



Peer Assistance and Leadership, PAL[®] II

PEIMS Code: N1290006

Abbreviation: PAAL2

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Award of Credit: 1.0

Approved Innovative Course

- Districts must have local board approval to implement innovative courses.
- In accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.27, school districts must provide instruction in all essential knowledge and skills identified in this innovative course.
- Innovative courses may only satisfy elective credit toward graduation requirements.
- Please refer to TAC §74.13 for guidance on endorsements.

Course Description:

Peer Assistance and Leadership[®] (PAL[®]) II is an advanced peer mentoring elective for high school students in grades 9-12 who have completed *PAL[®] I*. In this course, students build on their foundational skills as peer mentors and take on leadership roles by teaching and motivating PAL[®] students. The course is designed to strengthen existing leadership skills and address critical issues such as academic challenges, bullying, violence, suicide, and substance misuse, empowering students to become confident and effective leaders.

Through progressive training in prevention education, character building, and leadership development, *PAL[®] II* equips students with advanced leadership skills such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and resilience. The *PAL[®] II* course promotes concepts like ethical leadership, motivation and influence, continuous learning, and personal excellence. *PAL[®] II* students strengthen and enhance foundational skills such as stress management, accountability, and values-based leadership, preparing them for success in college, careers, or military service.

Essential Knowledge and Skills:

- (a) General Requirements. This course is recommended for students in grade levels 9-12. Recommended prerequisites: *PAL[®] I*. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course.
- (b) Introduction.
 - (1) *Peer Assistance and Leadership[®] (PAL[®]) II* is an advanced peer mentoring elective for high school students in grades 9-12 who have completed *PAL[®] I*. In this course, students build on their foundational skills as peer mentors and take on leadership roles by teaching and motivating PAL[®]

students. The course is designed to strengthen existing leadership skills and address critical issues such as academic challenges, bullying, violence, suicide, and substance misuse, empowering students to become confident and effective leaders.

Through progressive training in prevention education, character building, and leadership development, *PAL® II* equips students with advanced leadership skills such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and resilience. The *PAL® II* course promotes concepts like ethical leadership, motivation and influence, continuous learning, and personal excellence. *PAL® II* students strengthen and enhance foundational skills such as stress management, accountability, and values-based leadership, preparing them for success in college, careers, or military service.

- (2) *PAL® II* students learn to refine and advance their abilities to uphold and model exemplary character standards. *PAL® II* students play a pivotal role in reinforcing group accountability while mastering techniques for fostering peer relationships. This course equips students with specialized competencies in service-learning, leadership, and mentorship, preparing them to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and serve as influential leaders in diverse settings.
- (3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.

(c) Knowledge and Skills.

- (1) Group Building. The student demonstrates interpersonal skill that maintain good working relationships with peers and enhance or improve group dynamics. The student is expected to:
 - (A) explain and facilitate the establishment of group norms critical to helping a group's success;
 - (B) identify and apply methods and strategies that are effective for welcoming a new person to a group;
 - (C) summarize the stages of relationship development;
 - (D) summarize and follow the National Association of Peer Program Professionals Code of Ethics;
 - (E) evaluate how a group's work can be improved or enhanced;
 - (F) identify and demonstrate constructive techniques to resolve conflict such as supporting positive attitudes, group participation, and encouraging group members to formulate positive and helpful responses to issues and concerns rather than destructive responses;
 - (G) describe and summarize the flow of information within a group; and
 - (H) organize and lead group activities, including ensuring all students are actively engaged and contribute to the success of each initiative, participation is tracked and monitored, and effectiveness and impact of activities are evaluated;
- (2) Leadership Skills. The student applies leadership skills to situations presented in class and on the school campuses. The student is expected to:
 - (A) describe characteristics of a positive role model such as respecting boundaries, asking questions, following through, and being authentic;
 - (B) conduct interviews with prospective PAL® students and provide feedback to the instructor;

- (C) explain the traits of an effective mentor and serve as a mentor to students, including building trust and rapport, consistent participation in mentoring sessions, providing feedback, setting and tracking shared goals;
 - (D) define service-learning;
 - (E) evaluate how leaders use academic knowledge and critical thinking skills to address community needs;
 - (F) evaluate characteristics of an effective leader, such as the ability to listen to others, take initiative, demonstrate dependability, and act with honesty;
 - (G) analyze the effectiveness of redirection strategies;
 - (H) suggest alternate future strategies in applying leadership skills, such as positive reinforcement, restorative conversation, and peer support; and
 - (I) create and implement a plan to provide services such as tutoring and mentorship to student mentees and to the campus.
- (3) Communication Techniques. The student demonstrates communication skills that facilitate discussion, trust, and open lines of communication. The student is expected to:
- (A) demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication in interactions with peers and others;
 - (B) summarize the content of written messages and feelings of the sender;
 - (C) identify and explain communication factors that impact a helping relationship;
 - (D) analyze influences on communication behaviors within the context of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs;
 - (E) describe strategies to maintain composure and disengage from conflict, including IDEAL, Four Step Problem-Solving Model, and the Nine Step Problem-Solving Model;
 - (F) provide, receive, and discuss constructive criticism that can be applied to future activities; and
 - (G) demonstrate effective facilitation techniques to lead activities with students, such as clarification, summarization, and managing participation.
- (4) Problem Solving/Decision-Making Skills. The student analyzes conflicts and resolves them sequentially. The student is expected to:
- (A) evaluate the effects of personal values and peer pressure on decision making;
 - (B) discuss the steps in the decision-making process with younger students, and propose how those steps can be used to make choices in day-to-day situations;
 - (C) analyze and discuss the conflict cycle, and apply them to different scenarios;
 - (D) analyze choices and develop strategies to translate problems into goals;
 - (E) explain the pace differentiation and integration phases of the problem-solving process;

- (F) develop and implement a systematic group action plan; and
 - (G) evaluate the results of the action plan.
- (5) Self-Awareness/Esteem Skills. The student understands the role that one’s individuality plays in fostering a positive self-concept. The student is expected to:
- (A) explain a positive self-inventory, which includes physical, mental, emotional, and social growth;
 - (B) identify how a positive self-concept supports healthy decision-making and the ability to refuse negative influences; and
 - (C) identify and apply strategies to positively influence self-esteem in oneself and peers.
- (6) Risk and Protective Factors. The student analyzes community factors, including risks, as a component of healthy relationships. The student is expected to:
- (A) identify community needs and ways to become involved to address those needs;
 - (B) categorize scenarios that might be encountered at school or in the community according to the degree of risk involved;
 - (C) analyze and roleplay risk avoidance strategies;
 - (D) explain how healthy relationships and community involvement contribute to inclusive behaviors;
 - (E) analyze how peer, school, and family relationships can be used in a positive way to encourage peers to make good decisions;
 - (F) explain scenarios in which defense mechanisms are used and propose strategies for reacting to defense mechanisms;
 - (G) explain when to share confidential information with a school official or adult;
 - (H) evaluate the effectiveness of techniques to promote prosocial behaviors and explain when to suggest alternatives.
- (7) Cultural Competency. The student analyzes personal attitudes and actions regarding cultural awareness. The student is expected to:
- (A) demonstrate cultural awareness by organizing or leading celebrations of culture on campus;
 - (B) identify opportunities to participate in multicultural community work;
 - (C) apply and analyze strategies to improve cross-cultural communication such as acknowledging others’ strengths or looking for common interests or qualities;
 - (D) explain how cross-cultural conflict can provide an opportunity for cultural learning; and
 - (E) identify and differentiate between dimensions in systems of shared knowledge.
- (8) Service Learning. The student analyzes individuals’ skills and learning styles and how these align to the needs in the community. The student is expected to:
- (A) define locus of control;

- (B) explain how the attribution of success, either to internal or external factors, applies to individual learning;
 - (C) explain how the attribution of difficulties, either to internal or external factors, applies to individual learning;
 - (D) define how multisensory learning as an instructional approach combines auditory, visual, and tactical elements into a learning task;
 - (E) identify and explain metacognitive strategies to academic and service-learning assignments;
 - (F) differentiate between different types of learning needs and disabilities, and describe types of accommodations;
 - (G) apply knowledge of learning styles to peer-helping activities such as tutoring, making presentations, and activity facilitation;
 - (H) review and evaluate an existing community action plan that addresses a community need, and propose amendments based on community feedback;
 - (I) review and evaluate an existing community referral resource directory, and propose amendments based on new information from the community;
 - (J) identify community service placements for students;
 - (K) identify and interview potential service sites;
 - (L) categorize service-learning projects based on thematic issues; and
 - (M) develop plans for the implementation of service-learning projects.
- (9) Knowledge of Prevention Issues. The student identifies substance use and misuse risk factors and early warning signs. The student is expected to:
- (A) explain and facilitate school-related efforts to address health-risk behaviors;
 - (B) design and deliver presentations on substance use and misuse issues;
 - (C) evaluate the impact of laws relating to prescription and over-the-counter drug misuse and the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances;
 - (D) apply effective communication skills for building and maintaining healthy relationships which mitigate the risks associated with substance use and misuse;
 - (E) examine the influence of culture and society on the misuse of prescription drugs in school, sports, or entertainment;
 - (F) explain and lead in sharing prevention knowledge with peers to help create a supportive network;
 - (G) categorize different kinds of refusal statements;
 - (H) facilitate discussions to describe refusal skills; and
 - (I) educate fellow students on techniques for refusing substances, including the use of using clear, confident communication and positive body language.

Recommended Resources and Materials:

- I. Workers Assistance Program, Inc., *PAL® Peer Assistance and Leadership High School Teacher's Manual*, 3rd ed. (Workers Assistance Program, Inc., 2002).
- II. Workers Assistance Program, Inc., *PAL® Peer Assistance and Leadership High School Student Handbook*, (Workers Assistance Program, Inc., 2003).
- III. PAL® Peer Assistance and Leadership. "PAL® Peer Assistance and Leadership". Accessed October 17, 2024. <https://palusa.org/>.
- IV. National Association of Peer Program Professionals (NAPPP). "National Association of Peer Program Professionals". Accessed October 17, 2024. <https://peerprogramprofessionals.org/index.html/>.
- V. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). "Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration". Accessed October 17, 2024. <https://www.samhsa.gov/>.

Recommended Course Activities:

Activity: *PAL® II Student Training*
PAL® II students receive an extensive review of, and demonstrated mastery in, the *PAL® I* course. *PAL® II* students further deepen their foundational skills as they participate in teaching and leading *PAL® I* students in the *PAL® I* Student Training. Through this hands-on training, *PAL® II* students will strengthen their leadership and mentoring abilities.

Objectives Include:

- Facilitate training on key *PAL® I* topics.
- Design training exercises that challenge and engage *PAL® I* students.
- Lead reflection sessions to help *PAL® I* students process their learning.

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Group Building	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Leadership Skills	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I
Communication Techniques	A, B, C, D, E, F, G
Problem-Solving/Decision-Making Skills	A, B, C, D, E, F, G
Self-Awareness/Esteem Skills	A, B, C
Risk and Protective Factors	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Cultural Competency	A, B, C, D, E
Service Learning	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M
Knowledge of Prevention Issues	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H

- I. **Activity:** "Identifying Defense Mechanisms: Why Do People Act That Way?"
PAL® II students explore human behavior through defense mechanisms, promoting empathy and reflective listening. *PAL® II* students will facilitate the learning process while reinforcing their own leadership skills.

Objectives Include:

- Understand defense mechanisms and their relevance.
- Develop empathy through role-play scenarios.
- Lead discussions and activities on defense mechanisms.

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Group Building	A, B, E, F, G, H
Leadership Skills	A, G, H
Communication Techniques	A, E, F, G
Problem-Solving/Decision-Making Skills	C, D
Self-Awareness/Esteem Skills	A, B, C
Risk and Protective Factors	C, E, F
Cultural Competency	C, D, E
Service-Learning	B, C

II. **Activity:** "Drugs and Alcohol: Your Opinion"

PAL® II students examine diverse perspectives on drug-related issues. Through discussion and collaboration, students develop critical thinking skills as they articulate and defend their opinions on controversial statements regarding drugs and alcohol. *PAL® II* students will facilitate the learning process while reinforcing their own leadership skills.

Objectives Include:

- To form differing opinions on drugs and drug-related issues.
- To discuss how varying viewpoints influence decision-making.
- Lead discussions and activities on drug and alcohol related issues.

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Group Building	A, B, E, F, G, H
Leadership Skills	A
Communication Techniques	A, C, G
Problem-Solving/Decision-Making Skills	A, B, C, D
Self-Awareness/Esteem Skills	B, C
Risk and Protective Factors	B, C, D, F
Knowledge of Prevention Issues	A, B, C, D, H

III. **Activity:** "Community Vision"

PAL® II students engage in a collaborative exploration of their community by creating a collective drawing. Working in small groups, students illustrate their perceptions of the community, including its strengths and weaknesses, while fostering dialogue about what community means to them. *PAL® II* students will facilitate the learning process while reinforcing their own leadership skills.

Objectives Include:

- To visually represent and discuss the elements of a community.
- To encourage collaboration and communication among students.
- Lead discussions and activities on community.

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Group Building	A, B, F, G, H

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Leadership Skills	C, H
Communication Techniques	A, C, G
Risk and Protective Factors	A, D, E
Cultural Competency	B, C, D, E
Service Learning	B, C, F
Knowledge of Prevention Issues	E

IV. **Activity:** Community Service-Learning Activities Survey
 PAL® students engage in a collaborative effort to identify existing community service activities and gather information on how these efforts are structured, implemented, and supported. This activity will help PAL® students build skills in outreach, data collection, and collaboration while fostering a deeper understanding of their community.

Objectives Include:

- Develop skills in conducting surveys to collect relevant information.
- Identify and analyze existing community service activities.
- Build communication and collaboration skills through outreach and engagement.

Knowledge and Skills (KS)	Student Expectations (SE)
Group Building	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Leadership Skills	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Communication Techniques	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I
Problem-Solving/Decision-Making Skills	A, B, C, D, E, F, G
Self-Awareness/Esteem Skills	A, B, C, D, E
Risk and Protective Factors	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Cultural Competency	A, B, C, D, E, F
Service Learning	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I
Knowledge of Prevention Issues	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

Student Outcomes

Suggested evaluation of PAL® II student performance can include a number of the following factors:

- assessments covering curricular content areas to ensure the academic rigor of the course;
- participation in program-related activities, projects, and services;
- performance in role-playing scenarios where they simulate real-world peer helping situations to demonstrate their skills and understanding;
- individual student journals documenting on-going PAL® II activities and services, reflecting personal growth and contributions;
- feedback from administrators, teachers and counselors at feeder schools/classrooms with regard to the effectiveness of peer assistance services;
- research projects, presentations, self- evaluations, and other written or oral assignments as directed by the teacher;

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- self-evaluations of their own performance, encouraging self-reflection and ownership of their progress.

Teacher qualifications:

An assignment for PAL® II is allowed with a valid secondary teaching certificate.

Additional information:

- 14-Hour Certification/Renewal Teacher Training
- \$500 Teacher Certification/Renewal Fee
- \$200 Curriculum Fee (Per each teacher curriculum training manual.)
- \$10 Handbook Fee (Per each student handbook.)
- Workers Assistance Program, Inc./ PAL® provides all applicable training.

Please email PAL® for implementation guidance and general questions at: contact@palusa.org or by phone at: 800-522-0550.