

## Peer Assistance Leaders Program (PALs®)

### What is PALs®?

"PAL® (Peer Assistance Leadership) is a peer-to-peer outreach program for elementary, intermediate, and high school students. Peer Assistance Leaders help other students in a variety of ways, along with improving the culture and climate of the school. The proven results of this program are improved school attendance, reduced drug and alcohol abuse, a positive school climate, increased academic success, responsible behavior, and involvement in community service. The PAL Program teaches life skills and builds resiliency in students.

### PAL Philosophy

At the root of peer leadership or peer helping programs is the philosophy that "kids can and do help other kids." Teenagers need programs that are designed with their culture and needs in mind. The PAL program is designed to provide accurate knowledge about common teen problems and to teach the skills of effective communication, empathetic listening and problem solving. That way, teens can help others help themselves.

### Characteristics of a PAL

Students who are interested in becoming a PAL should exemplify the following traits:

- Genuine spirit of helpfulness
- Concern for the welfare of others
- Self-confidence
- Dedication to community service
- Accepting of others
- Dependability
- Trustworthy
- Positive role-model
- Excellent listening, communication and problem-solving skills
- Ability to effectively present a lesson/presentation to peers
- A sense of belonging and commitment to WMS
- Ability to stand-up to insensitive or judgmental peers/situations
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

### PAL Outreach Activities and Strategies:

1. New Student Orientation
2. Mentoring
3. Tutoring
4. 5<sup>th</sup> grade Transition Activities
5. Peer Mediation
6. Crisis Response Team Members
7. Public Relations to Promote the PAL Program
8. One-to-One Listening
9. Community Service
10. Peer Education (presentation of lessons to peers)