



**Palos School District 118**

**East | West | South**

*All Students Reaching their Full Potential*

**2017-2018 HANDBOOK**



## **Welcome**

### **FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Thank you for your continued efforts to support our mission of excellence in education. Please take the time to read the contents of this parent/student handbook, and visit the content links online for more detailed information. It contains information you will need as the parent of a Palos 118 student. The calendar and parent/student handbook is designed as a guide to the Palos 118 website and supersedes all previous calendar/handbooks. Informational items and parent notifications are summarized in the calendar/handbook with reference to the district website where more detailed information can be found at [www.palos118.org](http://www.palos118.org). Please note that school procedures and board policies may be amended during the year without notice.

As a learning community, it is important that we partner with parents to maintain the superior school system we enjoy here at Palos School District 118. To this end, please take some time to go over the information contained within these pages with your child. As you do so, please remind your student that we are here for him or her and wish all our students an abundance of personal success and happiness. We hope you have a wonderful school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella  
*Superintendent of Schools*



## **Greetings**

### **FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT**

The Palos 118 Board of Education is committed to continuing the school district's tradition of offering exceptional educational and extra-curricular opportunities for every student while making it a great place for our talented staff to work and grow professionally. We are comprised of seven elected representatives, each serving a four-year term. The board's role is to serve as the policy making body for the district and work with our Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Scarsella, who implements those policies and oversees day to day operations. Regular meetings are typically held the third Tuesday of each month and are open to the public.

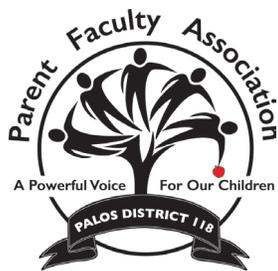
The Palos 118 School Board conforms to all standards set forth by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB).

We hope to see you at our meetings and in our classrooms, sharing whatever time and talents you have. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me or any Board of Education member. Have a great school year.

MariJo Calacci  
*Palos 118 School Board President*

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## Parent Faculty Association PFA



[www.palos118.org/pfa](http://www.palos118.org/pfa)

District 118 PFA is an association of parents and school faculty working together on behalf of your children. Each child in District 118 benefits from the various programs and events sponsored by the PFA. The PFA provides our schools supplementary financial support that funds various items needed by faculty

to enhance the learning experience of every child in our amazing school district.

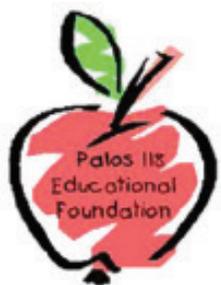
The PFA also sponsors the following programs and events:

- Educational assemblies & safety presentations
- Art Awareness & Reading Programs
- Cardinal Chase - Family Fun Run/Walk
- Mom's Night Out

- Daddy/Daughter Dance & Mother/Son Bash
- Santa's Secret Shop
- Holiday room parties
- Boo Bash
- Spirit Lunch & South Theme Lunch
- ShamRock-N-Roll - Spring Fundraiser
- Eighth grade graduation dance and ceremony
- and a variety of other events

Your volunteerism and participation is essential to the PFA fundraisers. You make these programs possible through your support.

If you would like more information on joining the PFA or being a volunteer, please email us at [pfa@palos118.org](mailto:pfa@palos118.org). If you have a student in one of our schools, you can join through Skyward which is your student's registration site. You can find volunteer opportunities at each school or event on our Volunteer webpage.



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## Palos 118 Educational Foundation

F.U.N.

[www.palos118.org/foundation](http://www.palos118.org/foundation)

Dedicated to F.U.N. - Funding Unfunded Needs - has been the Foundation's vision since its inception in 1998. The recent Capstone donation, iPad purchases, funding

for the Applied Technology Lab at South and playground renewals at East and West were possible through fundraising endeavors by the Educational Foundation.

**Mission Statement:** The Palos 118 Educational Foundation is a not for profit organization dedicated to the support and enhancement of superior educational opportunities for the students of Palos Community Consolidated School District 118.

**Beliefs:** The Foundation is an advocate of excellence in public education through long-term community partnerships and resources.

**Goals:** The Foundation strives to expand the educational mission of the District by providing financing beyond the means of conventional public funding and by fostering long-term community partnerships.

This year's events include Laps for Literature (9/15/17), National Day of Giving (11/28/17) and Trivia Night (2/10/18). We hope you consider supporting our events and mission. Visit our webpage for more information about how you can support the Foundation.

*The Foundation is a tax-exempt organization within the meaning of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code and is also registered with the State of Illinois Attorney General Office's Charitable Trust Bureau. All Foundation Board members serve without remuneration.*

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## Music Parents Association



<http://www.palos118.org/mpa>

The Music Parents Association (MPA) at Palos School District 118 is a volunteer organization whose mission is to support the advancement of education through the school district's music programs. The MPA provides supplemental financial resource through various fundraising efforts, including our annual signature event—the Harvest

Fest. Funds raised are used for educational music activities, equipment, and supplies. In addition, the MPA also conducts ancillary activities such as hospitality during key musical events at the three Palos District 118 schools. All parents and guardians are welcome to join the MPA.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## ABSENCES EXCUSED UNEXCUSED

Students that regularly miss school are at heightened risk for falling behind academically. Parents/guardians should make every effort to ensure students are in school daily. Student absences will be excused for the following reasons: Illness, doctor appointment, family emergency, death in the immediate family, concern for the student's safety and observance of a religious holiday. For information regarding vacations, please see Extended Absences below. Parents/guardians must provide a reason for all absences. If no reason is given, the absence will be unexcused.

### Extended Absences Up to 10 Days

Parents/guardians may request an extended absence from school for their student for up to 10 days. Requests must be made to the building principal in writing at least a week prior to the extended absence for approval. If the parent/guardian fails to request an extended absence for up to 10 days and their student is not in school, those days will be unexcused.

### Extended Absences In Excess of 10 Days

Only in rare cases will an absence in excess of 10 days be excused. Requests for extended absence in excess of 10 days must be made to the Superintendent in writing at least a week prior to the extended absence for approval.

### Extended Absences In Excess of 3 Weeks

Parents/guardians requesting an extended absence in excess of three weeks will be required to withdraw their student from school. Parents/guardians are highly encouraged to consider homeschooling their student or enrolling them in another school pursuant to Illinois' Compulsory School Attendance laws.

### Chronic Absenteeism and Chronic Truancy

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) defines chronic absenteeism as absences in excess of 10% of total school days. In Palos 118, students are considered chronically absent if they miss more than 17 days of school. Palos 118 is required to report all students missing 17 total days or more of school (both excused and unexcused absences) to ISBE as chronically absent.

Illinois defines chronic truancy as missing 9 or more days of school unexcused. Palos 118 is required to report students missing 9 or more days of school unexcused to the South Cook Intermediate Service Center (ISC) as chronically truant. They ISC can investigate all students reported as chronically truant.

### Attendance Notifications

To assist parents/guardians in tracking the number of days students have been absent BEFORE Palos 118 is required to report your child to the Illinois State Board of Education and/or Cook County, parents/guardians will receive automated attendance reminders after the following days:

- 5 Days Unexcused
- 8 Days Unexcused
- 9 Days Unexcused – student reported to Cook County as chronically truant
- 10 Days Total (Excused and Unexcused)
- 15 Days Total (Excused and Unexcused)
- 16 Days Total (Excused and Unexcused)
- 17 Days Total (Excused and Unexcused) – student reported to ISBE as chronically absent

## ABSENCE MAKE-UP WORK

Parents of students who are absent from school due to illness may request make-up work prior to 10 a.m. by calling the school office. In the event that a child is ill for 2 days or longer, it is strongly recommended that parents call the office and request make-up work. Homework may be picked up in the school office from dismissal until 4 p.m. (East & West) and 3:45 p.m. (South). A student who is excused from school attendance shall have the equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements which he/she missed during the excused absence (schedule to be determined by the teacher).

## VACATION MAKE-UP WORK

Academic success is dependent upon regular student attendance. Parents are encouraged to plan family vacations when school is not in session. It is impossible to replicate the classroom experience by virtue of make-up classwork. Class discussions and conceptual development cannot be made up through missed assignments. Should it be impossible to schedule vacation without impacting the school schedule, the teacher will provide make-up work upon the student's return to class. Students will be given the same number of days to complete make-up work as the number of days out of school for vacation.

## TARDINESS

In the event that a child arrives late to school, a parent/guardian must accompany the child to the office.

## TELEPHONE USE

Except in cases of special emergencies, parents are asked not to telephone their children at school. If any emergency arises at school, children are given permission to use the school telephone.

## GIFTS

Collection of money for the purpose of purchasing gifts for school personnel is discouraged.

## RECESS (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)

Students will go outside for recess unless the temperature (with the wind chill factor) is below 15 degrees, or other circumstances such as playground conditions or precipitation require students to remain indoors. Please dress your child appropriately.

## SCHOOL VISITORS AND PARENTS

School security procedures require that all visitors and parents must request admittance to the school through the office. Parents who desire to observe their child in class should make arrangements with the school principal. Classroom visitation procedures are also clarified in board policy 6:122. School offices have locked entrances and a buzzer intercom and camera system.

- All parents/visitors are required to have a picture ID such as a driver's license or state-issued ID.
- All parents/visitors must identify the purpose of their visit. An appointment must be made in advance by contacting the building administrator to observe a classroom, attend a conference, or meet with a teacher.
- All parents/visitors will be required to wear a visitor badge and lanyard while in the school. The staff has been instructed to direct any unidentified visitor to the office.

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All parents/visitors are limited to the preapproved purpose for their visit and should not visit classrooms, engage students in conversation, or tour the building.
- At the conclusion, visitors/parents must return to the office, sign out, and return their visitor badge.

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS

District 118 will utilize an automated calling system to call home, cell and/or work phone numbers in the event of a school closing. School closings are also listed on the district website and the Emergency Closing Center website: [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com).

### LATE START OF SCHOOL/WEATHER DELAY

Palos 118 may also declare a one-hour late start option to provide an additional solution for poor weather situations and parents will be notified with an automated phone message. A late start schedule delays all school and bus operations by one hour. Students report to their bus stops one hour later and schools begin one hour later.

### SKYWARD PARENT PORTAL

Palos South parents and students have access to grades and attendance through a secured parent portal. Parents and students will receive individual usernames and passwords. The usernames and passwords are given to all parents and students entering sixth grade, or those new to the district. The usernames and passwords will remain the same while the student attends Palos South. Please contact the district office (448-4800) if you do not receive a username and password by the end of your child's first month of school.

### REQUIRED PHYSICAL EXAMS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

**Physical Exam and Immunizations:** Illinois State Law requires each public school student to present proof of physical examination and immunization upon entering school at kindergarten or at the first grade level, when transferring to a new school, and at the sixth grade level. School District 118 will exclude children on the first day of school until such time as proof of physical examinations and immunizations are presented. The Department of Public Health requires evidence of immunity against Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Measles (Rubeola) Rubella (German or 3-day measles), Mumps, Chicken Pox, Haemophilus Influenza, Pneumococcal Disease, Meningococcal Conjugate, and Hepatitis. If there are objections on religious grounds, the Illinois Certificate of Religious Exemption to Required Immunizations must be completed and signed by parent and child's health care provider responsible for performing the child's health exam. If the physical condition of a child precludes immunizations on medical grounds, the examining physician must indicate the reasons.

**Dental Exam:** Illinois State Law requires each public school student to present proof of dental exam by May 15, 2018 at the kindergarten, second, and sixth grade levels. District 118 will withhold student report cards until such time as proof of dental exam is presented.

**Vision Exam:** Illinois State Law requires eye exams within one year prior to entering kindergarten starting in the fall, and for students entering a school in Illinois for the first time. Proof of the required vision examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist must be submitted by October 15, 2017. School District 118 will withhold

student report cards until such time as proof of vision exam is presented.

**Physical Exams, Interscholastic Athletics:** The Illinois State Board of Education requires all students who participate in interscholastic athletics to have an annual physical examination. The proper form must be completed and returned prior to the first day of tryouts. Forms are available at South and on the website.

**Vision and Hearing Screening:** School health personnel perform vision and hearing screening of students. The parents of a child may request a screening at any time. Vision screening will be done, as mandated, for the following children: EC, preschool, kindergarten, second grade, eighth grade, special education, teacher referrals, and new students during the 2017-2018 school year. Hearing screening will be done as mandated, for the following children: EC, preschool, kindergarten, first, second, third, special education, teacher referrals, and new students during the 2017-2018 school year. Vision and hearing screenings are not substitutes for a complete eye and ear examination by an appropriate doctor. Your child will not be required to undergo this VISION screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that an evaluation is on file at the school. Your child will not be required to undergo this HEARING screening if an audiologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that evaluation is on file at the school. This notice is not a permission to test and is not required to be returned. Vision and hearing screening is not an option. If a vision or hearing examination report is not on file at the school for your child, your child in the mandated age/grade/group will be screened.

### MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

Medication for students remains the responsibility of parents and should if at all possible, be given at home. For required medication during the regular school day, these steps must be followed:

1. Written orders from a physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage, and time interval must be provided on the district's form. Orders must be renewed annually.
2. The parent/guardian must complete the school district's form requesting that the school comply with the physician's orders.
3. Medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or the physician.
4. Palos 118 retains the authority to reject complex requests for administration of medication.
5. Direct communication with the health office is essential for full comprehension of the student's medical needs.
6. Cough drops and throat lozenges can only be brought from home and used by students if written parental permission is provided to school nurse.

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICE

School District 118, in accordance with state and federal mandates, supports the rights of all children with disabilities to a free, appropriate public education. Students may qualify for special education services if they are determined to have a disability that is adversely impacting their educational performance and are in need of a specially designed instructional program to succeed in school. A continuum of instructional programs and services are available to eligible students who have a disability that impacts their ability to benefit from standard educational programming as determined by an Eligibility Conference and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) Conference. Special Education programs and services are offered directly through the school district or in conjunction with Southwest Cook County Cooperative for Special Education. A copy of the rules and regulations that govern the Administration and Operation of Special Education can be attained from the Student Services Department, or by written request to: Illinois Office of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, IL 60277. Questions can be directed to Erin Deval, Director of Student Services, at the Central Administrative Office at 708-761-5806.

### PRESCHOOL SCREENINGS

School District 118 conducts free preschool screenings for children who are 3, 4, and 5 years of age. The purpose of the preschool screening is to assess a child's general development and detect any delays in vision, hearing, motor, cognitive, social-emotional, and/or speech and language development areas. Children identified through the screening process as being at-risk for learning and/or behavioral difficulties may be referred for a special education evaluation. Members of the Student Services Team conduct the screenings and will provide feedback to the parents as to their child's performance. The screening takes about 45 minutes. Preschool screenings will be held multiple times during the school year. For further information, please contact the Student Services Department at 708-761-5807.

Children from birth to three years of age whose parents and/or physicians suspect significant physical or developmental delays may be eligible for an evaluation and/or intervention services through the Illinois Child and Family Services Program. For further information on birth to three screenings, please contact Student Services at 708-761-5807.

### COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

All District 118 schools offer technology tools and online resources to support student learning. Students in grades four through eight are provided with personal network passwords and space to save individual work on our file servers. Use of our network services, including access to the Internet, is supervised and subject to the provisions of our District 118 Acceptable Use Policy. A printed copy of this policy was included in the registration packet. Please refer to the District 118 Board of Education policy explained in its entirety in Policy 6:235, Access to Electronic Networks.

### STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Students in grades K-8 who live 1-1/2 miles or more from their attendance center receive free bus service. This service is also available to students who attend kindergarten and who live in Illinois Dept. of Transportation approved hazardous walking areas. Parents who qualify for bus service will receive information in the mail prior to the school year. Call Mary Meyer at 708-448-4405 regarding transportation issues.

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## PARENT NOTIFICATION LIST

Palos 118 must give parents annual information regarding a number of topics. A brief listing of these follows. Detailed information regarding these and other important topics can be found on the parent notification link [www.palos118.org/pnl](http://www.palos118.org/pnl). Parents who do not have computer or internet access, or who have questions are encouraged to contact your school office. This listing is not exhaustive and may be updated without notice.

- Absences
- Access to Electronic Networks
- Administering Medication to Students Including Asthma and Allergies to Students
- Alternative Learning Opportunities
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Behavior Intervention
- Birth Certificate Requirement
- Bullying Prevention, Intimidation, Harassment
- Community Notification Act (Sex Offender Information) [www.lsp.state.il.us/Sor](http://www.lsp.state.il.us/Sor)
- CPR and AED Video
- Dental Exam
- Directory Information
- English Language Learners
- Equal Education Opportunity
- Erin's Law/Notice of Teen Dating Violence Policy
- Free Public Education
- Harassment of Students Prohibited
- Homeless Students
- Mandated Child Find
- No Child Left Behind Act
- Notice of Non Discrimination
- Notice of Delegation of Rights for Special Education Students
- Notice of Parents' Legal Protections When a Public Agency Seeks to Access Public Benefits or Insurance
- Notice to Parents of Students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind or Visually Impaired Regarding Special State Schools
- Notice of Parental Right to Object to Invasive Physical Exams or Screening
- Notice of Survey Policies
- Notice of Violence and Drug Prevention Efforts
- Pesticide Exposure

- Prevention/Management of Allergic Reactions
- Review of Instructional Materials
- School Meals
- Search and Seizure
- Section 504/Americans With Disabilities Act
- Sex Equity
- Sexual Harassment
- Social Networking Passwords
- Special Education
- Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries
- Student Behavior Plan
- Student Discipline/Behavior Intervention Guidelines
- Student Fees/Waiver of Fees/Free and Reduced Meals
- Student Records
- Teacher Qualifications
- Title I Parent Notification Including Parent Involvement
- Uniform Grievance Policy/Procedures
- Video Surveillance on Buses and in School
- Videotape/Audio Surveillance Polices
- Vision/Hearing Exams/Screenings
- Water Testing Results
- Wellness Policy

## BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY REFERENCES

[www.palos118.org/board-of-education/policies](http://www.palos118.org/board-of-education/policies)

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|-------|---|
| 6:235 | Access to Electronic Networks                                   |
| 7:70  | Attendance and Truancy  |
| 7:140 | Search and Seizure  |
| 7:180 | Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment               |
| 7:200 | Suspension Procedures   |
| 7:210 | Expulsion Procedures  |
| 7:220 | Bus Conduct   |
| 7:160 | Student Appearance  |
| 7:240 | Conduct Code for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities   |
| 7:190 | Student Discipline  |
| 7:310 | Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material |
| 7:20  | Harassment of Students Prohibited                               |
| 7:230 | Misconduct by Students with Disabilities                        |