

PALESTINE FLAG FOOTBALL - 2024 K/1st, 2nd/3rd, 4th/5th

LOCATION, DATES and TIMES OF PRACTICES/GAMES

- **PRACTICES:**
 - Northside Primary Outside Fields behind the school building - 2509 Highway 155, Palestine
 - K/1st Field: Closest to the tree line
 - 2nd/3rd Field: Middle Field
 - 4th/5th Field: Closest to the school
 - 6th: PISD Wildcat Stadium
 - Length of Practices: a.) K/1- no longer than 1 hr. - 1 ¼ hours
b.) 2nd/3rd AND 4th/5th - 1 hr. - 1 ½ hours
 - NOTE: Restrooms are only available at Wildcat Stadium.
 - Team Coaches will determine their own practice time and day/days per week. Coaches will inform the PYSO Coordinator of their selected dates, times and location.
- **GAMES:**
 - PISD HS Wildcat Stadium - Loop 256 and Benbrook Drive
 - Games are held on Saturdays for all divisions.
 - If a game needs to be rescheduled, coaches must reschedule their own games with the opposing team and must notify the PYSO Coordinator of the change. The scheduling change must include one of the following choices:
 - a.) Use the Northside Primary Field for a “make-up” game on an agreed upon date OR
 - b.) Use the JH side Field (contact the PYSO Coordinator to check on availability) OR
 - c.) Use the Wildcat Stadium if available (contact the PYSO Coordinator to check on availability.)
 - Scheduled game times: 8:00, 9:15, 10:30, 11:45, 1:00*, 2:15* Times are approximate. *Indicates times for rescheduled games.
 - Park on Benbrook Drive. Do not park in the designated Fire Department parking areas. Enter through the Visitor’s side of Stadium.
 - There is a regularly scheduled Concession Stand provided with limited drinks/candy/chips/donuts.

EQUIPMENT

- **PLAYER JERSEYS** will be provided for games and must be **TUCKED IN** at all times. All flags must be properly displayed; one flag per side hip unless otherwise noted. Jerseys will be returned after every game to team coach. Coaches’ shirts are provided to the coaches and are theirs to keep.
K/1st: 3 flags (additional flag in middle back of belt) 2nd/3rd: 2 flags 4th/5th: 2 flags
- **BLACK SHORTS are required FOR GAMES so flags are VISIBLE.**
- **All** players will receive their own Palestine Flag Football T-shirt representing their age division. Additionally, confirmed Team Coaches (signed up as Volunteers on the PYSO Website AND have passed the Background Check AND are COACHING at the Games/Practices) will receive a Coaching Shirt.
- Head coaches will receive a bag of balls, belts, flags, cones, pinnies and rules. Bag with equipment will be turned in immediately following the final game of the season.
- Size 3 Youth Football: K/1st and 2nd/3rd Grade Teams Nike Youth Vapor: 4th/5th
- A small, handheld ball pump will be available to use at Games for practice balls that need inflating.
- No jewelry worn at practices or games.
- All players must wear shoes. Rubber cleats are allowed but **NO METAL CLEATS.**
- There will be no Championship Game/Tourney or All-Star Team due to PYSO philosophy and date/time constraints.

FIELD SIZE/SET-UP

- **Field sizes are modified** depending on age divisions and location of games (Northside or Wildcat Stadium)
- Generally:
 - K/1st - 30 yards wide by 40 yards long
 - 2nd/3rd - 30 Yards wide by 40 yards long
 - 4th/5th - 30 yards wide by 40 yards long (Half Field) or 50 yards long (Full Field)

- **K-1: Games will be played using HALF of the Football Field. Each Team will go toward the same Goal Line when on offense.**
 - Ball starts at the 40 yd. line; midfield (1st down) is at the 20 yd. line; Goal Line is true HS Goal Line.
- **2-3:** Same as K/1
- **4-5:** Same as K/1 except the **Full Football Field MAY be used for games if possible on game day (depends on # of registered teams and team preferences.)**
 - **Full Field:** Ball starts on the 20 yd. line; midfield is 50 yd. line; Goal line is at the 20 yd. line.

TEAMS

- **Flag Football teams are being drafted beginning this year (2024). All Head and Asst. coaches will have their own son/daughter on their team but the Sideline Coach must be chosen from each drafted team.**
- **When drafting teams, please be considerate of travel needs from out-of-town players.**
- **If a player is placed on a team and cannot attend the day per week chosen for practice by the Team Coach, the PYSO Coordinator should be contacted and an appropriate team change will be made by the Coordinator.**
 - **The PYSO Coordinator is the only person who can make changes to a team and will contact the parent/s when the occasion arises.**
- **Team playing size (5v5 or 6v6 or 7v7 etc.) is always dependent on the number of registrants per age division and number of teams needed per division. Flag Football: K/1st Grade - 7 on 7 2nd/3rd Grade - 7 on 7 4th/5th Grade - 7 on 7**
- All players are to play half of each game. **No player should play the entire game when subs are present.**
- To avoid forfeits, teams may:
 - a.) choose to both play with less players on the field depending upon the number of available players per teams (make it equal) OR
 - b.) agree to borrow players from the other team OR
 - c.) allow the team with less players to play "as is" (if that is the preference of the team with lower numbers) OR
 - d.) reschedule the game in advance (teams must agree on time and location of rescheduled game.)

GENERAL RULES

- There are no kick-offs or field goals.
- After halftime, possession changes to the team that was on defense at the start of the game.
- **K/1 defensive players must line up at least 3 yards behind the LOS. All other divisions must line up at least 2 yards behind the LOS.**
- **The defense must get set as quickly as possible so the offense does not have to wait to snap the ball.**
Yet, due to the age and inexperience of many players, we also do not want Coaches doing "hurry up plays" to catch the defense off guard. Therefore, in the spirit of learning the game, the Referee will monitor this situation and make sure the defense is "ready" before a play may begin BUT verbal warnings to the defense will be given if continually slow to the line. Chronic delays may result in a 5 yard penalty against the Defense as warranted by the Referee.
- **Referees:**
 - **K/1st Grade Divisions (One Referee provided by PYSO)**

When NO Referee is available:

 - a.) One Coach from the Home Team will serve as Referee (whistles the play dead, spots the ball, etc.)
 - b.) One Coach/Helper from the Visiting Team will serve as the Clock Keeper. (Stopwatches will be provided.)
- **2nd/3rd, 4th/5th:**
 - a.) Up to 2 Referees will be provided by PYSO.
 - Referee/s will do the time clock and downs.
 - b.) If, for unforeseen circumstances, referees are unavailable, the K/1 format will be used.

SPECIFIC RULES

Field Size

- **HALF FIELD - K/1st:**
 - The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 40 yd. line & has 4 plays to cross midfield (20 yard line) or score a touchdown.
 - If midfield is crossed, 4 more downs to score are awarded.
 - If midfield is NOT crossed (20 yard line), the defensive team automatically takes over on the 40 yard line.
- **HALF FIELD - 2nd/3rd, 4th/5th:**
 - The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 40 yard line and has 4 plays to cross midfield (20 yard line) or score a TD.
 - If the offense fails to advance (reach the 20 yard line) after 3 tries, they have 2 options:
 - a.) they can "punt" which means they turn the ball over to the opposing team who starts its drive from the 40 yard line or
 - b.) they can "go for it."
 - if they "go for it" and still fail to cross midfield, the opposing team takes over possession from the **SPOT OF THE BALL.**
 - Once a team crosses midfield (20 yard line), it has 3-4 plays to score a touchdown. IF 4 PLAYS were used without producing a touchdown, the ball will be placed on the 40 yard line to start the next drive for the opposing team.
 - Regular HS Goal Line is used to score a touchdown.

- **FULL FIELD - 4th/5th, (No K/1st)**

- Goal Line: 20 yard line

- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 20 yard line and has 4 plays to gain a first down by crossing the midfield (50 yard line) or score a touchdown.

- **If the offense fails to gain a first down** by crossing midfield (50 yard line) after 3 tries, they have 2 options:

- a.) they can “punt” which means they turn the ball over to the opposing team who starts its drive from their 20 yard line or

- b.) they can “go for it.”

- if they “go for it” and still fail to cross midfield (50 yard line), the opposing team takes over possession from the **SPOT OF THE BALL**.

- **If the team gains a first down by crossing midfield** (50 yard line), the team has 4 plays to score a touchdown.

- a.) If a team chooses to “punt” after 3 downs, the receiving team will take over possession at their own 40 yard line.

- b.) If 4 plays were used without producing a touchdown, the opposing team will take over possession from the **SPOT OF BALL**

Timing/Clock

- Running game clock:

- **K-1:** 50 mins. (25 min. halves) **2-3:** 50 mins. (25 min. halves*) **4-5:** 50 mins. (25 min. halves*)

- * 25 minute halves may be adjusted to 20 minute halves when an individual team must play 2 games per date.

- Halftime: 8 minutes or earlier if both teams agree.

- When the ball is spotted by the Referee, **THE BALL MUST BE SNAPPED WITHIN 30 SECONDS** to keep the game as realistic as possible. If not within the time limit, a 5 yard penalty will be assessed.

- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion. In the event of an injury, the official will stop the clock and then restart it when the injured player is removed from the field of play. The clock will stop during time-outs.

- Each team is allowed 1 time-out per half (1 minute).

SCORING

- No score is kept for the K-1 division. Score will be kept for all other divisions.

- 6 Points for a Touchdown

- Points earned for a Safety earned through interception of a Conversion Play and run back to the 40 Yard Line:

- 1 Point if interception occurs on a Conversion from 5 yards away from the Goal Line.

- 2 Points if interception occurs on a Conversion 10 yards away from the Goal Line (regardless if inside or outside the End Zone.)

- No Overtimes (unless it is the last game of the day on the field AND both teams agree to continue play for a limited time.)

- If a team is up by 24 points or more, new rules will apply. The leading team will:

- 1.) have 2 downs to get a first down AND

- 2.) have 2 downs to score a touchdown until the point differential is trimmed below 24 points. Regular rules will resume at that time.

- a. Coaches: It is expected that all PYSO coaches value the developmental nature of our organization. Your job is to increase skill while striving to make the game “FUN” and “Build Up” all players, regardless of the team. Therefore, to insure a lesser skilled team is not embarrassed or disheartened by the score, please use the following options:

- aa. Defense:

- Pull your defense deeper into the playing area to allow some forward progress by the offense.
- Create a “weak/slower side” of your defense on certain plays and share that information with the opposing coach
- Interceptions: Knock the ball down instead of advancing the ball.
- Other

- bb. Offense

- Change your quarterback to a lesser-skilled player
- Go for “1 point” in conversions
- Allow slower players to run the ball
- No trick plays
- Other

RUNNING GAME

- The QB cannot run the ball. Exception: The QB can only run the ball if he/she has taken a direct handoff. Quarterbacks may pitch the ball.

- Only direct hand-offs behind the LOS are legal. Anyone behind the LOS can receive a hand-off.

- Note: The ball cannot be handed off between the center’s legs.

- Players eligible to run the ball must either catch a forward pass, receive a hand-off or catch a backward pass.

- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball, as long as he/ she does not pass the LOS first.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Once the ball has been handed off the **6 second pass rule** is no longer in effect and all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- **# of RUNNING PLAYS ALLOWED**
 - **K-1st: Run or pass on any/all downs.**
 - **2nd/3rd: Minimum - 1 running play per set of downs; Maximum - 2 running plays per set of downs.**
 - **4th/5th: Same as 2nd/3rd**
- Defensive players cannot pass the LOS during a direct hand off play, until the ball is handed off.
- Spinning is allowed. However, hurdling a player or diving to advance the ball is not allowed.
- **K/1 defense must start at least 3 yards behind the LOS. All other divisions must start at least 2 yards behind the LOS.**
- No blocking or screening is allowed.

BALL CARRIER

- Players running the ball are not allowed to:
 - Lower or butt their head
 - Use a straight arm/stiff arm above the shoulders, or run directly at the opposing player
 - Guard their flags with any parts of their body or the ball.
 - Hurdle other players unless it is to avoid contact.
 - Cover their flag/s with their jerseys.

RUN ZONES

Grades 2-3, 4-5, (not K-1)

- “No Run Zones” are located 5 yards from each end zone AND 5 yards from midfield line (20 yard line).
 - If going for a **1st Down** (midfield): Must **FORWARD** Pass. Rationale: Safety - to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
 - If going for a **Touchdown**: Must **FORWARD** pass INTO THE END ZONE. No small forward pass to a player who then proceeds to run across the “No Run Zone.” Rationale: Safety - to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.

PASSING GAME

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the LOS. (Laterals after a forward pass is completed are allowed.)
- All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- Defenses cannot rush the QB if he is attempting to pass. Additionally, no blocking is allowed.
- If the QB is attempting a pass, he has **6 seconds** to throw the ball. If 6 seconds expires, the ball is ruled dead and returned to the LOS with a loss of down.
- Players catching a ball must land with at least one foot in bounds.
- If an offensive and defensive player catches the ball at the same time and both have possession, the offensive player will retain the ball.
- **INTERCEPTIONS:**
 - a. If during **REGULAR PLAY**, a ball is intercepted, the ball **MAY be advanced** and may result in a touchdown (6 points) located at the original start-of-game LOS (40 Yard Line.)
 - If the intercepted ball does NOT result in a touchdown, the team that intercepted the ball will have 4 downs to score a touchdown. (If using a Half-Field format, the referee will place the ball on the converted distance to the goal line.)
 - b. If during **EXTRA POINT CONVERSIONS** (1 point OR 2 point), the intercepted ball may be advanced and may result in:
 - 1 point earned if Conversion attempt was from the 5 yard line and returned to the “start of game” LOS (40 yard line.)
 - 2 points earned if Conversion attempt was from the 10 yard line and returned to the “start of game” LOS (40 yard line.)
 - General football rules determine possession of the ball after an interception of a 2 point conversion pass.

XIII. PENALTIES

- All **OFFENSIVE** penalties will result in a **5 yard penalty assessed from the previous LOS.**
 - Any type of blocking/screening, protecting flag, hurdling, intentional physical contact (running over players, contact with shoulder down, stiff arm, pushing, shoving, grabbing, holding onto jersey)
- All **DEFENSIVE** penalties will result in a **10 yard gain for the offense from the LOS and an AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.**
 - Physical contact, running over players, pushing, shoving, grabbing, tackling, tripping, swatting/stripping the ball from the offensive player’s hands.
- **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:**
 - **During/after a play:** Extreme language, taunting, negative behavior or excessive celebration
 - **1st Offense: Referee will join the Coach and the Player to discuss the occurrence and penalty.**

It is also expected that the COACH will immediately send the player to the sideline (amount of time determined by each Coach) as a consequence for his/ behavior until there is time to discuss further.

- **2nd Offense by player: 10 YARD PENALTY AND Offending player is OUT for the rest of the half. (More consequences per coaches' discretion.)**

- **After a Touchdown:** Excessive celebration
 - 10 yard penalty at kickoff **AND** rule listed above (1st or 2nd offense.)

- If the ball carrier's **flag falls off** after the LOS, the ball carrier is considered down at the point of the fallen flag. If it happens in the backfield, the ball is dead and spotted at the LOS with a loss of down.
- **Bad Snap/Dead Ball Rule: Loss of Down unless a "mulligan" is agreed upon by coaches prior to it happening. (Exception: K/1)**

XIV. COACHES

● GAME DAY

- A maximum of 2 coaches are permitted on the playing field to assist players but may not interfere in any way with the actual play.
 - a. When on Defense - One coach may remain toward the middle of the field to help direct the players. If a 2nd Coach is on the field, he/she must move toward the sideline to avoid hampering forward progress by the offense.
- Teams may have 1-2 registered volunteers who have passed their background checks on the sideline to help with team/game management.
- It is understood that coaches will lead offenses that allow diversity in plays with the intent that all players have the opportunity to "touch"/carry/catch the ball on multiple occasions.
- A "standard player rotation" is suggested to promote equal time carrying the ball
- If a Referee is not available for 2/3rd or 4th/5th Grade:
 - One HOME TEAM COACH will be required to officiate the game.
 - One VISITING TEAM COACH will be required to keep the Clock and Score Chart..
- **After the FINAL GAME** of day/evening:
 - The **WINNING TEAM** will **PICK UP CONES, ETC.** from the Game Field and place them by the Concession Stand/Storage Area.
- Each coach collects **belts, flags and GAME JERSEYS** at the end of the scheduled game. (No equipment goes home with the players.) Coaches may wash the jerseys, if they desire, on COLD; air dry/line dry/low heat dry.

XV. GAME PROTOCOL

- There is a COIN FLIP which starts each game. Captains (up to 2) from both teams **meet for the coin toss** to determine who has first possession. The Visiting Team calls the flip. The winner of the coin flip has the choice to take offense or defense. After the team captain/s handshake, the game will begin. It is suggested to alternate captains throughout the season.
- Officiating coaches must use a **WHISTLE** to identify dead plays, penalties, out-of-bounds, etc.
- Player humility during the game is emphasized. Dances after scoring, creative "look at me" behaviors, etc. will be penalized either by game rules (see PENALTIES)
- At the **END** of the game, teams will line up and shake hands.
 - Note: Stress looking opponents in the eye, verbally stating positive words

XVI. OTHER

- The ball is spotted where the flag becomes disengaged from the belt.
- Coaches must make an attempt to allow each player on their team to touch the ball in each half. More than 1x is preferred for developmental purposes and to increase love of the game.
- **Fumbles (ball hits the ground) are considered DEAD BALLS. No advancement is possible and a loss of down is assessed. The team that fumbled will retain the ball if downs are still available. (Rationale: Safety)**
- **For K-1, there may be 2 "bad snap dead balls" per possession that does not count as a play or loss of down. Referee MUST call the "bad snap - dead ball" immediately and not allow the play to develop. Only the Referee can make this call.**
- Mouth pieces are not required and are left up to parental discretion.
- **NO COLORED DRINKS on the HS Wildcat Stadium game field.**
- Parking at Wildcat Stadium may be difficult. Please tell your parents not to park in designated Fire Station areas.
- All spectators will remain on the "Visitor" side of the stadium. Spectators are not allowed on the track or turf.
- All spectators are encouraged to pick up trash and keep the stadium clean.
- Team photos will be scheduled and will be mailed to the address on file.
- Youth Sports should be FUN for both the participants and coaches. If it isn't fun for the participants, our youth will become discouraged and choose not to participate in the future. If it is not fun for the coaches, we will struggle finding Volunteers in the future. MAKE IT FUN!
- All coaches/officials are required to go through a Background Check.
- If any issues arise or problems with parents/guardians, please contact: Nancy Kindig-Malone, PYSO Coordinator at 979.446.6470

