

**POLSON ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (PAL)
STUDENT & PARENT
HANDBOOK**

POLSON
ALTERNATIVE
LEARNING
2023-2024



PAL

POLSON

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING

Vision:

*Striving for Excellence -
Everyone, Every Day!*

Mission:

Our Mission is to be a safe, thriving, and dynamic educational environment that teams with families and the community to inspire self-directed learners in an interconnected world.

SCHOOL COLORS

Purple & Gold

SCHOOL MASCOT

Pirate & Lady Pirate

SCHOOL YEAR THEME

"Go For Gold"

CORE VALUES

We believe...

Partnerships allow parents, communities, and schools to support one another.

Relationships inspire mutual respect and are at the heart of success.

Integrity builds honesty and trust.

Diversity embraces individuality and enriches our community.

Excellence promotes high expectations and academic rigor.

INTRODUCTION

TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The Polson Alternative Learning Student and Parent Handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the school year. Throughout the handbook, the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please note that references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm current policy. A copy of the District’s Policy Manual is available on the school website.

This handbook has been prepared to provide the best possible guidance for PHS/PAL students and parents. PHS administration is required to enforce these regulations and is given the discretion needed to address special circumstances as they arise. It is the student and parent's responsibility to know, understand, and comply with the policies listed in this handbook. If the student or parent has a question or concern, please contact an administrator

Important Note: this handbook is not the be-all and end-all for student information and PAL “Policy and Rules.” All PAL students must abide by PHS rules and school board policies. Students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the handbooks. In order to make our alternative learning successful it will take dedicated students and teamwork. You have been accepted into PAL because we believe you have the desire to succeed; we challenge you to prove we accepted the right students to succeed!

PRINCIPAL’S WELCOME TO STUDENTS

On behalf of the entire Pirate community, I want to welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year at Polson High School. I am honored to serve as your principal and am excited for the opportunities this year will bring. PHS has a defined set of core values that are represented by the acronym PRIDE. We believe in Partnerships, Relationships, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence. It is our hope that you will embrace the many opportunities that are afforded to you at PHS and focus your efforts to “Go For Gold!” - Andy Fors

ACCREDITATION

Polson High School has been granted full accreditation by the Montana Office of Public Instruction pursuant to the Montana Code Annotated 20-6-503.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2023-2024

The Board of Trustees would like to extend an invitation to students, parents and community members to come to board meetings throughout the school year and summer. We would also like to encourage you to share with us your concerns, ideas, and general comments. We will be available to listen to and we will provide guidance on how to get your concerns addressed through the proper channels.

Chanel Lake - Chair	Alan Anderson - Vice Chair	Joanna Browning - Trustee	Devon Cox - Trustee
- Trustee	Tony Muzquiz - Trustee	Nathaniel Netzer - Trustee	Shane Orien - Trustee

Polson High School - Administration - Counselors - Office Staff		
Principal	Andy Fors	(406) 883-6351 ext 201
Assistant Principal	Jay Sampson	(406) 883-6351 ext 202
Activities Director	Sean Dellwo	(406) 883-6351 ext 205
Counselor (Last Name A-K)	Chris McElwee	(406) 883-6351 ext 203
Counselor (Last Name L-Z)	Nicole Bonner	(406) 883-6351 ext 204
Administrative Assistant	Alysha Valentine	(406) 883-6351 ext 200
Registrar	Pam Carruth	(406) 883-6351 ext 209
Activities Secretary	Crystal Walker	(406) 883-6351 ext 207

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

PAL Students will not be included in "Class Rank". PAL Students are not eligible for academic graduation distinctions.

ACTIVITIES

PAL students may NOT participate in extracurricular activities, nor will they participate in school assemblies or other whole school functions. (Graduation rehearsal and meetings will be an exception.)

ATTENDANCE

DAILY Attendance Matters! PAL Students that do not attend each day will have their account frozen until the next day. Progress online outside of school hours is encouraged, but will only be allowed if the student is attending in person between 9:00am and 12:00pm.

You are required to commit yourself to attending school each day and to be punctual. Since your schooling begins at 9:00 am, you will be there on time. Students enrolled in the PAL program may not arrive prior to 9:00am unless they have arranged an earlier arrival with the director and or principal. PAL Students must depart campus by 12 pm, unless they have arranged a late stay with the director or principal. If you have frequent absences due to chronic medical issues, you must have a doctor's note in order for the absences to be excused. If you are, or will be absent, A PARENT OR GUARDIAN NEEDS TO CALL THE MAIN HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE (883-6351 ext. 200) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO REPORT THE ABSENCE. If you begin to show excessive absences, you may lose your spot in our alternative school. Excessive absences will require a parent meeting and will be addressed by administration, which may lead to removal from PAL and or an attendance contract. We have other students waiting to commit to being here!

CAMPUS

PAL students are not allowed on the PHS campus unless prior approval has been granted by an Administrator or the PAL Director.

CHECKING OUT

If you have to leave during the academic time, you must check out with the office or program designee.

CREDITS

Once a student is admitted to PAL, all credits will be earned via the online program and or work-study. PAL students will need to have earned a minimum of 11 credits prior to being enrolled. The maximum number of credits that a PAL student may earn during a semester is 5.5 credits. PAL students may NOT take classes offered by PHS in the main building. The online program will not utilize the Pretest and allow students to test through certain sections. Students will be required to complete the entire online course to earn credit.

DISCIPLINE

The discipline policy for PAL will remain consistent with district policy and the PHS handbook at Polson High School.

DUE PROCESS

If you have a problem or complaint, you must write a complaint within ten calendar days of the event. Once the complaint is filed, you (and parent or guardian) will meet with the principal or designee to seek an informal resolution. If the informal resolution does not work, then you can file a formal complaint.

DUE PROCESS FOR NON-VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM PAL

If you are exited from PAL involuntarily, you may appeal the decision in writing within ten days from being exited. The PAL team (principal, counselor, student, and parent/guardian) will meet to discuss the reasons for the forced exit. After the meeting, the principal will re-determine the withdrawal. If the principal rules against you and you and/or parent/guardian wish to appeal, you will need to do so, in writing (within ten days), to the superintendent. If the superintendent rules against you, your final appeal must be made in writing (within ten days) to the board of trustees. The board of trustees will make the final decision for the appeal. While the process is evolving, you will remain in the alternative school (and be in good standing) until the complaint decision is made.

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in PAL is based on a team decision, for applicable 12th grade students. The team will look at the applications and each individual applicant to determine if you will be a successful PAL candidate. There is limited space in our alternative school. The decision of the team to accept you is not based on a first-come, first-served basis or on an age appropriate decision. The team retains the right to refuse any candidate. There are no last minute additions to PAL. After the start of 2nd semester, students will not be admitted unless there are extenuating circumstances. Upon acceptance into PAL, a parent and student meeting with the team or appropriate representative will be required.

EVALUATION

In January, in concordance with the ending of the Fall Semester, PAL students will be evaluated by their instructor, counselors, and administration on their progress in the program - based on attendance, attitude, and course completion. If the student is not on pace to graduate in June, they will be exited from the PAL program.

GRADUATION

Students earning the necessary credits will receive a PHS diploma and will have the option to participate in graduation ceremonies.

HOURS

9:00am - 12:00pm

INDEPENDENT LEARNING PLAN (ILP)

You will be on an ILP. The ILP is established by the PAL team, once you are accepted. The ILP will include an academic plan and the specific credits needed to graduate. The ILP will also include progress benchmarks. If these benchmarks are not met, the student may be dropped from PAL.

PARKING LOT

PAL students may NOT use the PHS Parking Lot. All PAL students will park at the Boys and Girls Club.

SCHOOL TO WORK

School-to-Work. School-to-Work is a program that allows students to earn academic credit while gaining job experience. The work experience is tailored to become an integral part of the student's education. Through this interaction of study and work experience, the student enhances his or her academic knowledge, personal development, and professional preparation.

- This program requires that a student's schedule accommodate a one or two class period block for the entire school year.
- The student must attend a school-to-work seminar class four times each semester.
 - These meeting dates are mandatory.
 - Times will be established by the counselor and announced during the second week of each semester.
- Upon completion of this course, the student is awarded one or two credits in the area of Vocational and Practical Arts.
- To be approved for the School-to-Work Program, the student must:
 - Have at least 12 credits and be of junior status.
 - Maintain passing grades while in the School-to-Work program.
 - Be approved for the program by the counselor, principal, employer, and parent.
 - Sign an agreement to remain drug and alcohol-free throughout the entire School-to-Work placement.
 - Secure employment from an employer who is not an immediate relative (or family member) of the STW student.
- Students who enroll in this program will be expected to:
 - Keep a weekly journal of work experience.
 - Attend all seminar meetings.
 - Fulfill employers' expectations.
 - Follow the employee dress code.
 - Report to the job site and back to school on time.
 - Inform both the high school and the employer prior to being absent.
 - Follow an exemplary code of conduct.

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION

The first semester of this course is a trial period for the program. Upon completion, the student will be evaluated for continued employment, and if approved for the second semester of the program, he or she will receive ½ credit or 1 credit for the first semester. Upon completion and evaluation of the second semester, an additional ½ credit or 1 credit will be awarded. Should the student not be approved for the second semester of the program, he or she will not be placed in another location but will return to a full schedule of classes. Both semesters' evaluations will be based on the course expectations listed above and will be completed by the supervisor, high school counselor, and the employer. The teacher and the counselor will determine whether the student receives a passing or a failing grade.

STUDENTS WITH JOBS

PAL students may get jobs or continue with the jobs they currently have. However, those jobs must not compete – in any way – with actual school hours (9:00am - 12:00pm). You may schedule work before school or after school as needed. You have been accepted into PAL, so you need to arrange with your supervisor based on this information

TRANSPORTATION

If you need school provided transportation, the PAL director and or principal will meet with you to discuss bussing options. You will be responsible to abide by all bus policies and procedures, as bus riding is a privilege. You are NOT permitted to enter the high school building to wander or interrupt classes!

PHS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

PHS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of high school graduation requirements is to establish rigorous standards of learning. Graduation requirements are intended to provide the student with a well-rounded education in a variety of subjects and should be viewed as minimums. We encourage all students to pursue a rigorous schedule all four years of high school. Graduation requirements are those in effect when the student enters the ninth grade for the first time.

SUBJECT	CREDITS
English 1 credit each in English 9, 10, 11, 12	4
Math Must be in different Math courses	2
Science	2
Social Studies Must include 1 credit of US History, .5 credit Government, and .5 credit of a Senior level Social Studies elective.	2
College & Career Readiness Must include .5 credit of CCR 1 (9th Grade)	.5
Physical Education* If a student has a temporary exemption from PE, that credit must be made up prior to graduation. If permanently exempt, 22 credits will still be required.	1.5*
Health	0.5
Fine Arts Fine Arts courses include Art, Choir, Band, Journalism, Engineering Design, Web Page Design, Graphic Design, & Multimedia Production/Design, Read 180	1
Practical Arts Practical Arts courses include Business, Shop, FCS, LINK, Journalism, Health Occupations Internship, Education Occupations Internship, Engineering Design, Web Page Design, Graphic Design, & Multimedia Production/Design.	1
Electives	7.5
TOTAL	22

Note: Courses described in this curriculum guide may not necessarily be offered every year.

Polson High School Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks Agreement K-12

The District makes Internet access and interconnected computer systems available to District students and faculty. The District provides electronic networks, including access to the Internet, as part of its instructional program and to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The District expects all students to take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access, including good behavior on-line. The District may withdraw student access to its network and to the Internet when any misuse occurs. District teachers and other staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise use of network and Internet access; however, student cooperation is vital in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

Access to electronic information, services, networks and the Internet are a privilege not a right.

Acceptable use would be: Activities which support learning and teaching and are consistent with the educational objectives of the Polson School District.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when utilizing any technology services just as they are in a classroom or hallway. Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette:

- Do not view, send, print or access abusive, obscene or harassing materials.
- Do not engage in uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property, including, but not limited to, engaging in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies): employing another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating, or otherwise using his/her access to the network or Internet: uploading a worm, virus, other harmful form of programming or vandalism: participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to computers, networks, or other information.
- Do not download or play games, access, download or print cheat games codes, participate in dating sites, subscribe to or access LISTSERV, or any other mailing list server, blogs, chat sites, download or access music sites or files unless specific written permission is given by a teacher or school administrator.
- Do not check, send or receive e-mail or use any messaging service such as instant messenger without written prior permission granted by a teacher and or school administrator.
- Computers are not to be used in a wasteful or frivolous manner. This includes printing WWW pages that require excessive amounts of system resources due to system load and function or by printing excess copies of documents or files. Do not browse sites not related to the assignment requested by teachers.
- Do not download or install any commercial software, shareware or freeware onto network drives, disks or workstations. Do not connect personal laptops, MP3's or any device not approved by the district.
- Do not copy other people's work or intrude into other student's files.
- Vandalism of any kind including software, hardware and peripherals. Leave workstations and peripherals in their designated places. Do not modify or rearrange printers, keyboards, individual key caps, monitors, mouse's or cables. Do not reconfigure any workstation.

Consequences for misuse or abuse of these resources, depending on the age of the student and severity of the situation may include one or more of the following:

- A warning followed by re-clarification of the appropriate use of technology services.
- User's access may be denied or withdrawn for not less than 2 weeks and up to a period of 45 school days. Access will be denied in their class where the infraction occurred, alternative assignments will be assigned. Students who have lost Internet or network privileges may not use personal equipment in lieu of district equipment on school grounds.
- Notification of parent, conference required with administrator.
- One day in school suspension with a full workload.
- Where damage or vandalism has occurred, payment of equipment and or technical support costs will be levied.
- Referral to legal authorities for possible criminal charges under Section 45-6-311 of School Laws of Montana. This could include out of school suspension and or expulsion in accordance with Polson School District Policy 3300.

The building administrator and or Superintendent or designee following due process will make all decisions regarding violation and relative rules or regulations and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time with their decision being final.

PAL - POLSON ALTERNATIVE LEARNING

Handbook Acknowledgement

Student Name: _____ Grade _____
(Please Print)

I have read the Polson High School *Electronic Information, Services, and Networks Agreement*.

I agree to follow the rules contained in this policy. I understand that if I violate the rules, my account can be terminated and I may face other disciplinary measures.

I have read the PAL *Student and Parent Handbook* and understand the procedures and rules therein.

I have read the PHS *Student and Parent Handbook* and understand the procedures and rules therein.

I have read the *Title 1 Compact* and understand the procedures therein.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Section

I have read the Polson High School *Electronic Information, Services, and Networks Agreement*.

I hereby release the school district, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the Polson Public Schools Information Network System, including, but not limited to claims that may arise from unauthorized use of the network to purchase products or services.

I will instruct my child regarding any restrictions against accessing material that are in addition to the restrictions set forth in the *Electronic Information, Services, and Networks Agreement*. I will emphasize to my child the importance of following the rules for personal safety.

I give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained in this form is correct.

I give permission for my child to participate in any school activity that is not on school property, and that is chaperoned by a classroom teacher. This could include field trips, lunches, end of year activities, and permission for my student's work or photo to be published on our school's web page or other publications.

I have read the *Student and Parent Handbook* and understand the procedures and rules therein.

Parent/Guardian (Print) _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

