



September 1, 2026

Welcome to the new year at Palmer!

I hope you and your family are enjoying a wonderful summer and finding time to rest, recharge, and connect with loved ones. As Principal of Palmer Secondary, I am excited to welcome both returning and new students and families to another year of learning, growth, and opportunity.

Our staff have been busy preparing for the year ahead and look forward to partnering with students and families to support success both inside and outside the classroom. We encourage you to stay connected to school life through meetings, events, activities, and ongoing communication. Strong partnerships between students, families, and staff are at the heart of a successful school community.

Welcoming New Staff

We are pleased to welcome the following staff members to Palmer:

Staff Name	Subjects/Role	Staff Name	Subjects/Role
Ria Lacoumentas	Vice Principal	Rebekah Gingrich	Home Economics
Chris Arena	Counsellor	Ariel Hunt-Brondwin	RAIL Humanities
Olivia Ye	Office Staff	Serguei Krakhmal	Music
Natalie Hui	Support Staff	Shelly Gupta	Science & Resource
John Shim	Chemistry	Jessica Yuen	Physical Education & Science
Jane Zhao	Math	Tianna Liang	Business / ICT
Tim Lee	Math / Sciences	Ivan Li	Math
Paul Paldo	Home Economics	Bree Dulay	RAIL Science / Math
Theo Ko	Art / ELL / AD / Leadership	Falisha Dean	Support Staff
Anna Erfan	RAIL Math / Sciences	Brian Au-Yeung	English/ Socials
Anita Benjamin	Social Studies & English		

New beginnings bring exciting opportunities for learning, growth, and connection. To our returning students, I encourage you to approach the year with determination and a commitment to achieving your personal best. To those joining Palmer for the first time, including our Grade 8 students, a warm welcome. We hope you quickly feel at home and take pride in contributing to the positive, inclusive culture that makes Palmer such a special place.

We look forward to a fantastic year together. Please review the below information as it may answer some of your questions about the upcoming school start up.

First Day Information –September 8, 2026

Tuesday, September 8 is the first day of school for students. All students are asked to report directly to the **Lounge** for their grade-level assembly. Following the assembly, students will attend a brief homeroom session.

Assembly Schedule

- **Grade 8** – 9:00 a.m.
- **Grade 9** – 10:00 a.m.
- **Grade 10** – 11:00 a.m.
- **Grade 11** – 12:00 p.m. (Noon)
- **Grade 12** – 1:00 p.m.

Homeroom lists, organized alphabetically by last name and including room locations, will be posted at the front entrance of the school and on the Palmer Secondary website before the first day of classes.

Following their grade-level assembly on September 8, students will attend homeroom, where they will receive important school information. Students will be dismissed after approximately one hour.

Regular classes for Grades 8–12 begin on **Wednesday, September 9 at 8:30 a.m.**, starting with a brief homeroom before Block A. Please note that a 10-minute homeroom period will continue throughout the week to collect required forms.

Student School Forms – Due Sept 9 –11- Homeroom

Students will receive three forms during homeroom. **Please review, complete, and return all forms to the homeroom teacher during the first week of school.** Any outstanding forms are due to the office by **Friday, September 18, 2026.**

1. Personal Information Release Form (Yellow)

Required to allow a student's name, image, or work to appear in the yearbook, newsletters, school website, and other school publications.

2. Student Medical Verification Form (Blue)

This form ensures we have current emergency contact and medical information. Please update any changes, including allergies or health concerns, sign the form, and return it promptly. Any changes during the school year should be reported to the office.

3. Walking Field Trip Permission Form (White)

This form provides consent for participation in local, low-risk walking field trips that support classroom learning throughout the school year. Please complete and return the signed form during the first week of classes.

IMPORTANT

School Communication

At Palmer Secondary, we believe strong communication between home and school is essential to student success.

All school communications are sent by email. To ensure you receive important updates, please provide a current email address emailing palmer@sd38.bc.ca with the student name., parent name and current email address and ensuring your email is included on your child's **Blue Medical Verification Form**.

For the most up-to-date information about school events, announcements, and important reminders, please visit our website: **palmer.sd38.bc.ca**. We encourage families to regularly check the **Week at a Glance (WAAG)**, our primary source for upcoming events and school news.

Student Agenda Books

We are pleased to provide every student with a paper agenda book this year. The agenda is an important tool for helping students stay organized, manage their time, and keep track of assignments and deadlines. We encourage parents and guardians to review their child's agenda regularly and discuss their learning and upcoming assignments. These simple conversations help reinforce learning and demonstrate the value we place on education together.

MyEducation BC

All Palmer students and their parents/guardians receive a **MyEducation BC** account, which provides access to schedules, attendance, report cards, transcripts, and other student information.

Please note that MyEd accounts will be disabled for summer maintenance and reactivated during the **second week of September**. New Palmer families will receive account information in early September.

Need Help Accessing Your Account?

If you need to update your email address or are experiencing access issues, please email palmer@sd38.bc.ca with **"MyEducation Account"** in the subject line and include:

- Student's full name
- Pupil number
- Parent/guardian name
- Email address

Student Schedules

Students will receive their schedules (salmon sheets) from their homeroom teacher on **September 8**. Schedules are based on course selections made last spring. While most students will receive the courses or alternates, they requested, some timetable adjustments may have been necessary to balance classes or resolve scheduling conflicts. Course change request forms (back of schedule) are due back to the Counselling Centre on Wednesday September 9th at 3:00pm. Please note that most of our classes are full and students with incomplete/incorrect schedules will be prioritized. Students must follow the schedules they have been given until they have been contacted by a counsellor.

School Timetable

Classes begin daily at **8:30 a.m.**, with a warning bell at **8:25 a.m.** Students are expected to be in class before the start bell.

The school day runs from **8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** During the first week, students will begin each day with a brief homeroom session to review important start-up information. The 2026–2027 school year will continue using a **semester system**, with four courses from September to January and four different courses from February to June.

School Start Time & Attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality are critical to student success. We ask families to support students in arriving at school by **8:25 a.m.** each day.

To help ease morning traffic congestion, students may access the Lounge for study or homework beginning at **7:30 a.m.** If a student arrives late for Block A, they must check in at the office for a late slip.

For late arrivals or early dismissals, please contact the school office at **604-668-6288**.

Parking & Student Transportation

We encourage students to walk, cycle, carpool, or use public transit whenever possible.

Families using vehicles for drop-off and pick-up should use the front roundabout and avoid the staff parking lots. Vehicles parked in designated staff areas may be subject to towing.

Due to limited parking capacity, a lottery system will be used for student parking passes. Students who park without a valid permit or in unauthorized spaces may be towed. Additional information will be shared with senior students during grade assemblies in September.

Staff Collaboration Days

On the dates listed below, staff will participate in professional learning from **8:30–9:25 a.m.** Classes will begin at **9:30 a.m.** Students may use the Lounge for quiet study before classes begin.

2026–2027 Collaboration Days

- September 15, October 6, November 17, December 1, January 5, February 2, April 6, May 4, June 1

For the latest school news, events, and reminders, please visit the Palmer website and regularly review the **Week at a Glance (WAAG)**.



Palmer Learning Time (PLT)

As we begin the new school year, we are excited to share updates to **Palmer Learning Time (PLT)** that support student success, well-being, and engagement.

What is PLT?

PLT provides students with dedicated time to:

- Take ownership of their learning
- Access academic support and enrichment opportunities
- Develop independence, time-management, and self-advocacy skills

PLT remains an important part of the school day, offering students flexibility in what they learn and who they learn with.

What's Changing?

Based on feedback from students, families, and staff, and to ensure PLT is used effectively as instructional time, we are introducing a revised format for 2026–2027:

- **PLT will take place twice per week between Period 1 and Period 2**
- **Each session will be 60 minutes long**

This change is designed to improve attendance, increase engagement, and provide more consistent learning support.

Benefits for Students

The updated model will:

- Increase student choice and flexibility
- Improve access to teachers and peer support
- Strengthen independent learning and time-management skills

Students will attend Homeroom sessions on **September 16 and 17** to learn about Palmer's new PLT model, including how to access learning opportunities and use the new sign-up tool, before PLT officially begins on **September 23 and 24**.

Student Lockers

Locker use has steadily declined in recent years. To help us allocate lockers more effectively, please discuss with your child whether they would like a locker this year. Priority will be given to senior students during the sign-out process.

Locker registration information will be shared in mid-September.

School Fees

Secondary schools have standardized general school fees at **\$28 per student**, which includes student council activities, student agendas, communication costs and awards.

While there are no fees for basic coursework, additional charges may apply for:

- Optional enrichment projects
- Fine Arts and Textiles materials
- Athletic teams and clubs
- Field trips
- Graduation events

Students experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to speak with a counsellor or administrator. Individualized fee statements will be distributed during Homeroom in September.

Student fees are due by Sunday, October 25, 2026.

Grade 12 Fees

Optional Grade 12 events may include:

- Valedictory Ceremony
- Grad Dinner Dance
- Dry Grad

Total costs for all optional graduation activities are expected to be approximately **\$600**, depending on participation, venues, and activities selected. Fees will be posted to School Cash Online as events are confirmed.

Please register at [School Cash Online](#) and enable email notifications for new fee postings.

Personal Digital Devices

In accordance with Richmond School District Policy 105, student use of personal digital devices is restricted during instructional and learning activities unless permitted by staff.

Exceptions are made for:

- Accessibility and accommodation needs
- Medical and health-related purposes
- Equity of learning outcomes

Families are encouraged to review the policy on the school website.

Please note that the school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal devices. Students are encouraged to leave devices at home, keep them secured in their lockers, or carry them with them and ensure they are powered off during instructional time. Personal devices should not be stored in PE lockers

School Photos: Photo Day: Friday, October 2

All students will have their photo taken for their Go-Card and the Yearbook. Photo packages may be ordered online through <https://www.artona.com/>.

Retake Day: Monday, November 2

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

First Meeting -Wednesday, September 16 7:00 PM

The PAC meets monthly to provide input on school programs and initiatives. New members are always welcome, and we encourage parents to get involved. Meetings will occur in the Palmer lounge.

Meet the Teacher Night- Thursday, September 17

Meet the Teacher Night provides families with an opportunity to connect with their child's teachers and learn more about their semester one courses. Additional details and schedules will be sent home in September.

Post-Secondary Information Meeting for Grade 12 Parents: 6:30 PM

Meet the Teacher Night: 7:00 PM

Best Wishes for a Successful School Year

Please review this newsletter carefully and keep an eye on the school website for updates and additional start-up information throughout September.

We wish all students and families a safe, successful, and rewarding school year. If you have any questions, please contact the school at **604-668-6288** (press "0" for the office) or email palmer@sd38.bc.ca.

September Highlights

Date	Event
Sept. 8	First Day of School
Sept. 9	Regular Classes Begin (ABCD)
Sept. 16	1 st Palmer PAC Meeting – 7:00 PM
Sept. 17	Post-Secondary Information Meeting (Grade 12 Parents) – 6:30 PM
Sept. 17	Meet the Teacher Night – 7:00 PM
Sept. 23	Palmer PLT Begins
Sept. 25	Professional Development Day – No School

Sincerely,
Herj Ghaug
Principal RC Palmer Secondary