any verbal dismissal changes must be received by the office *before 1:00PM* to allow normal school business to occur. Dismissal changes, without written confirmation may result in information not getting to a student in time or incorrect information being passed on to a student.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to maintain certain standards of cleanliness and decency. All students will be subject to this dress and grooming policy. All students must report to school attired in compliance with the provisions of this dress and grooming policy on a daily basis. There is to be no changing of clothes in school or on any school property prior to the beginning of or during the school day, unless it is for physical education, sports teams, extracurricular activities, or as authorized by the building administrator.

School officials may impose limitations on student participation in the regular instructional program where there is inappropriate dress or grooming.

With the guidance of their parents, students have the responsibility to dress appropriately and to keep themselves, their clothes, and their hair clean.

Students should at all times conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines of this policy. Most importantly, they should, at all times, be obedient, cooperative, respectful, and responsible to the teacher who is the supervisor of their educational program. Students who are disrespectful or defiantly disrupt their own education and that of others will be held accountable for such actions.

The following establishes the guidelines:

- 1. No hats, caps, hoods, bandanas, do-rags, headbands, sunglasses or gloves are to be worn once you enter the building. Such items are to be placed in lockers until the end of the day. Outerwear may ONLY be worn in the building with principal permission.**
- 2. No clothing including accessories and tattoos, shall display lewd, vulgar, obscene or plainly-offensive language or symbols, promote or picture alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illegal drugs or illegal or violent behavior including gang symbols.**
- 3. Clothing worn making underwear or bare skin visible between the upper chest and mid thigh is prohibited. Tops must have a minimum of one (1) inch straps. Showing cleavage is not appropriate. (Cleavage is defined as “The separation between a woman’s breasts.” per The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.)**
- 4. No footwear with greater than a three (3) inch heel. No flip flops, thongs, sliders, bedroom slippers, or roller shoes. Footwear meant to be tied must have laces tied. Heel straps on Crocs must be worn on the heel.**
- 5. No exposed body-piercing jewelry other than in ears. Gauges must be capped. No chains other than those designated as a bracelet or necklace, none of the following: wallet chains, dog collars, or spike bracelets/necklaces. Any jewelry that could be deemed as unsafe or used as a weapon is prohibited.**

Exceptions to any of these guidelines may be made for medical or religious reasons and must be referred to the building principal in writing prior to wearing.

Parents/Guardians should understand that they may be asked to bring a change of clothing to school for students who are in violation of this policy.

Student Expression and Dissemination of Materials

Students have the right to express themselves consistent with applicable law, Board Policy 220, and 22 PA Code §12.9. Student expression and dissemination of nonschool materials must comply with district procedures regarding time, place, and manner and may not materially and substantially disrupt the educational process, interfere with the rights of others, threaten safety, violate law, Board policy, or the Code of Student Conduct.

Students wishing to distribute or publicly display nonschool materials on school property must follow district procedures and obtain prior approval from the building principal or designee in accordance with Board Policy 220 and applicable administrative procedures.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

The decision to cancel school is made by the Superintendent of Schools. Cancellation of school sessions due to inclement weather or any other emergency situation is announced by SchoolMessenger (Automated Call) and over local radio websites and television stations:

Television: WYOU-22, WNEP-16, WBRE-28, WFMZ-69

InternetWebsite: www.palmerton.org

FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

An alternate approach (virtual) approved by the PA Department of Education (PDE) to delivering instruction if circumstances (inclement weather or other emergencies) arise that prevent in-person instruction.

PASD has been approved to use five (5) Flexible Instructional Days (FID) for this school year.

PASD will use the two (2) built-in make-up days first and then FID days will be used in place of any additional school closures. February 12th, and March 25th.

Families will receive information regarding Flexible Instructional Days throughout the school year.

PASD will send an automated call to notify families of a Flexible Instructional Day or school closure.

HEALTH

We will make every effort necessary to provide a safe, healthy, happy, and encouraging environment for each child. In order to do this, we need parent/guardian cooperation. We have implemented well-planned programs to meet the individual child's needs. Our state-mandated health program consists of:

Physical Examination	• Kindergarten, new first graders, sixth graders and students new to the district who have not had the required exam. A private physician may be chosen
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Scoliosis Check	● Sixth grade
Dental Exam	● K and 3 and children new to the district without the required exam. The school dentist or a private dentist may be chosen by the parent/guardian
Vision Checks	● Annually for all students
Height/Weight/BMI	● Annually for all students
Hearing Screening	● K-3, students with hearing difficulty and/or suspected hearing difficulty
Tuberculosis Testing	● New entrants as required and any adults working with the children during the school day

Any child with a suspected problem will receive a referral to be acted upon as soon as possible. Parents/guardians should notify the nurse when the problem is corrected.

The school nurse is available to our students at all times. However, parents will be notified if a student appears to be developing a habit of frequent visitation to the health room without sufficient reason.

MEDICATION

Medications should be given at home whenever possible. However, if it is absolutely necessary that medication be given at school, the following requirements must be met:

1. **ALL MEDICATION MUST be in the original prescription container.**
2. **Parent/guardian must bring the medication to the school nurse. No medication should be sent to school with a child.**
3. **The parent should also provide a written authorization for the medication with the following information:**
 - **Student's name**
 - **Date**
 - **Name and amount of medicine/time for medicine to be taken and how long medication is to be taken**
 - **Side effects and allergies**
 - **Listing of any other medications being taken by the child**
 - **Parent/guardian signature**
 - **Physician signature if it is a prescription**

Parents/guardians must complete emergency forms every year. In cases of injury and/or illness, parents/guardians will be contacted. It is vital that changes in home/work phone numbers and addresses be reported as soon as possible to the school.

First aid services are provided when accidents or sudden illness may occur at school. Accidents or illnesses that happen at home are not to be treated by the school nurse. If a child is too ill to remain in school, the parent/ guardian must provide transportation home. In the event that our school nurse requests that your child leave school, please make the necessary arrangements to do so

immediately. Your child's health, as well as the health of other children he/she may come in contact with, is our primary concern.

Please do not send your child if:

1. He/she has a fever (100 degrees or more). Student must be fever free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before a child may return to school. For example, if a child is sent home on Monday, at 10:30 AM, the student would need to be out one full day of school and would be able to return on Wednesday; if the child is fever free without fever-reducing medication.
2. Vomiting and/or diarrhea are occurring.
3. A severe head cold, continual runny nose, sore throat, earache, or persistent cough exists.
4. Any suspicious skin rash, disease of the eye, or contagious disease is present or suspected.
5. Lice are present.

Any student who shows signs of a contagious problem such as lice, pink eye, scabies, or questionable rash will be sent home from school. A physician's certificate should accompany the student upon return to school. Students who are returning after lice infestation are required to see the school nurse and present a box top from the pediculicide (shampoo used or receipt of purchase).

According to Pennsylvania State law, epinephrine auto-injectors can be administered to any student believed to be experiencing a life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), even if they have not previously had a severe reaction to a known or unknown allergen. The School District Physician provides a standing order that allows the school to maintain and administer epinephrine auto-injectors for use in these emergency situations.

The Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1414.2(g) allows parents/guardians to request an exemption to the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector for their student. To request this exemption, contact the school nurse to make an appointment to discuss this decision and review and sign the opt-out form.

Classroom Snacks and Treats

If students wish to bring in items for their classroom parties or if you feel the need to celebrate your student's birthday, you may send in items for their classroom peers. If you choose to send in edible treats, they should be store bought and include all ingredients on the package. If you intend to distribute birthday invitations at school, one must be given to each student in the class.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF MEMBERS

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional by contacting the building principal with a written request.

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) (McKinney-Vento Act). The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every

Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).¹ The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youths have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as other children and youths. Homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. Local Educational Agencies are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths. The law indicates that the LEA liaison shall ensure that all homeless children, youth and families are identified through coordinated activities with other entities. DEFINITION OF HOMELESS (MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT SEC. 725(2); 42 U.S.C 11435(2)): CHILDREN WHO LACK A FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE NIGHTTIME RESIDENCE: "Doubled up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations. Living in emergency or transitional shelters. Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live. Migratory children living in the above circumstances. Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meet the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Residency and Educational Rights: Students who are in temporary, inadequate, and homeless living situations have the following rights: Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment; Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation ; Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations. When a student is identified as being McKinney-Vento eligible, staff will: Assist with enrollment, monitor school attendance, and arrange transportation (preK-8 students) Provide school supplies and other school-related materials as needed Advocate for and support students and families through school and home visits set clear expectations for student behavior, attendance and academic performance assist students/families access with community services assist students/families with access to tutoring, special education, and English language learner resources assist students so they can participate in sports, field trips, and school activities regardless of their ability to pay or to provide their own transportation. For additional information, contact our Homeless Liaison/ Special Education Director – Demi Rohlffing (610)826-7101 Ext. 5018.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

We strongly believe that homework is an extension of the learning experience found in the classroom setting. It is an integral part of the educational process for children, and as such, should be viewed as a help to students in working independently and improving their ability to organize their work. Homework brings the home and school closer together by allowing parents to participate in their child's school program.

- 1. Review schoolwork with your child.**
- 2. Reduce TV time and turn off music while your child is studying.**
- 3. Provide an area for your child to study that is away from the center of family activity.**
- 4. Set up a regular study time and help your child organize assignments.**

5. Be aware of assignments and talk to teachers to make sure work is being done.
6. Read at the same time your child is studying – sort of a “study hour” for the whole family.
7. Provide educational trips to libraries, museums, local sites, etc.
8. Ask your child questions about what they have learned.
9. Set a limit on extracurricular activities on school nights.
10. Support your child while they are doing homework.

HOMEWORK REQUESTS

Homework requests will be granted as long as requests are made to the office by 9:00 AM. This will provide teachers with sufficient time to prepare assignments. Assignments and materials will be gathered and sent to the office for parent pick-up after 2:00 PM and prior to 3:00 PM. Please avoid dismissal time (3:00 PM – 3:30 PM) for picking up homework.

A parent or another designated adult may come to the office to pick up the homework. If there is a sibling at Towamensing Elementary, we will allow siblings to take homework home. If we are to send homework home with your child’s friend, please make the proper arrangements with the child and parent before contacting the school

HONOR ROLL and PRINCIPAL’S LIST

Listed below are the requirements for students to attain Honor Roll or Principal’s List:

Honor Roll – students must have all As and Bs in all major subjects and at least an “S” (Satisfactory) in all special areas. If your child receives an “N” or “U” in a special area, he/she will not be eligible for Honor Roll during that Marking Period.

Principal’s List – students must have all A’s in all major subjects and at least an “S” (Satisfactory) in all special areas. If your child receives an “N” or “U” in a special area, he/she will not be eligible for Principal’s List during that Marking Period.

HOURS

Office Hours	8:00AM – 3:30PM
Grades K-6	8:30AM – 3:00PM
Early Dismissal	8:30AM–11:45AM
Two Hour Delay	10:30AM– 3:00PM

It is very important that **ALL STUDENTS**, kindergarten through grade 6, attend school regularly and be at the bus stop on time. When tardiness is frequent, parents will be called. Because of supervision concerns, children being brought to school by parents **should arrive at school no earlier than 8:15AM each morning**. Please note that the school doors **DO NOT OPEN** prior to 8:15AM.

INCLUSION – ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN

The goal of the Palmerton Area School District is to create an environment that enables all children to be successful learners. This process is accomplished by determining what works for each child through the collaborative efforts of the school, home, and community. We believe that all children belong and learn best with their age-appropriate peers. We also believe that it is our responsibility to educate all of our children in an optimal educational environment that addresses academic, social, and emotional needs. Children with identified needs will receive additional support through special education teachers and our support team working with the classroom teachers. In this way, all children can benefit while learning to appreciate diversity.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

This notification is to advise you that the Palmerton Area School District occasionally applies pesticides, herbicides, and fertilization products to property and inside buildings. The application of these type products is in accordance with the district's Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), which is available for public review in school offices.

Planned applications of products will be preceded by a notification posted in buildings not less than 3 days prior to **the** anticipated date of service. Notifications will not be sent home unless requested in writing by the parent or legal guardian. Exceptions to the notification process would be an application in an emergency-type situation where there is an immediate threat to the health and safety of occupants. An example of this would be an infiltration of bees into an occupied space whereas the pests would need to be controlled immediately so as not to pose a health threat to occupants.

If your student has a history of experiencing adverse health effects from the use of pesticides or herbicides, you should provide that information to the school office. If you require notification of planned applications, please submit a written request to the school office.

For further information, review the IPM plan in the school office

INSURANCE

A school-endorsed insurance policy is available. This policy covers medical expenses from accidents that may occur both in school and traveling to and from school. Two plans are available: regular school hour coverage and 24-hour coverage. Announcements concerning this accident policy are made at the beginning of the school year. Families opting to purchase school insurance should send their payment directly to the insurance company. Please contact the Main Office if you are interested.

LEADER IN ME

Leader in Me is an evidence-based, comprehensive model that builds leadership and life skills in students, creates a high-trust school culture, and lays the foundation for sustained academic achievement. Our mission is to establish a “whole-child” mindset with a belief that all students have genius and everyone can be a leader. The program is based on the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey which are:

- 1. Be Proactive - You are in charge of yourself**

2. **Begin With the End in Mind - Make a plan**
3. **Put First Things First - Work first, then play**
4. **Think Win-Win - I win, you win, everyone wins**
5. **Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood - Listen first, then talk**
6. **Synergize - Work together to do it better**
7. **Sharpen the Saw - Take Care of Yourself**

LOST AND FOUND

Please label all students' clothing and possessions to allow us to return lost articles. There is a lost and found container located in the hallway outside the Main Office. Lost and found articles are set out at the end of the year for students to claim. However, many, many items are unclaimed. Money and jewelry items are held by the school secretary until claimed. At the end of each school year, unclaimed articles not able to be used by the health room will be disposed of. Students shall NOT bring more money to school than is needed for the day. When it is necessary to bring in large amounts of money (fund-raisers, photo day, Holiday Shoppe, Book Fairs, etc.), please place money in a sealed envelope with the child's name and homeroom teacher, and it is then secured in the office safe. The school is not responsible for any lost money/checks left in desks, book bags, etc.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

- **A Standards-Aligned Strategy to Improve Student Achievement using research-based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the students**
- **MTSS provides all students with standards-aligned concepts and competencies, data-driven instruction and the additional support needed to achieve strong academic results**
- **Comprehensive, multi-tiered intervention standards-aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk**
- **A data team comprised of the school counselor, school principal, reading and math specialists and classroom teacher will meet regularly to discuss those students who may be in need of interventions to be successful throughout the school year.**

MOVING DURING THE YEAR

If you plan to move within the Palmerton Area School District to another address, a moving permit is required. Please call the Towamensing Elementary School at 610-681-4024 for more information. In the event of a move out of our district, please notify the office as soon as possible, and return all textbooks, library books, and other school materials to your child's classroom teacher. All outstanding debts (cafeteria, etc.) must be settled prior to leaving the district.

NOTES TO SCHOOL/OFFICE

Should a note be written that will be sent to the office, certain information must be included on the note:

- **Child's first and last name**
- **Child's classroom teacher**
- **Parent/guardian's first and last name**
- **Date**

The office personnel appreciate your cooperation with providing the above information on notes. Occasionally, there may be a substitute in the office who is not familiar with families. Sometimes, a child's last name is not the same as the parent/guardian's last name.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

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:

Dr. Daniel Heaney
Assistant Superintendent for Academic Programs and Technology
3525 Fireline Road
Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-7160
dheaney@palmerton.org

PETS

Due to student illness, allergies and safety issues, pets and animals will not be allowed in school. Special permission may be granted for therapy dogs.

POLICIES

PASD entire manuals can be found on the district website. Please be aware of the following policies:

PASD Attendance Policy
PASD Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy
PASD Dress and Grooming Policy
PASD Elementary Schools Drug Policy
PASD Terroristic Threats/Acts Policy
PASD Tobacco & Vaping Products Policy
PASD Possession of Weapons Policy

To view these and more, please visit <https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/palm/Board.nsf/Public>.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Learning and maturation take place at different rates for every child. Some children need more time to learn basic concepts necessary for success in later grades. For this reason, sometimes the school will recommend retention. Parents need to be aware that:

- The School District has the obligation and right to assign students to appropriate educational settings where they can make their best progress.
- Decisions concerning promotion or retention of children are individual in nature and are made with the combined input as needed, of the parent, teacher, principal, school counselor, and school psychologist
- Most children are expected to move through the elementary school program in seven years. When retaining children, grades kindergarten, one and two seem to be ideal times to repeat for

the strengthening of skills or for the development of needed maturity. Since most retentions occur in the primary years, only in extreme cases will a child be retained after third grade

- Retention is a school responsibility and we are committed to keeping parents/guardians advised throughout the school year of the true nature of the performance of their child. Contact with the home will be made when the child first shows signs of failing. If the parent desires, a conference can be held with the teacher, counselor and/or principal. Possible retention will be discussed with parents/guardians prior to the end of the school year.

READING REQUIREMENT

Each marking period grades 3 through 6 will be required to complete a graded book project as assigned by their classroom teacher.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

We are committed to open and continued communication regarding student progress. Parent conferences for kindergarten-sixth grades will be November 23rd, 24th, and 25th. Formal final report cards are given at the end of the year. Parents may check grades on a daily basis through PowerSchool on the district website www.palmerton.org as well as, access 1st, 2nd, and 3rd marking period grades. There are no formal conferences held in the spring. However, parents are welcome to request a conference with teachers to discuss any concerns.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. Weather permitting; students go outside for recess. Students should be dressed appropriately for the existing weather conditions.

The National Nurses' Association has established the following guidelines for outdoor recess during the winter months:

- Feels like 25 degrees and above (considers wind chill factor) – Outdoor recess is permitted
 - Feels like 16 – 25 degrees (considers wind chill factor) – Abbreviated Outdoor Recess to 5 or 10 minutes and/or indoor recess.
 - Feels like 15 degrees or below (considers wind chill factor) – Inside recess.
2. Students are expected to go outside for recess unless a doctor's certificate for health reasons has been received.
 3. In the interest of safety and in compliance with our district dress code, flip-flops are not permitted to be worn to school. Crocs may be worn only if strap is being used to secure the foot.
 4. Children will not be allowed to leave the building with anyone other than the parent unless written permission to do so is sent to the office by the custodial parent. Any person picking up a child should be prepared to present identification.
 5. Students needing to use the elevator must have a written note from the doctor.

The entire school community is asked to cooperate regarding our daytime building security system. It has been installed with the safety of everyone in mind. All school doors are locked, and the security system is armed. Visitors to the building must approach the front entrance to request admittance. Once in the building, all visitors, parents, and community members must stop at the office, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge. Parents are not permitted to go directly to any classroom without first signing in at the Main Office and obtaining a Visitor's Badge. This procedure enables us to monitor who comes into the building, thus ensuring your child's safety. Upon leaving, you must return your Visitor's Badge, sign out and exit by way of the main entrance.

DRILLS

The Palmerton Area School District is committed to the safety and security of our students, staff, and schools. We encourage and welcome visits from local law enforcement agencies; we will also routinely conduct safety drills so that we can be as prepared as possible in the event of a true emergency. Please know that we may not provide notice, either before or after, these routine visits and drills. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

SCHOOL ACTIVITY POLICY FOR EARLY DISMISSAL AND SNOW DAYS

All district activities are canceled on snow days and early dismissal days. All activities that are not District operated (PTO, scouting, booster club activities such as basketball) are canceled on early dismissal and snow days and on any school holidays.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) members together with the principal and faculty plan activities and programs for the good of the students, school, and the community. The PTO is a parent volunteer organization which has worked tirelessly to raise funds to enrich our school programs. In past years, the PTO has provided our students with field trips, assemblies, t-shirts, classroom supplies, holiday gifts, and treats.

You are invited to become an active member of our organized school association at a cost of \$1.00/year. Parents/guardians, and grandparents are welcome to join and give their support. Notices announcing activities, as well as monthly meetings, are sent to parents by this organization. All meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month. Please support our efforts to enrich the programs for our students.

2026-2027 PTO Officers

Erin Bennett	President	ptotowapresident@gmail.com
Dakota Lichtenwalner	Vice President	ptotowavicepresident@gmail.com
Cheyenne Counterman	Secretary	ptotowasecretary@gmail.com
Lynn Passerini	Treasurer	ptotowatreasurer@gmail.com
Holly Sutterfield	Compliance Monitor	hollysutterfield@yahoo.com

Website: <https://www.towamensingpto.com>

PTO MEETING DATES

PTO meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. Childcare is provided for students in grades K-6.

September 9, 2026
October 14, 2026
November 11, 2026
December – no meeting
January 13, 2027

February 10, 2027
March 10, 2027
April 14, 2027
May 12, 2027

FIELD TRIP CHAPERONES

The following are general rules for chaperones on all field trips:

- Smoking/drinking is prohibited at all times and in all places
- All discipline concerns should be referred to the classroom teacher
- Never leave your assigned group unattended at any time
- Do not buy treats or souvenirs for your group

Teachers may have additional guidelines for you to follow, depending on the field trip. The classroom teacher will make these guidelines available to you.

PTO Field Trip Chaperones are selected based on points accumulated through PTO activities. Field Trip Chaperones must have required clearances approved in the office and must be a member of our PTO.

Parents will not be permitted to drop-off or pick-up students from the field trip site.

SchoolMessenger (Automated Phone Calls)

SchoolMessenger will call parents to notify of any delays or dismissal changes in the normal school day (two hour delay or early dismissal). Please make sure that you update all contact information on the Emergency Form Update that is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Should contact information change during the school year, please contact the office to update your information. SchoolMessenger may also be used to notify parents of any pending school events, i.e. first day of school, concerts, field trips, etc. It is very important that you listen carefully to the call when you receive it to avoid unnecessary confusion. Parents and students are asked not to call the school or the busing contractor to check/verify school closings, but to stay tuned to all local radio and television stations as well as our school website. The safety of our children and entire staff is always the primary concern when the decision is made to dismiss early, start later, or cancel school.

In the event of cancellations, the school district has built in snow make-up days that will be used at the discretion of the Superintendent. In such an event this will be communicated through an automated phone call. This should be kept in mind if you plan to make vacation arrangements over Presidents' Day weekend (2/12/27) and/or Spring Break (3/25/27).

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Individual photographs are taken of children each year, as a service to parents. Photographs are made available at a cost basis and purchase of these pictures is optional. Notices are sent home prior to the date on which pictures will be taken. The composite photo will be available for distribution after all absentees and retakes are processed.

Fall photos will be taken Monday, September 14th, 2026. Make-ups will be Monday, October 26th, 2026.

SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROGRAM

Rationale

Towamensing Elementary has implemented a positive behavior support program that is designed to create a culture that emphasizes a sense of unity and pride within our building and community. This program aims to teach and encourage positive behavior throughout the school. It is our goal that the program will create a school-wide environment that promotes self-respect, respect for each other, academic success, and pride in our school and community.

Positive Reinforcement

A major component of the program is to recognize students and classes demonstrating positive behavior through positive reinforcement. A certain number of “Leadership Tickets” will be given daily throughout the building by our staff. Staff will give a ticket to a student who is demonstrating positive behavior that is linked to our 7 Habits. Students who received a ticket will turn in their ticket to receive a magnet with their name on it. Their magnet will be placed on the ‘Towamensing Leaders’ board which is located in the main hallway of our school.

Consequences

There will be situations where a child may behave in a manner that is not positive and causes a disruption to the learning environment. We expect students to make mistakes; it is part of the learning process. However, in the event that a student is continually disruptive to the learning process, his/her teacher will complete a referral form and an authentic consequence appropriate for the student’s grade level will be given. For example, if a student says something offensive to another student, he/she may be asked to write an apology letter. Additionally, the student will be asked to complete a behavior reflection that will need to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned. Depending on the severity of the behavior, students may be referred to the principal and may also be given detention or receive in-school or out-of- school suspension. The goal of this program is to have students accept responsibility for their actions at an early age and understand that there are natural consequences for behaviors that interrupt the learning of others.

Parent Involvement

This program cannot reach its ultimate goal without your help. Research shows that one of the biggest contributors to a student’s success is when parents and the school work together. There will be a brief presentation about Leader in Me at “Meet the Teacher” nights. We are firm believers that with your support, we can help your children reach their goals, and with this program, we believe they will have the tools to reach and soar above those goals. If you have any questions about the program, please call our school counselors or principal.

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Palmerton Area School District, either directly or in conjunction with the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21, provides programs and services which may be required by students with special needs. Screening activities for these services are ongoing throughout each school year. These activities are coordinated by the RtII Data Team in each building. The team is comprised of the building principal, school counselor, school psychologist, and teachers. Screening/s conducted by these teams include a

review of health history (including vision and hearing), informal social history, and an informal assessment of academic, social, and development progress. Parents who wish to request screening for their child may do so by contacting the principal or counselor in their child's building. Special education screening and services are also available at no cost to school district residents attending private schools. Parents may request screening for their children attending private schools by contacting the Director of Special Education at 610-826-7101. For cases where screening indicates the possibility of a special need, the Director provides a Multidisciplinary Evaluation, with parental consent. Such an evaluation is conducted by the Multidisciplinary Team, which is chaired by the school psychologist and is comprised of the parent, building principal, school counselor, school nurse, teacher, and any specialist needed (such as speech, vision, or hearing therapists). Questions regarding the evaluation process may be directed to the Director of Special Education, Demi Rohlifing at 610-826-7101 Ext. 5018

The types of programs and services available to special needs students include:

- **Learning Support:** for special needs students whose primary identified need is academic learning
- **Life Skills Support:** for special needs students with a need to focus primarily on independent living skills
- **Multiple Disabilities Support:** for special needs students with more than one disability
- **Gifted Support:** for students identified as mentally gifted
- **Hearing Impaired Support:** services for students identified as in need of hearing support
- **Visually Impaired Support:** services for students identified as in need of vision support
- **Speech Support:** services for students with identified needs in the area of speech and language
- **Physical Support:** for special needs students whose primary need is due to a physical disability

Parents with questions regarding these programs may contact the Director of Special Education at 610-826-7101. All information and documents regarding your child's involvement with any of these services is confidential.

Parents of preschoolers within Palmerton Area School District may contact Project CONNECT at the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 directly at 1-800-223-4821 with any concerns about the development of a child in the areas of motor skills, cognitive/early academic skills, social development, self-help skills, and speech/language development. Project CONNECT provides screenings, evaluations, classroom instruction, itinerant and consultative services for special needs students from ages 3 to 5. Project CONNECT services are available without charge to children and their families. All information regarding your family and child will be kept confidential.

SIGNS OF AFFECTION

Students are to refrain from public displays of any affection. Violations will result in a warning. Continued violations may result in disciplinary action.

SIX-DAY SCHEDULING CYCLE

Students in grades kindergarten through six will be on a Day 1 to Day 6 scheduling cycle. The first day of school is Day 1; the second day is Day 2, etc. Should unscheduled days off occur, we will continue with the next scheduled number. For instance, if Monday is Day 2 and we have a snow day on Tuesday, Day 3 would be Wednesday or the next day we return to school.

SPECIAL SERVICES

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

The guidance and counseling needs of students in grades K-6 in the Palmerton Area School District are well served by a comprehensive counseling program offered at our elementary schools. In the elementary

grades, the approach taken by the counseling program involves both the remediation of problems already being experienced by students and, equally important, the prevention of future problems. These two goals are achieved through the following services offered by the elementary school counselor.

1. Classroom guidance lessons cover the following topics:
 - study skills
 - social skills/making friends
 - decision making
 - conflict resolution
 - career exploration
 - self-awareness/self-concept
 - anger/stress management
2. Individual and small group counseling - arranged as needed: (parent permission is required)
 - peer relationships
 - academic success
 - grief
 - social skills
 - anger management
 - emotion management
 - family concerns
 - coping skills
3. Testing – Regarding student’s strengths and weaknesses, the following tests are administered by the school counselor and/or the classroom teacher.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

GRADE(S)	NAME OF TEST
3, 4, 5, 6	PSSA English Language Arts and Math
5	PSSA Science

- Intelligence Screening Test
 - Testing for Learning Difficulties
- If the situation warrants, parent permission is obtained for psychological and educational evaluations administered by the school district psychologist
4. Consultation – The School Counselor acts as a consultant to:
 - Parents/Guardians
 - Teachers
 - Community Agencies
 5. Referral – If the needs of a child cannot be met in school, referrals can be made to others who can offer assistance to students and their families such as:
 - Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit
 - Carbon-Monroe-Pike Drug & Alcohol Commission
 - Community Social Service Agencies
 - Mental Health Agencies

- Medical Facilities
- YESS! Program through St. Lukes

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

This voluntary program is available to offer supportive services to students who may be experiencing academic, behavioral, and/or social/emotional difficulties.

These are just a few of the school counseling services available in our elementary program and parent are urged to contact the school counselor with any concerns. It is only with input from parents/guardians that any school counseling program can be truly successful.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Art Exhibits	• Each year, our students participate in a variety of art contests, poster contests and exhibits.
Chorus	• Students in grades 4 thru 6 may participate in chorus. Each year, chorus concerts are held in the winter and spring. All chorus members are expected to attend and participate in the concerts.
Environmental Club	• Students in grades 5 & 6 may participate in this club whose primary goal is to learn about preserving and advancing our environment.
Envirothon	• Selected students in grades 2-6 participate in an annual county-wide competition held at the Carbon County Environmental Education Center.
Sixth Sense Competition	• A team of sixth-grade students from Towamensing and S. S. Palmer Elementary School compete with local students in the Sixth Sense academic competition. This annual competition is held in the spring. Students meet regularly, under the direction of their advisors, to prepare.
Student Lighthouse Team	• Student representatives in grades 3 thru 6 are selected to be members of our Student Council. These students take an active role in our school's everyday activities and promote positive programs throughout the school year.
Top of the Morning Towamensing	• Students in this group will assist with the morning announcements and create a weekly video to share with all classrooms.
Yearbook	• Towmansing publishes an annual yearbook. This yearbook encompasses the many exciting activities and events that take place throughout the school year. Everyone will be represented in our yearbook through class and individual photos.

Students must maintain passing grades and demonstrate appropriate behavior to participate in school-sponsored activities, including band and other extracurricular programs. Participation is a privilege and may be revoked if academic performance or conduct does not meet school expectations.

TEACHER REQUESTS

Parents Please Note: We will not accept requests for specific teachers for your child's upcoming school year. Consideration will be given to learning styles and teaching styles when developing class lists for the coming year. Thank you in advance for your understanding in this matter.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for all textbooks issued to them. Textbooks are to be covered at all times in order to protect them, using Book Sox or paper, but not sticky paper. The student's name and grade should be listed on the book cover. Lost or damaged textbooks and/or library books must be paid for at the end of the school year at replacement cost as per Board Policy #224. Students are expected to carry their belongings in a sturdy book bag to/from school.

TITLE IX

The Palmerton Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or age in its education programs and activities. Additional information can be found on the Title IX link, which is located on the district's website under the "Student Resources" page and the "Parent Resources" page. Students and parents may also report issues directly to the principal or the Title IX coordinator.

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

Dr. Daniel Heaney
Assistant Superintendent for Academic Programs and Technology
3525 Fireline Road
Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-7160
dheaney@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:

The Palmerton Area School District enforces its commitment to non-discrimination through a series of school board policies including policies 103, 103.1, and 104. The PASD's entire policy manual is available on our website.

Reporting Forms:

[Discrimination and/or Harassment reporting forms](#) are available on the district's website. To access these forms, please click on the red Title IX Information link that is available on the [Student Resources webpage](#), [Parent Resources webpage](#), and the [Faculty Resources webpage](#) of the district's website.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

The following rules and regulations are necessary to ensure the maximum safety level for all students of the Palmerton Area School District. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the

student being suspended from riding the bus for a period of time, depending on the seriousness of the problems. Continual refusal to comply may result in permanent suspension from riding the school bus. If this occurs, parents are responsible for finding a way for their children to get to school. Absence from school due to bus suspension will be considered an unexcused absence.

DISTRICT SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS: Bus students will be permitted to ride their assigned school bus only. Only in an emergency situation or for educational purposes will a student be transported on another bus to or from an alternate bus stop. If your child, due to an emergency situation or for educational purposes, needs to be transported to or from another bus stop on a bus other than his/her regularly assigned bus, you must contact the school office in writing and make the arrangements. A bus pass with the appropriate verification will be issued. Students who attempt to board alternate buses without a bus pass from the office will not be permitted to do so.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE BUS STOP:

1. Be on time, but not earlier than five minutes.
2. Respect the rights of property owners in the area of the bus stop.
3. Form a single line when the bus is approaching. There shall be no pushing, shoving or horseplay at any time.
4. Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children before the bus arrives.
5. Students shall remain in place until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver gives the signal for safe crossing, at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
6. All school rules apply at the bus stop.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE BUS:

All students being transported by the Palmerton Area School District shall not:

1. Use any kind of tobacco products.
2. Eat or drink on the bus.
3. Engage in scuffling, fighting, or creating a disturbance.
4. Use profane, foul, or indecent language.
5. Use the emergency exit unless permitted to do so by the driver.
6. Tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
7. Regulate windows unless permitted to do so by the driver.
8. Extend any part of their bodies out of the window.
9. Throw any object(s) on the bus or out of the window.
10. Stand or walk when the bus is in motion.
11. Carry hand-held radios or other audio-visual games, electronics, etc.
12. Place any article in the aisle or in front of the emergency exit.
13. Carry or use any potentially dangerous object including, but not limited to knives, firearms, matches, lighters, fireworks, water guns, scissors, etc.
14. Litter the floor of the bus or the seats.
15. Transport any animal.
16. Board or disembark at a bus stop other than their designated bus stop unless given written permission by a school official.
17. Behave in a manner that would endanger the health, safety or welfare of other students or the driver by distracting the driver from his/her responsibility to operate the bus in a safe manner.
18. All school rules apply on the bus.

STUDENT BUS DISCIPLINE PLAN

The Palmerton Area School District employs a fair and consistent plan for addressing misconduct on school buses.

CONSEQUENCES:

1ST OFFENSE Driver may bring the student into the school office to meet with the principal and discuss the rules of the bus at which time a letter or phone call will be sent/made to the parents. Possible disciplinary action may be given at the first offense depending on the seriousness of the offense. A referral may also be written.

2ND OFFENSE A detention or bus suspension will be given, at which time a letter will be sent to the parent stating the consequence of the next offense. If a bus suspension occurs as a result of the current offense, a meeting needs to be scheduled with the parent, principal, student, bus driver and bus contractor to sign a Bus Reinstatement Contract. This contract will state that the next infraction will result in bus riding privileges being revoked for the remainder of the present school term. The student is not permitted to return to the bus until the meeting has been held.

3RD OFFENSE Bus riding privileges are revoked for the remainder of the present school term.

***NOTE** – Depending on the severity of the offense, a bus suspension may be issued. A student will be expected to sign a Bus Reinstatement Contract after any bus suspension. Once the reinstatement contract is signed, loss of riding privileges will follow the next offense.

****Building Administrators “reserve the right” to determine the seriousness of the offense and its consequences****

UNIFIED ARTS

Art	• Art is offered to all students in grades K-6. Please provide younger children with an old shirt or smock for art classes.
Health	• Health education is offered to students in grades 1-6.
Library	• Every student visits the library once a week for library/technology instruction and book exchange. No grade is given. Students are also encouraged to join their local library.
Music	• Music is offered to students in grades K-6. Classroom performances are held at certain grade levels. If your child is chosen for a part in his/her classroom performance, we will ask your permission for participation. If your permission is given, there is an expectation that the student will be present for any and all performances.
Physical Education	• Physical Education is offered to students in grades K-6. The children should wear or carry sneakers to school on the day of physical education. If a child must be excused from class, a doctor's note is required. Clothing worn should allow for free and safe movement during physical education activities.
Technology	• Students in grades 1-6 will be given an introduction to technology through our computer lab settings. Emphasis is on understanding how to properly use technology, keyboarding, word processing, and research use, depending on the grade level.

VACATIONS

Vacations taken during the school year are discouraged. However, when vacations are planned, parents must request a vacation form from the office at least one week prior to the departure date. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all assignments and see that they are completed upon returning to school. The nature and length of the assignments, as well as the make-up of any missed assignments, is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Any vacations not pre-approved by the principal will be considered unexcused absences. Our approach to this aspect of attendance flows directly from our belief in the critical importance of instructional time and the further conviction that loss of such time has negative consequences that neither teacher nor school cannot be expected to fully remedy.

Grades 3-6	English Language Arts	April 26, 27, & 28
Grade 3-6	Math	May 3 & 4
Grade 5	Science	May 5 & 6

Please refrain from scheduling vacations during PSSA testing days.

**PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
TOWAMENSING ELEMENTARY
LEADERS are Safe, Respectful, and Responsible**

	CLASSROOM	HALLWAYS	BATHROOMS	CAFETERIA	RECESS	BUS	When I feel upset...
SAFE	I will keep hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will push in my chair. I will use walking feet.	I will walk in a straight line while facing forward. I will keep my shoes tied.	I will keep water in the sinks. I will use the facilities properly. I will keep the floors clean.	I will walk at all times. I will sit in my area. I will use my utensils properly.	I will keep hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will use equipment properly.	I will sit in my assigned seat facing forward. I will enter and exit the bus by using walking feet. I will sit until the bus comes to a stop.	I will keep hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will walk in a straight line while facing forward. I will use an inside voice.
RESPECTFUL	I will use kind words. I will share with others. I will be considerate of the property of others.	I will use manners. I will walk quietly. I will greet others kindly.	I will keep the walls, mirrors, and stalls clean. I will respect the privacy of others.	I will pay attention to personal space. I will follow directions from adults. I will speak kindly to peers and adults.	I will enter and exit the building quietly. I will share playground equipment. I will play fairly.	I will keep hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will use kind words. I will be respectful to the bus driver.	I will ask for a break. I will express my feelings using "I statements"

RESPONSIBLE	I will listen at all times. I will raise my hand and wait to be called on. I will take care of my personal belongings. I will be responsible for my actions and accept consequences.	I will walk quietly in the hallway. I will keep my hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will walk directly to where I need to go.	I will flush the toilet. I will wash my hands when finished. I will put trash in the trash cans.	I will keep hands, feet, and objects to myself. I will use an inside voice. I will keep tables and floors clean. I will follow directions from adults.	I will line up when the signal is given. I will clean up and return equipment to the proper place. I will accept responsibility for my actions. I will report any incidents to staff members.	I will use an inside voice at all times. I will report any incidents to staff. I will not have food or drinks on the bus. I will take care of my personal belongings.	I will use calm down strategies-count to 5; take a belly breath. I will use the steps to problem solve with others. I will use positive self-talk.
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