



PALMYRA R-1

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jason Harper, Superintendent | harperj@palmyra.k12.mo.us

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October 19, 2026

Dear Palmyra R-I Families,

We want to share important information with you regarding Missouri's new A–F school rating system currently being developed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

This new rating system was established through an executive order signed by Governor Mike Kehoe in January 2026. The initial ratings are part of a pilot program based on data from the 2024–2025 school year. Because this is a new system, the framework and methodology used to calculate these ratings are still being refined and may change over time.

As these ratings become available to the public, we want our families to understand what they represent and, equally important, what they do not. While a letter grade can provide one measure of school performance, it does not tell the complete story of the academic achievements, student growth, relationships, and opportunities taking place in our schools every day.

At Palmyra R-I, we believe it is important to evaluate student success through multiple measures, including our Annual Performance Report (APR), Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) testing, graduation rates, student attendance, and individual student growth.

We are proud to share several highlights that reflect the hard work and dedication of our students, staff, and families:

- 82.33% of our community gave Palmyra R-1 and A or B on the district survey completed last November. These results do not change the fact that we will try to continue to improve our student and staff experience, but it does say that a large portion of our community is satisfied with the performance of our school district.
- Palmyra Elementary School: On the most recent APR, PES earned 86.8% of available points, representing a 31% improvement compared to the 2024 APR. This significant growth reflects the continued efforts of our elementary students and staff to strengthen academic achievement.
- Palmyra High School: PHS earned 92.8% of available points on its most recent APR summary, placing it among the highest-performing schools in our region and across the state. Our high school also continues to maintain one of the highest graduation rates in Missouri, reflecting our commitment to preparing students for success beyond graduation.
- Palmyra Middle School: While our middle school's 2025 APR results were below our expectations, preliminary results from spring MAP testing show substantial improvements in student achievement. We are encouraged by this progress and remain committed to building upon these improvements.
- Districtwide Student Attendance: Our district maintains an impressive student attendance rate of over 95%. This is a strong reflection of the commitment our students and families make to education each day. Consistent

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Bridgette Augspurg
Elementary School Principal

Kylee Meyer
Middle School Principal

Jared Pontius
High School Principal

Brian Wosman
Athletic/Activities Director

Kinsey Cissna
Special Education Coordinator

Kathy Nicholson
Parents as Teachers Coordinator

Steven Jones
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attendance plays an important role in academic success, and we are proud of the partnership between our schools and families that makes this possible.

These accomplishments demonstrate why it is important to consider multiple measures when evaluating the success of our schools. We recognize the importance of accountability and transparency in public education. We also understand that there will always be areas where we can improve. Our administrators, teachers, and staff continually evaluate student performance, identify opportunities for growth, and implement strategies to help every student succeed.

It is also important to remember that the new A–F pilot ratings are based on historical data from the 2024–2025 school year and may not fully reflect the progress currently taking place in our classrooms. Our priority has always been, and will continue to be, the students and families we serve. We believe in holding ourselves to high standards, celebrating our successes, and taking meaningful steps to address areas where improvement is needed.

We are proud of the educational opportunities available to students throughout the Palmyra R-I School District. From strong academics and extracurricular activities to meaningful relationships with teachers and staff, our schools provide experiences that cannot be fully captured by a single letter grade. Every student enters our classrooms with unique strengths, needs, and goals. Our responsibility is to support each of them, provide opportunities for growth, and prepare them for a successful future. As Missouri continues to refine its new rating system, we will continue to monitor developments and keep our families informed.

Regardless of any letter grade assigned through this pilot program, our mission and commitment to our students will not change. We will continue working each day to provide a quality education, maintain high expectations, and make decisions that are in the best interest of our students.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and partnership. We are grateful to have you as part of our Panther family and look forward to continuing the important work of educating our students together.

Sincerely,

Jason S. Harper
Superintendent

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