

PALO VERDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Home of the Panthers!

7502 N. 39th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85051

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Front Office/Student Center: 602-347-2500

24/7 Attendance Line: 602-347-2525

Health Office: 602-347-2510

Principal: 602-347-2505

Assistant Principal: 602-347-2506

Breakfast in Classroom from 8:45-9:00 a.m.

School Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Early Release Wednesdays

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesdays 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Website: www.wesdschools.org/py

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As the Palo Verde principal, it is my honor to welcome the Palo Verde community to the 2025-2026 school year!

I am excited to continue the incredible journey we've started together. This year, we are deepening our commitment to becoming a truly collaborative community – one where students, staff, and families work side by side on our shared "Pathway to Excellence."

At Palo Verde Middle School, we believe that strong partnerships lead to powerful learning. By fostering a spirit of collaboration, we're creating a school environment that is inclusive, innovative, and focused on success for every student.

Your involvement is essential. Whether you're joining us for a school event, volunteering your time, or supporting your child at home, you are helping build the foundation of our **Palo Verde Panther Pride**. I encourage each family to be part of at least one school activity this year as we continue our positive focus on **Great Students, Great Staff, Great School**.

Our rules and expectations are designed to maintain a safe, respectful, and supportive environment where all students feel valued and inspired to excel. With your partnership, we can provide every student with the best possible educational experience.

Thank you for being a vital part of our growing collaborative community. I look forward to all we will accomplish together.

Shannon Sixel

School Mission

Palo Verde's mission is to ensure the success of our diverse school community.

Palo Verde Vision: We envision Palo Verde as a school where we work together as we embrace an engaging educational experience, while supporting one another, building meaningful relationships, and empowering the growth and potential of our diverse school community.

BELIEFS

We, the staff of Palo Verde Middle School, are committed to the following ideals:

The highest level of professional integrity in holding ourselves accountable to self, staff, students and community for consistency in educational goals, discipline, communication and professional growth.

A safe, positive environment where open communication facilitates

integrity, mutual pride, and respect.

Guiding every student to reach his or her highest level of involvement and achievement.

An open partnership with the community, parents and school, based on communication and shared responsibility.

Student Support

Our school uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to make sure all students have what they need to learn and grow. MTSS helps us support students in their academics as well as their social-emotional well-being. All students receive strong, school-wide support, but some may benefit from more targeted help. This might include additional instruction, small group time to practice skills, or more individualized plans. Teachers and staff regularly check how students are doing and adjust supports as needed. Our goal is to work as a team with families to help all students do their best by using data to provide the right kind of support for both academic success and social-emotional growth.

In addition, we are moving in the direction of becoming a PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) school. This change will support our students and maintain consistency with our incoming feeder school students.

Parent/Student/Teacher Title I Compact Palo Verde Middle School

These compact pledges our school community to increase student reading and math skills.

By signing off on the school handbook, this signifies that you have read and understand the Parent/Student/Teacher Title I Compact.

Parent/Guardian Pledge: I want to see my child succeed, to encourage him or her, I will:

- *Help my son/daughter create a system to organize materials by class, to track assignments and collect forms/information needing my attention.*
- *Urge my son/daughter to ask for help from the teacher if he or she is having difficulty understanding instruction or assignments.*
- *Require that my son/daughter completes projects and daily work.*
- *Urge my son/daughter to read uninterrupted for 30 minutes a day, any type of material (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.).*
- *Commit to attending at least one or more activities at the school, per semester.*
- *Access my student's grades and academic progress two times per month through teacher contact, online grade access, etc.*
- *Help my student connect his or her learning to high school, college and career readiness.*

Student Pledge: It is important to work to the best of my ability, so I will:

- *Be responsible for organizing materials by class, keeping track of assignments and giving my parent information sent home by the school.*
- *Let my teacher and family know if I need help.*
- *Read on my own every day for at least 30 minutes.*
- *Work on projects and daily assignments in class when time is given, and at home.*
- *Set goals for high school, college and career readiness and monitor my own progress.*

Teacher's Pledge: Student achievement is our priority, so I will:

- Create a partnership with every family in my class.
- Monitor student progress regularly and communicate concerns with students and parents.
- Make sure all students get help as soon as needed.
- Use effective teaching strategies to support all learners.
- Make sure students understand the assignment and what they'll learn from it, grade it promptly and reteach as needed.
- Support academic preparation for high school, college and career readiness for all students.

DRESS CODE

ID Cards: All Palo Verde students are required to wear IDs while on the Palo Verde campus and on buses. Students will be provided with a picture ID at the beginning of the school year at no cost. Students will be checked for compliance during first period and throughout the school day. If a student does not comply with the school dress code in wearing his or her ID card, the student will be disciplined accordingly. Students will not be allowed on the bus if an ID is not present. IDs must be visible at all times, on student's lanyard, around the neck.

IDs are required at athletic events, getting on the bus, and entering campus from the buses. If students deface, destroy, render their ID unreadable or lose their ID, they will be required to purchase a replacement ID for \$2. Replacement lanyards and pouches are 50 cents each.

MANDATORY SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

Palo Verde is a uniform-only school, as adopted by the Palo Verde Middle School Site Council and consistent with Washington Elementary School District Governing Board policies and regulations. The purpose of the policy is to enhance a positive, productive and safe school environment that contributes to increased student achievement. Additionally, the uniform and dress policy standards program has been determined to be in the best interest of our students.

Description of Uniform Requirements. The uniform, for all Palo Verde students, shall consist of the following:

The red, short-sleeved Palo Verde T-shirt must be worn every day by every student. Please contact the school office about how to obtain a T-shirt. Uniform shirts must be visible at all times.

Jackets/outer coverings must provide warmth and may not contain inappropriate symbols, pictures or language.

Navy-blue, khaki, or black bottoms, **uniform-style** pants (pants, shorts, skirts or skorts) without embellishments are to be worn and may be purchased at any store. Shorts may not extend past the kneecap. Skirts, skorts and shorts must reach at least mid-thigh above kneecap. "Sagging" is not permitted. Uniform-style pants must be free of holes above the knee.

Belts of appropriate length must be solid black or navy with a solid/plain buckle. Belts may not be more than one size larger than the waist. All belts must be worn through the belt loops, and the ends may not dangle in front of the pants.

Shoes must be worn at all times. If the footwear has laces, they must be tied for safety purposes. Shoes must be closed toed and closed heel. No sandals, slides, etc. allowed. Socks may be knee-high, calf-length or ankle socks, of any color, but must match. Students are expected to wear properly tied athletic shoes for physical education.

Jewelry/accessories must be appropriate in content.

The wearing of any clothing or symbols or possession of paraphernalia that is associated with gangs or gang-like activity are

prohibited (See District gang policy). Gang-related items tend to change throughout the school year. The Police Department advises school administrators when such changes take place; subsequently, administrators notify students of changes in the dress code.

Spirit/Free Dress Days: Administration may allow a "free dress day" or "spirit day."

The District dress code will be followed on free dress days or spirit days. Administration may approve team attire for athletes, club members, performers, etc. on campus during their specific activity ONLY on the day given permission.

Note: The administrators and faculty reserve the right to evaluate any clothing for health and safety concerns and may determine on a case-by-case basis that particular clothing presents a potential safety hazard or educational disruption. Those students who are dressed inappropriately must change to more appropriate attire and will receive proper disciplinary consequences. The dress code is in effect at all school events at Palo Verde regardless of the time of day. With written administrative approval only, changes may be made to the designated uniform during the school year. Apparel and accessories deemed inappropriate by the administration will not be allowed.

As with dress, hairstyles should not distract from the learning environment or other school activities.

ATTENDANCE/TRUANCY

When a student reaches five total absences (excused, unexcused and/or unverified), families will receive an attendance notification letter. When a student reaches 10 **unverified, unexcused, and excused absences**, families will receive an attendance warning letter and a referral to the AU for appropriate actions (see District guidelines). In order to avoid this eventuality, there are several precautions to take: (1) reinforce being on time and good attendance, (2) call the school each time a student will be late or absent, (3) present any medical documentation to the health technician and/or attendance clerk if illness will be a consistent, foreseeable issue.

Parent cooperation is of the utmost importance in assuring student success.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain assignments that have been missed due to absence and complete them within the guidelines set by the teacher. In the case of extended absence, a member of the student's team will make special arrangements for the student to make up work.

Students who are tardy to school must check in at the Student Center. Tardies to class will be handled by teams per the Palo Verde Guidelines

LEAVING CAMPUS

Palo Verde is a Closed Campus. Students may not leave campus. Students may leave campus only if a legally authorized parent or guardian, as listed on the school records, has signed the student out. The parent or guardian must go to the Student Center with I.D. to sign out the student. Students must be signed out prior to their departure. The student may leave campus only if accompanied by the parent or guardian.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

No one has the right to interfere with the learning or safety of others. Palo Verde has established the guidelines for behavior to be consistent with the rights and responsibilities of all concerned.

When students disrupt the educational process, in the classroom, staff members will use the following sequence of procedures:

1st Offense: Warning.

2nd Offense: Isolation within the classroom.

3rd Offense: Isolation in another classroom. (Out-of-class Isolation) Call to parent/guardian.

4th Offense: Removal from isolation classroom; referral to student center (parent notified).

Severe Behavior: Immediate referral to student center; parent notified; and/or severe consequences administered; referral to police, if necessary.

OUT-OF-CLASS ISOLATIONS

Each time a student is isolated out of class, a parent/guardian will be notified.

1st Out-of-class Isolation: Parent notified by teacher isolating the student out of class. Conference with the student.

2nd Out-of-class Isolation: Parent notified by teacher isolating the student out of class; Conference with the student.

3rd Out-of-class Isolation: Parent/Teacher Conference scheduled. Student put on a behavior contract.

4th Out-of-class Isolation: Parent notified by teacher isolating the student out of class; one after-school detention assigned by team.

5th Out-of-class Isolation: Parent notified by teacher isolating the student out of class; referral to the Office; advance One (1) Step on the Step Plan.

Any further out-of-class isolations will result in an office referral.

The number of Out-of-class Isolations reverts to zero (0) at the end of each semester, unless a contract has been entered.

DETENTION

Lunch detentions will be served on the student's regular lunch period in a designated location or may consist of community service supervised by a staff member.

After-school detentions will be served in a designated detention room, or may consist of community service. Students should report to the designated room, or area, by 4:05 p.m., or Wednesdays, by 2:35 p.m.

Individual teams may run their own lunch and after school detentions. Those detentions are run according to team policy.

Students who are assigned detentions must complete all detentions assigned to them. Failure to complete detention(s) or being removed for failure to follow directions will result in an additional detention being assigned. Failure to serve assigned detention(s) will result in doubling the number of detentions, and/or an Office Referral. In addition, a Step may result with "Refusal to Comply" as the consideration for administrative action. Advancement on the Step Plan may result in either In-school or Out-of-school Suspension.

In-school Suspension (ISS) is designed to provide structured supervision to those students who by their behavior have indicated a lack of self-discipline and/or have been a disruption to the orderly conduct of the classroom or school. If a student misbehaves during In-school Suspension, he or she will then be Home Suspended during the remainder of the time and an additional day may be added. Repeated removals from In-school Suspension will result in automatic Home Suspension regardless of the student's discipline step.

All schoolwork will be available in the In-school Suspension room for the student to complete.

All schoolwork assigned during the Home Suspension time will be collected and in the front office for parents to pick up, if necessary.

PALO VERDE STEP PLAN

Upon referral to the student center, below are *minimum/maximum* consequences for each Step. Greater consequences may be given based on the seriousness of the infraction. Refer to the District section of this handbook for more details.

Step 1 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 2 2 days In-school Suspension

Step 3 3 days In-school Suspension

Step 4 1 day Home Suspension, TAP process will begin

Step 5 1 day Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 6 2 days Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 7 3 days Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 8 4 days Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 9 5 days Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Step 10 6 days Home Suspension, 1 day In-school Suspension

Serious infractions of any school rules may result in detention, suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the offense. When appropriate, the police will be notified. Parents will be notified of any referral to the Student Center. In the event of a student suspension, due process will be provided to the student in accordance with Washington Elementary School District Governing Board policy and regulations.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are not to be in the possession of students at bus stops, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. These items will be confiscated and returned only after parent notification. The items will be returned to parents, discarded or turned over to the police, if appropriate.

Hats (except during cold weather, or on "Hat Day"), caps, visors, bandannas, or bandanna-style accessories, beanies, headbands and hairnets.

Safety pins may not be worn on the body or to accessorize your uniform.

Spike-type ear gauges, excessive/disruptive piercings.

Chains of any kind. Fashions or fads that become a health hazard or safety hazard.

Backpacks, backpack purses and book bags. If sports bags or backpacks are needed for athletics, they are to be kept in a designated area.

Laser pens and any type of toy.

Matches, lighters, cigarette papers and other paraphernalia.

Skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, scooters, heelys, etc.

Prescriptions or nonprescription medication. (These must be dispensed by the health tech per District Policy).

Stink bombs, smoke bombs, poppers, fireworks of any kind, etc.

Water balloons.

Gum

Coffee, soda, energy drinks.

Sunglasses may not be worn in the cafeteria or classroom.

Makeup, hair products, combs, perfumes, colognes, body spray and brushes are not to be used in the classrooms or the cafeteria.

Aerosol sprays

Sharpies/Permanent Markers

Any other item(s) deemed inappropriate by the administration.

Electronic Devices

Palo Verde is not responsible for any lost or stolen electronic devices on campus (including cell phones, iPods, smart watches, headphones, cameras, etc.). Students will be allowed to use these

items at the teacher's discretion for academic purposes only. If electronics are used for personal purposes during school hours, they will be confiscated.

All confiscated items will be returned to parents only (from 4:00-4:30 p.m. in front office), discarded or turned over to the police, if appropriate.

Please note that Palo Verde does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen items. They are not to be brought to school.

Public Display of Affection (PDA)

PDA is considered a disruption to the educational environment. Students violating this policy will receive consequences in line with the District policy for disorderly conduct.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES **PROMOTION CEREMONY**

Eighth grade students will be recognized through a promotion ceremony sponsored by individual teams. This is an earned privilege through academic achievement, positive behaviors, and daily attendance. Students must achieve a 1.0 or D average in each class to qualify for the Promotion Ceremony. If a student is suspended at the time of the Promotion Ceremony, he or she will not earn the right to participate in the ceremony. Students who have received multiple disciplinary actions for significant behavior concerns resulting in suspension(s) will be in jeopardy of not participating in the promotion activities. Parents, please note that if your son/daughter has any issues in any of the criteria areas, please schedule an appointment to meet with your child's teacher, Student Service Specialist, and/or administration.

Academics: Each student must maintain a 1.0 grade point average (G.P.A.) in all academic areas. Academic assistance is being provided in regular classes and during 3rd/4th Hour Tutorial.

Behaviors: Students behavior on campus is *the student's* responsibility. If a student's behavior results in a suspension, eligibility for these activities will be in jeopardy.

Attendance: Daily attendance is extremely important in any student's academic success. It is imperative that absenteeism is minimal and that all students are present for state testing.

After-school Activities

The Parent/Student Handbook rules and procedures apply to all after-school activities. The following guidelines outline our procedures for determining student eligibility for any extra-curricular activities:

Sports Participation:

Eligibility for competition will be determined by quarter report cards and midterm reports. An academic grade of "F" or conduct grade of "U" in any subject on a District report card or a District midterm report will make a student ineligible for competition until the next reporting period.

A student may regain eligibility status:

1. At the next reporting period (a District report card or District midterm report). This is defined as no "Fs" in any academic subject or "Us" in conduct or effort.

Or

2. After a minimum of two weeks from the onset of the ineligibility, the athlete can prove that his or her deficiency has been corrected and all other grades and conduct marks are still in good standing.

The athlete must present proof to the coach and athletic director. The "two week petition" may only be used to make an athlete eligible.

Other After-school Activities:

Students receiving a grade of an "F" or a "U" in behavior may be determined ineligible at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Ineligibility applies to all activities that occur outside the realm of a normal school day and have no grade or credit attached to student participation.

1. Ineligible students may, at the discretion of the sponsor, practice with teams or organizations that require it. These students may not represent the school by dressing in uniform or actual participation in the event or contest.
2. Activities affected by these standards include clubs, performances, athletics and school dances.
3. Coaches and sponsors are responsible for checking each member of their activity for eligibility to participate and subsequently informing them of their status.
4. A student must be in attendance for at least half of the school day to be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored activity or event.

Student Recognition

Student of the Month: Teachers recommend students for outstanding academics in the classroom.

Citizen of the Month: Teachers recommend students for outstanding character.

Perfect Attendance

Principal's List: Students earning a 4.0 GPA all four quarters.

Honor Roll: Students earning a 3.5-4.0 on their report card are placed on the Honor Roll (Bronze-3.5-3.74, Silver- 3.75-3.99, or Gold-4.0). Students receiving a grade of "F" or "U" in behavior or effort will not be eligible for these awards.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PTO

We welcome participation in our **PTO**. Yearly dues are \$5.00 per family. We hold monthly meetings, generally the first Monday of the month. We are building an e-mail network to support communication between families and the school. Brochures with our mission and goals are available in the school office. Take Panther Pride in knowing that you are a crucial part of helping to improve your child's school.

Site Council

We encourage you to attend the **Site Council** meetings, which are held monthly. Please contact the office for meeting dates. Meeting dates, agendas and minutes are posted on our Web site.

NUTRITION SERVICES

Palo Verde provides universal free breakfast and lunch to all students.

TRANSPORTATION

Riding on a District bus is not a right but a **privilege**. Students must maintain safe and appropriate behavior on the way to school/home, at the bus stop and on the bus. Students must have their ID on them at all times.

Bus reports will be issued for violations of bus rules. Parents will be notified of all bus reports. Infractions of bus rules will result in loss of privilege to ride a WESD bus. Please refer to the District handbook for bus rules.

Students requesting to ride a bus they do not regularly ride must take a written request, signed and dated by a parent, to the office for authorization prior to 9:00 a.m. The request must also include the route number of the bus to be ridden.

**PALO VERDE IS A TOBACCO, WEAPON AND DRUG
FREE SCHOOL ZONE!**