

Palmer Public Schools
2026-27 Student Activity Handbook

202 Commercial Street
Palmer, NE 68864



Mr. Darius Williams - Activities Director

Phone: 308.894.3065

Fax: 308.894.8245

Email: dwilliams@palmer.esu7.org

Activity Schedules: Available on school website calendar - www.palmertigers.org

ATHLETIC COACHES

Fall Season	Winter Season	Spring Season
Head HS/JH XC – Jim Chvala	Head HS/JH WR – Ruger Reimers	Head HS TR – Darius Williams
Head HS VB – Shelbea Hinrichs	Asst. HS WR – Connor Donscheski	Asst. HS TR – Jeremy Vlcek
Asst. HS VB – Sherise Loeffelbein	Asst. HS/JH WR – Kyndsay Herrick	Asst. HS TR – Sara Kanter
Head JH VB – Natalie Bohlken	Head HS GBB – Carissa Valasek	Head JH GTR – Kyndsay Herrick
Asst JH VB - Becky Mottl	Asst. HS GBB – Jim Sake	Head JH BTR – Heath McClellan
Head HS FB – Luke Thompson	Asst. HS GBB - Becky Mottl	Asst. JH TR – Natalie Bohlken
Asst. HS FB – Brandon Rolf	Head JH GBB – Jim Sake	Head HS Baseball – Jim Sake
Asst. HS FB – Darius Williams	Head HS BBB – Heath McClellan	
Head JH FB – Jim Sake	Asst. HS BBB – Matt Green	
Asst. JH FB - Heath McClellan	Head JH BBB – Jim Sake	

ACTIVITIES SPONSORS

National Honor Society	Mary Gregoski
Student Council	Kristin Reimers
One-Act Play	Jaime Green
All-School Play	Heather Shotkoski
Instrumental Music	Anna Sake
Vocal Music	Anna Sake
Speech	Jaime Green
Math Counts	Cindy Doggett
Quiz Bowl	Cindy Doggett
Cheer	Melissa Kriz
Dance	Kyndsay Herrick
FFA	Payden Woodruff
Yearbook	Jaime Green
Summer Weight Lifting	Jim Sake / Darius Williams

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Activity Program at Palmer Public School. We are excited to have you participate and anticipate that you will have an exceptional experience in team sports and activities!!

This packet includes forms, which must be completed prior to your participation in an activity program during the 2026-2027 school year. Both athlete and parent/guardians should read the information and policies on each form, completely fill in all the blanks, and have both parent/guardian and athlete sign the proper forms. The following forms only need to be filled out once each school year:

- Physical Examination Form **must be dated after May 1st of the current year.**
- Parent & Student NSAA Consent Form must be signed by both parent/guardian and athlete.

PALMER PUBLIC SCHOOL

OBJECTIVES OF ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Statement of Objectives

- a. **To provide a positive image** of school activities at Palmer Public School.
- b. **To strive always** for playing excellence that will produce winning teams within the bounds of good sportsmanship while enhancing the educational values of student athletes.
- c. **To ensure growth** and development that will increase the number of participants; that will give impetus to increased contest attendance; that will enhance a program of maintenance and improvement of athletic facilities.
- d. **To provide opportunities** that will allow the program to serve as a laboratory where students may cope with problems and handle situations similar to those encountered under conditions prevailing in the contemporary world. The laboratory should provide adequate and natural opportunities for:
 - 1) Physical, mental and emotional growth and development.
 - 2) Acquisition and development of special skills in activities of each student's choice.
 - 3) Development of commitments such as loyalty, cooperation, fair play and other desirable social traits.
 - 4) Directed leadership and supervision that stresses self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence, and the ideals of good sportsmanship that make for winning and losing graciously.
 - 5) A focus of interests on activity programs for the student body, faculty and community that will generate a feeling of unity.
 - 6) Achievement of initial goals as set by the school in general and the student as an individual.
 - 7) Provisions for worthy use of leisure time in later life, either as a participant or spectator.
 - 8) Participation by the most skilled that will enable these individuals to expand possibilities for future vocational pursuits.
- e. **To provide a superior program** of student activities that includes appropriate activities for every participant.
- f. **To provide an opportunity** for students to experience success in those activities he or she selects.
- g. **To provide sufficient** activities to respond to a wide variety of student interests and abilities.
- h. **To provide student activities** which offer the greatest benefits for the greatest number of students.
- i. **To create a desire** to succeed and excel.
- j. **To provide for the students'** worthy use of leisure time now and in the future.

- k. **To develop high ideals** of fairness in all human relationships.
- l. **To practice self-discipline** and emotional maturity in learning to make decisions under pressure.
- m. **To be socially competent** and operate within a set of rules, thus gaining a respect for the rights of others.
- n. **To develop an understanding** of the value of activities in a balanced educational process.

PALMER PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITY STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The major objective of the athletic program is to provide wholesome opportunities for students to develop educational values and attitudes of social and group interaction.

Coaching leadership should be of the highest quality and should provide athletes with examples of exemplary behavior. Measurement of leadership success should not be measured in terms of the tangible evidence of the victories and defeats. Instead character, courage and integrity should be major objectives of the athletic program.

The athletic program should always be consistent with the general objectives of the school. The athletic administration should be oriented to general policies of the institution. At no time should the program place the total educational curriculum secondary in emphasis; program leaders should constantly strive for the development of well-rounded individuals, capable of taking their place in modern society.

PALMER PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITY MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is to provide a rigorous athletic program which complements and supports a challenging academic program by teaching students to persevere, to work well with others, and to help develop a well rounded individual.”

2026-2027 Sports Start Dates:

Fall Sports: Aug. 10th, 2026 – Cross Country, Volleyball, & Football

Winter Sports: Nov. 16th, 2026 – Wrestling, Girls Basketball, & Boys Basketball
Winter Moratorium – December 23rd – 27th, 2026 (no practices/games)

Spring Sports: March 1st, 2027 – Girls & Boys Track and Field & Baseball

GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETES / PARTICIPANTS

A Palmer student involved in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities is subject to this code of conduct during the entire calendar year, regardless of when he or she is considered an in-season athlete. Participation in all extra-curricular activities is a privilege the school district extends to a student whose conduct and academic standing meet acceptable standards. Extra-curricular activities shall be those non-graded activities that occur outside the normal school day. Once you choose to represent Palmer through extra-curricular activities you are expected to be a positive, responsible representative of yourself, your family, your school, and your community at all times during any activity throughout the school year and while representing the school during summer months. The following specific guidelines outline the Palmer Activity Code of Conduct:

1. Behavior Out of Town: Students who are traveling to school activities must remember that they not only represent the school but also their community. Improper behavior such as fighting, cursing, property destruction or any other behavior that normally would not be tolerated in school will also not be tolerated when traveling with a school group. Students must be reminded that when they are out of town at a school activity, they cannot get into any vehicle not approved by the school sponsor. Failure to comply may result in a loss of traveling privileges and is left to the discretion of the coaching staff and/or administration.
2. Sportsmanship: All students are expected to exhibit excellent sportsmanship to opposing teams, coaches, officials, and visiting guests by following these guidelines:
 - a. Censure fellow students whose behavior is inappropriate.
 - b. Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
 - c. Respect the property of the school and the authority of school officials.
 - d. Show respect for injured players when they are removed from the contest.
 - e. Do not applaud errors by opponents.
 - f. Do not heckle or distract members of the opposing team.
 - g. Never criticize the players or coaches for the loss of the game.
 - h. Respect the judgment of officials.
 - i. Never use profanity or exhibit obnoxious behavior.
 - j. Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping, and Other Drugs: Any student involved in extra-curricular activities including sports and all other activities is subject to discipline if he or she is involved in any of the behavior as detailed in the Student Handbook.

DISCIPLINE ACTION FOR STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES

Usually, if a disciplinary situation arises during a student's involvement in school activities, the coach/sponsor and Activities Director will determine what punishment, if any, will be given. Students may at times be referred to the Principal for disciplinary action. The chain of command must be followed.

Eligibility

1. Absence from School and Eligibility to Participate

Students are to be in school on the day of the event to participate in extra-curricular activities. Students who have missed school must be in attendance for at least the second half of the day on the day of the event, or for at least the second half of the day on Friday for events held on Saturday. Exceptions may be made for family emergencies or other family events. Other exceptions may be granted for foreseeable, pre-arranged, absences if work is done in advance and approval has been obtained from the Principal.

Students must practice the day prior to the event, or have the practice made up with their coach/sponsor, before they will be allowed to participate in the activity. Exceptions may include absence due to a sanctioned school activity or for DOCUMENTED religious observation or funeral.

Further, students who fail to comply with the Unexcused Absence or Excessive Absence provisions of Policy 6.11B shall forfeit their eligibility for extracurricular activity participation. For additional information on participation and eligibility to participate in school activities, please refer to the Student Handbook.

2. Academic Eligibility Requirement

Academic eligibility standards will apply to all extra-curricular activities. A student must have been enrolled in school and received the number of credit hours required by the Nebraska School Activities Association and state law in order to be eligible to participate in NSAA activities. Any student failing 2 or more classes (academic or non-academic) or failing the same class in consecutive weeks, will become ineligible for a period of 1 week (Monday through Sunday) including all extra-curricular activities. Students who are academically ineligible will not be excused from any classes to attend any activities except a College Class Visit off-school grounds. Responsible students will complete assignments and homework on time or even ahead of schedule. In the event that a student is less than responsible and fails to submit a completed assignment on schedule, teachers will immediately record the grade as a zero (0). Late assignments may be submitted and accepted no more than one school day following the due date, but ONLY with a standard penalty of 50%. For acceptable reasons, as determined by the Principal, a late assignment may be accepted without penalty.

3. Physicals

All students participating on a school athletic team will be required to have a physical exam every school year. Students will have to arrange for their own physical exam. Any physical done after May 1 can be used for the following school year.

4. Medical Release and Authorization Form

Students who travel with any school group including activity or athletic events must have this form completed, properly signed, and returned to the office before a student can travel with a school group.

5. Residence and Activity Participation

Students who have recently changed residence from one school district to another and whose parent(s) have not moved with them are immediately ineligible to participate in varsity athletic competition for a period of 90 school days. Students whose parents move and leave their child in Palmer with a guardian are also usually ineligible for 90 days. Option enrollment exceptions may apply. For the student to be eligible immediately, they must complete and return all option enrollment paperwork to the necessary school and NSAA personnel by the NSAA deadline of May 1.

HEALTH INSURANCE

In case of accidents or injury during athletic or activity participation, the school does not carry injury or health insurance on individual students except that a special insurance is provided for catastrophic injuries in which the medical costs exceed \$25,000. Medical Insurance or financial responsibility is the responsibility of the parents or guardian. Parents may purchase additional insurance coverage beyond their family policies through student accident policies. The student accident policy forms must be returned to the office whether the students purchase the insurance or not.

PADLOCKS

All students in school athletics or physical education programs may be issued a combination padlock by the Athletic Director and checked in at the end of the school year. These locks will be transferred back to the school at the end of the school year. If a lock is lost, stolen, or broken, the student will be required to purchase a new lock at a cost of \$10.00. Personal locks purchased by the student may not be used under any circumstances. These locks will not be issued for use on the book lockers in the hallways.

NSAA SPORTSMANSHIP BYLAWS & APPROVED RULINGS

2.11.3 Participant Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

Approved Ruling 2.11.3 Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Any participant ejected for a third time shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.

THE ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

I recognize that being a member of the community carries with it responsibilities and rewards, and that as an athlete in the community, I must not only embrace those responsibilities, but also conduct myself both on and off the playing field in a way which exhibits respect for myself and for others.

I therefore resolve to:

- conduct myself with dignity as an athlete and as a citizen of the community, recognizing and accepting that I must accept accountability for my behavior and its outcomes.
- honor my obligations and promises.
- exercise self-control.
- be willing to be fair with others in my dealings on and off the playing field.
- take pride in myself and my accomplishments, but never at the expense of demeaning another person or group.
- respect the efforts of others.
- respect authority.
- play by the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of the game and the rules of life.
- strive to make my community—whether that be the team on which I play or the community in which I live—better because of my contributions as a member and as a citizen.

PARENT'S ROLE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Communicating with your children

- Make sure that your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- Be helpful but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.
- Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.

- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized.
- Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

Communicating with the coach and what to expect from your child's coach:

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- Following the chain of command

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

- The mental and physical treatment of your child
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes
- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches

* Call to set up an appointment with the coach

* Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)

NFHS SUPPLEMENTS POSITION STATEMENT

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) strongly opposes the use of dietary supplements for the purpose of obtaining a competitive advantage. Research shows that there continues to be widespread use of dietary supplements by adolescent and high school athletes, despite considerable safety concerns. Dietary supplements are marketed as an easy way to enhance athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose weight, and feel better. Adolescents are more susceptible to peer pressure and these advertising messages, which may increase the incidence of dietary supplement usage and reinforce a culture more concerned about short-term performance rather than overall long-term athletic development and good health.

The Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994 removes dietary supplements from pre-market regulation by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Under DSHEA, a manufacturing firm is responsible for determining that the dietary supplements it manufactures or distributes are safe and that any representations or claims made about them are substantiated by adequate evidence to show that they are not false or misleading. This essentially classifies dietary supplements as a food and not a drug, and as such, they are not subject to the same strict tests and regulations as prescription and “over-the-counter” medications by the FDA. Only the companies that produce dietary supplements are responsible for ensuring that their products are pure, safe and effective for their intended use. As the FDA has limited resources to analyze the composition of dietary supplements, there is often no guarantee concerning the true amount, concentration or purity of the ingredients as listed on the label. In fact, the FDA cannot remove a dietary supplement from the marketplace unless the supplement has been shown to be “unsafe.”

The NFHS SMAC strongly opposes the use of supplements by high school athletes for performance enhancement, due to the lack of published, reproducible scientific research documenting the benefits of their use and confirming no potential long-term adverse health effects with their use, particularly in the adolescent age group. Dietary supplements should be used only upon the advice of one’s health care provider for health-related reasons – not for the purpose of gaining a possible competitive advantage. School personnel and coaches should never recommend, endorse or encourage the use of any dietary supplement, drug, or medication for performance enhancement.

We recommend that coaches, athletic directors, and other school personnel develop strategies that address the prevalence and growing concerns of using dietary supplements. Such strategies may include conversations with athletes and their parents about the potential dangers of dietary supplement use. Athletes should be encouraged to pursue their athletic goals through hard work.

PROM GUIDELINES FOR PALMER PUBLIC SCHOOL

1. The date for the Junior-Senior Prom is in the spring. The Principal may make adjustments if a conflict exists with other school obligations/activities.
2. Prom banquet is for Palmer Juniors and Seniors and their dates only. All outside dates (anyone other than Palmer Juniors and Seniors) must be registered in the Principal’s Office by dismissal time on the Thursday prior to prom.
3. Prom will be held in the high school Gym/multipurpose area or at the old gym. Other arrangements may be made and approved by the Principal.
4. This is a formal event and everyone is expected to dress accordingly.
5. Anyone arriving at the prom suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is subject to a breath/drug test and will be handled according to school policies (student handbook) and state/federal laws.
6. Doors will open early for pictures. A professional photographer is available and is selected by the junior class. Family, friends, and non-high school students may attend during the picture portion only. Once pictures conclude, anyone who is not a current high school student, a registered date, or a prom sponsor must leave the venue.
7. If there is a meal served, it will be served after pictures are completed.
 - a. Outside dates (other than Palmer Juniors and Seniors) may be required to pay for their meal. This needs to be done in advance.

- b. The meal will start at approximately 6:00-7:00 p.m.
- 8. Students and/or their dates will not be permitted to leave once they are within the building and the dance has started. If they choose to leave they will not be allowed to return for the evening.
- 9. The doors will be locked at 8:00 p.m. and no entrance to prom after this time is allowed unless special arrangements are made and approved by the Principal.
- 10. The dance will start at approximately 8:00 p.m. and conclude at approximately 12:00 a.m. All Palmer students in grades 9-12 are welcome but must arrive prior to 8:00 p.m. in order to attend.
- 11. Inappropriate dancing will not be tolerated. This will be determined at the discretion of the dance sponsors and/or Principal. Students will be warned once of their inappropriate behavior and may be asked to leave the dance after that.

PARENT/ATHLETE ACTIVITIES HANDOUT

Philosophy:

Each individual is an important part of this team and each individual's actions affect the team attitude and the team's success. When you choose to be part of a Palmer Athletic program you are making a commitment to yourself and to the people around you to uphold high standards of success and behavior expected by your coaches, parents, and community.

Goals:

Team and individual goals will be set during the season. Off-season training goals will be set as soon as possible after the end of the season.

Character:

Team members will maintain high standards in their academic and personal endeavors. Athletes should not only strive to be the best athletes they can be, but the best people they can be. Poor behavior will result in extra work and is defined as any disrespectful behavior towards teammates, coaches, officials, opposite sex, fans, spectators, competitors, self and/or bus driver. This handout serves as the warning. Consequences are 1) warning (handbook), 2) extra work in practice, 3) suspension from the next contest, 4) suspension from the team.

Health:

Parents and coaches have great concern for the health of those involved in a program. All participants in PHS athletics are required to have on file a Physical Release Form allowing them to participate. However, injuries and illness can still occur in the course of practice and competition. It is a priority to maintain a safe environment in which to practice skills and events and to provide recommendations and follow-up care to student-athletes who sustain an injury. Report any injury or illness to the coach immediately. Injured athletes are still expected to complete an alternative practice plan. Take care of your mind & body. Help reach your potential by applying common-sense guidelines to nutrition and rest. Eat well-balanced meals and avoid foods not conducive to good training / competing. The Head Coach reserves the right to set a curfew prior to any contest.

Practices:

Generally, practices will run from 3:30 until 6:00. Practices will be shortened or lengthened at the coaches' discretion. They will include appropriate warm-up, stretching, plyometric exercises, conditioning, event training, weight training, and cool-down activities. Train with others of equal or better ability to reach your potential. Don't let others pull you down.

Attendance:

Everything we do in practice is intended to help you reach your personal best. Student-participants are expected to attend all practices and competitions. Exceptions may be made if the student-participant leaves or misses school due to illness or for another school activity (Note: If a student-participant should return to school by 4:30 it will be expected that he/she will come to practice.) In all cases a participant shall notify a coach/sponsor that he/she will be gone. Other than those stated above, missed practices are unexcused, but may be made up at a coach/sponsor convenience and discretion. Any unexcused absence must be made up before participants may compete in their next competition.

Upon the third unexcused absence, a meeting concerning consequences may be held with the Activities Director, the Head Coach/Sponsor, and the Student-Participant and/or Parent. Students are not allowed to drive to practice or activities without permission from the Activities Director and/or Principal prior to the event/practice. The student will be required to have a signed permission form by a parent or guardian prior to the event/practice. An email or text message from the parent will be allowed on an emergency basis.

Tardies:

Be ready to work out before the designated starting time for practice. Training room time should be taken care of by this time. Unexcused tardies (due to discipline, forgetting equipment, etc.) will result in extra work. Should they become commonplace, suspension from upcoming competition(s) may result.

Uniform:

Team Uniform: The official team uniform is to be worn for all competitions. Participants will be issued team uniforms by number. You are responsible for returning all gear checked out to you or put under your supervision. (balls, implements, protective gear, etc.) Damages or lost uniforms, equipment or any other team issued items will be replaced at the users expense.

Pictures:

Sports Pictures will be scheduled by the Activities Director, typically during the first or second week of the sports season. Any student displaying gestures during team pictures will be held responsible for any retake or touch-up fees.

At a contest:

- Support your team and plan to be in attendance for the entire activity including the ride home.
- Know the rules of your sport; let a coach know if you notice any improprieties.
- Work hard. Walk off of the field, court, track, etc. knowing you gave the best effort you could possibly give.

Duty to Warn:

It is the duty of head coach/sponsor to warn you as athletes and parents of the dangers associated with participation in this activity. Injury or death could result during participation in practices or contests. We as a coaching staff will do everything appropriate to make the training and competition environment as safe as possible. However small, the risk of serious injury, paralysis, or death may still exist (specific situations may need to be discussed for specific activities).

Statement of Understanding

Parent

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the philosophy, policies and procedures of the Palmer Activities programs. I understand that under extreme circumstances, severe injury or death could occur as a result of my child's participation in these activities. I have read and understand that the Coaching Staff at Palmer Public School is thoroughly trained and plans to take every precaution possible to reduce the chance of injury to my child during practice or competition.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name (Print): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____