



CODE OF CONDUCT

UPDATED JULY 2024

PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY
4889 PALM VALLEY RD.
PONTE VEDRA BEACH, FL 32082

Pastor: Monsignor Keith Brennan
Principal: Daniela DosSantos
Assistant Principal: Fionnuala San Juan

Palmer Catholic Academy

Code of Conduct

Palmer Catholic Academy Mission Statement

Palmer Catholic Academy of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church provides a Catholic and Christ-centered educational environment that inspires all students to reach their full spiritual and academic potential and become responsible, respectful, and reverent disciples of Christ.

Palmer Catholic Academy Core Values

Always respectful

Never give up

Grow from mistakes

Encourage others

Live like Jesus

Show kindness

Palmer Catholic Academy Standards

To develop responsible, respectful, and reverent disciples of Christ, Palmer Catholic Academy seeks to form students who live responsibly, respectfully, and reverently as Christ's disciples through habits of good behavior, self-control, and accountability for their actions. Palmer Catholic Academy will help students to learn from their actions, take responsibility, accept their consequences, improve their behavior, and ultimately grow from their mistakes.

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Code of Conduct

Introduction

As teachers and administration endeavor to help students grow into well-rounded mature young disciples of Christ in keeping with the apostolic mission of Catholic schools, it is necessary that a Code of Conduct be in place to ensure a safe, respectful environment for all students and staff. All students of Palmer Catholic Academy are expected to demonstrate positive, desirable behaviors in line with the teachings of Christ. To ensure a productive learning environment, it is critical that misconduct be discouraged and not permitted in any way in or around our school.

Each student is to adhere to positive, healthy, productive, compassionate Christian behaviors. Each student will not be disruptive, will not use unhealthy negative language or objects, and will not allow an unproductive, mean-spirited manner to prevail. Honesty, charity, and kindness should prevail in all behaviors.

Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to impose disciplinary action as detailed in this Code of Conduct on any student who does not demonstrate behaviors that align with our mission statement and core values. Additionally, if off-campus conduct causes a clear disruption to the school environment, has a negative impact on the school's reputation, the educational program or defamation to anyone in the school community, Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to impose disciplinary action on any involved students.

Palmer Catholic Academy has adopted the following Code of Conduct to support our mission, core values, and standards that are detailed on p. 2 of this document. The Code of Conduct is divided into 2 sections by grade levels (K-2 and 3-8) to be developmentally appropriate for students at each age. (For the Code of Conduct for preschool students, please see the Preschool Addendum.) **As part of this plan, demerits will be given based on the level of the infraction. Whenever a demerit is assessed, FACTS will automatically generate an email to parents with notice of the infraction and any applicable fines.**

For our mission, core values, and standards to be supported and executed, it is essential that there is a cooperative relationship between students, parents, and Palmer Catholic Academy. Parental support of the Code of Conduct is expected as part of this cooperative relationship. Once parents have reviewed this document, they must sign and return the last page. A signed page is expected from each family. Please print out the last page, sign and return to palmercatholic@pcapvb.org.

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Code of Conduct - Grades K-2

Students in this age group are learning and developing their sense of right and wrong as Christ's disciples. Discipline at this level focuses on positive reinforcement and redirection, and an explanation of proper behaviors. Rules are posted in each classroom and discussed with students and parents. Each teacher sets the goals and consequences for his/her classroom and clearly explains them to both students and parents. Parents will be notified by the classroom teacher of any behavior incidents and consequences issued via email by the end of the school day. Inappropriate behaviors at this level include, but are not limited to, violation of classroom rules, disrespect of staff and/or classmates, disrupting class, refusal to work and/or follow teacher directions, being physical with another student (shoving, hitting, etc.).

Consequences at this grade level might include, but are not limited to:

- Logical consequences as determined by the teacher
- removal from the situation (time out)
- loss of privileges (for example: not able to participate in field trip, lunch detention, not able to participate in class party, not able to participate in resource class, etc.)
- parent conference
- behavior plan

Excessive inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated. All students at Palmer Catholic Academy have the right to learn in a non-disruptive environment. If inappropriate behaviors continue after the above consequences are administered, parents will meet with administration to discuss further consequences which may include disciplinary probation, suspension or de-enrollment from Palmer Catholic Academy.

Incidents which involve students hitting/punching/shoving a staff member will be sent immediately to administration and will result in immediate suspension or possible expulsion. Any incidents involving destruction of school property will require repayment by parents and may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

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Code of Conduct - Grades 3-8

Students at this level are better able to manage their behaviors and have a good understanding of what is right and wrong as Christ’s disciples. With teacher guidance and coaching, students are expected to take ownership of their behavior, recognize their mistakes, and take responsibility for their actions. Rules are posted and discussed in each classroom, including Enrichment classes and the lunchroom. Parents are notified of expectations at Open House.

Behavior infractions for grades 3-8 are divided into four levels. All infractions are first addressed through a conversation between the teacher and the student. The teacher will also discuss the incident with other students involved, if applicable. The goal is to redirect students using proximity control, and non-verbal and verbal warnings. **However, if the behavior persists, students will receive the designated number of demerits for the infraction. Parents will be notified via email when their child receives demerits. Once six (6) demerits are accumulated in all (not per class/subject), the student will serve an after-school detention. Please note that parents FACTS accounts will be charged \$35 per detention to cover the cost of coverage. After four detentions, the parents will meet administration and discuss the next steps, which will include a suspension from school.**

The following tables list examples of infractions at each level and consequences for those infractions. **Please note that due to privacy laws, the school is not at liberty to discuss disciplinary actions or consequences with anyone other than the child’s parents/legal guardian.**

LEVEL 1	
Examples of Level 1 infractions	Disciplinary Action These will be given by the teacher if witness to the infraction or told of it by a paraprofessional or substitute. Consequences will be:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violation of classroom/cafeteria rules Class disruptions (calling out, making noises, speaking loudly/yelling, excessive talking, etc.) Not following teacher directions Throwing small objects in the classroom/cafeteria (crayon, pencil, food, condiments, etc.) Gum chewing Horseplay; not keeping hands/feet to yourself Navigating non-school related games or sites on the iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 demerit (see p. 10 for more details) AND Phone call/email to parent, AND Logical consequences as determined by the teacher - for example: verbal warning, change of seating, removal from the classroom for a time out, loss of classroom privilege related to the infraction, lunch detention/silent lunch (see p. 11 for guidelines) Note: consequence for gum-chewing/make-up/nail polish includes a \$5 fine per occurrence that will be billed to the parent FACTS account

LEVEL 2

Examples of Level 2 Infractions	Possible Disciplinary Action These will be given by the teacher if witness to the infraction or told of it by a paraprofessional or substitute. Consequences will be:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued/repeated level 1 infractions over timeRefusal to follow a reasonable request (insubordination)Refusal to workDishonestyDisrespect of fellow classmates (including name calling, teasing, intentional exclusion)Use of cell phones, cameras, Apple watches and the like on campusNot following directions during a drillCreating and leaving an excessive mess in the lunchroom, classroom, restroomIrreverence at Mass or during prayersMalicious gossipGoing into another student's desk/locker/cubby/lunchboxInstigating poor behavior choices (i.e – coaxing another to break a rule, start a fight, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 demerits (see p. 10 for more details), ANDPhone call/email to parentDepending on severity/frequency, a parent conference may be scheduled with parents, teachers and administration to begin Tier 2 Behavior Plan and student may begin meeting with the School Counselor

LEVEL 3

Examples of Level 3 Infractions	Possible Disciplinary Action These will be given by the teacher if witness to the infraction or told of it by a paraprofessional or substitute. Administration can also implement these consequences. Consequences will include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Patterns of concerning behavior - Continued/repeated level 2 infractionsUse of obscene, indecent, or racist/discriminative language or gestures (orally, in writing, or in art form)Navigating inappropriate websites on the iPadStealingWillful destruction of property/vandalismAcademic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, sharing/copying classwork or homework, submitting work generated completely through AI)Disrespect of school staff including substitute teachers and lunch/recess monitorsInappropriate displays of affectionMisuse of school internet or technology, such as attempting to defeat security measuresWillfully entering a restroom or locker room designated for the opposite sex on school premises and refusing to depart when asked to do so by a school employee (FL statute 553.865)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3 demerits, ANDPhone call/email to parent, ANDReferral to administration, ANDProbation for sports teams/Honor Society/clubs/Student Council for two months (see p. 11 for more details)NOTE: Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of 0 for the test/assignment <p>In addition, depending in the severity/frequency, the consequences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Parent Conference with a Tier 2 Behavior PlanDisciplinary Probation (see p. 11 for more details)Meeting with the School CounselorIn-School Suspension (ISS) (\$150 fee charged to FACTS)Saturday School (\$300 fee charged to FACTS) (for grades 5-8 only) (see p. 12 for more details)

LEVEL 4

Examples of Level 4 Infractions ALL REQUIRE IMMEDIATE REFERRAL TO ADMINISTRATION	Disciplinary Action These will be given by administration. Consequences will include the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated/Continued level 3 infractions• Verified bullying (see p. 8 for additional details)• Violation of the sexual harassment policy (see p. 9 for additional details)• Bringing discredit on Palmer Catholic Academy school and/or staff verbally, in writing, or on the internet/social media• Leaving classroom/school/school grounds without permission• Intentional physical confrontation or harm to another student (fighting)• Physical confrontation or harm to a staff member• Any threats of violence or physical/mental harm to the school, staff, or another student, verbally, in writing, on the internet/social media, or in jest (see p. 8 for additional details)• Possession of a dangerous weapon (see p. 9 for additional details)• Possession, use or transfer of indecent materials including pornography• Possession, use or transfer of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, pill-like substances, controlled substances, tobacco/vaping products, and alcohol (see p. 9 for additional details)• Any conduct that would constitute a misdemeanor or felony under Federal/Florida law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 demerits (see p. 10 for more details), AND• Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – period of suspension will be determined based on severity of the infraction (see p. 12 for guidelines), AND• 10-day suspension from extracurricular activities, including sports teams (see p. 12 for guidelines) followed by probationary period, AND• Regularly scheduled meetings with the School Counselor <p>In addition, consequences may include the following depending on the frequency/severity of the infraction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Saturday School (\$300 fee charged to FACTS) (for grades 5-8 only) (see p. 12 for more details)• Disciplinary Probation (see p. 11 for additional details)• Expulsion/de-enrollment from Palmer Catholic Academy (see p. 12 for details)

BULLYING

All members of the Palmer Catholic Academy community have the right to learn in a safe, faith-filled, respectful, and healthy environment where they can succeed and prosper. Palmer Catholic Academy maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any condition or action which is perceived or regarded as bullying. All cases of bullying should be immediately brought to the attention of Administration.

Bullying is defined as repeated physical, emotional, psychological or social insults or assaults with the intention of isolating or degrading another student which can be manifested verbally or in written form and cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another student. **Bullying is deliberate and repeated.**

Bullying is considered a level 4 offense, and any reports of bullying will be investigated immediately, and appropriate consequences will be instituted as needed. Additionally, we encourage students to speak up/stand up for any students being bullied and recognize that being a silent witness to bullying can be just as hurtful as joining in.

The following procedures will be followed:

- Administration and School Counselor will interview all students named in the case to allow for due process.
- Written documentation of the interviews will be recorded.
- Administration and School Counselor will notify parents of all students involved, and conferences will be scheduled with the parents as needed.
- Administration will impose consequences, which will include one or more of the following depending on the severity of the case:
 - Detention
 - 1-3 day Suspension
 - Saturday School
 - Suspension or removal from teams/clubs/Honor Society
 - Expulsion/de-enrollment from Palmer Catholic Academy

THREATS AND VIOLENCE (Diocesan Policy 800.8)

It is the desire and expectation of every administrator, teacher, parent, and student that all will be safe in our schools. The Catholic teaching of respect for the dignity of each person because he/she is made in the image and likeness of God provides the basis for which we are. It is important that this teaching permeates the Catholic school community. However, there are times when some fail to measure up to this standard and we need to act accordingly. All threats of violence that are verified will be taken seriously.

A threat is an expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm regardless of whether the person communicating the threat has present ability to carry out the threat and regardless of whether the threat is conditional or future, or whether it is said in person, in writing, or online, or is real or in jest. Threatening behavior consisting of words or deeds that are intended to intimidate anyone in the school community **or the school as a whole** is strictly forbidden. **Threats will result in immediate suspension and possible expulsion/de-enrollment of the student depending on the severity of the threat. In addition, law enforcement will be notified to conduct a threat assessment on the student.**

The student may be required to receive psychological assessment and counseling depending on the nature of the threat, at the discretion of school administration. If required, the student may only return if he/she presents a written recommendation to that effect from the psychologist/psychiatrist and administration is willing to have the student return to school. A reinstatement conference will take place with administration, parents, and student.

DANGEROUS WEAPONS POLICY

A dangerous weapon is defined to include, but is not limited to, all firearms, explosives, munitions, electronic weapons (e.g. tasers), chemical weapons, knives, pocket knives or dangerous objects and facsimiles thereof, and combustible or flammable liquids. Razor blades or box cutters are also to be considered as dangerous weapons. **Possession of a dangerous weapon will result in the student's immediate suspension from school and may result in the expulsion/de-enrollment of the student. Cases of dangerous weapons possession may go before the Disciplinary Review Board.**

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Intoxicants or other controlled substances in any form, including but not limited to drugs (including over-the-counter types), marijuana, beer, wine, or alcohol may not be brought onto, consumed or utilized on campus or any off-campus student activities. Students and faculty/staff shall not sell, possess, use, transmit or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind. Violators shall be subject to immediate expulsion/dismissal as well as any action deemed appropriate by civil authorities for violation of any law.

Proper use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician, which is in the original container and clearly labeled, shall not be considered a violation of this rule. A student on such medication must provide the administration with written notification from the parent/guardian and physician if the medication is to be brought onto, consumed, or utilized on campus or any school-sponsored activity. This includes over-the-counter type drugs. **All medications must be kept in the clinic. Students are not permitted to have/carry any medications or over-the-counter medicines in their desks/backpacks/lockers.**

By acceptance of enrollment the students and parents consent to and authorize all reasonable action on the part of the school authorities to enforce this rule including, but not limited to, the utilization of searches, questioning, and other investigative tools.

Inhalers – Florida Statutes authorize asthmatic students and faculty to carry a metered dose inhaler on their person while in school when they have approval from their parents and physician. Administration shall be provided a copy of the parent's and physician's written statement of approval.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (Diocesan Policy 800.7)

Catholic teaching recognizes that we are each made in the image and likeness of God and that we are to treat each person with dignity and respect. Faculty and students should model this teaching.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal or written or text harassment or abuse of a sexual nature
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Repeated remarks of a sexual nature to a person, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

Any student, teacher, or staff member, who alleges sexual harassment by another should bring this matter to the attention of the Principal and his/her parent/guardian and/or teacher as applicable. The Principal will investigate the allegation. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the

totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated.

A substantiated charge of sexual harassment against a student by another student shall subject the student to disciplinary action based on the Code of Conduct. Any further investigation will be determined by the Principal and follow due process procedures.

SAFETY IN PRIVATE SPACES ACT

Palmer Catholic Academy complies with the requirements of Florida Statute 553.865, the Safety in Private Spaces Act. Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, the school's bathroom and locker rooms/changing facilities are designated exclusively for use by biological females or biological males. Any student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences as established by the school Principal (Level 3) unless a specific statutory exception applies.

DEMERITS

Parents will be notified each time their child receives a demerit(s) and the reason for the demerit(s). If a student accumulates **6 demerits**, the student will serve an **after-school detention** for one hour (Detention A). For every subsequent accumulation of 6 demerits, the student will serve an after-school detention for an hour and a half (Detention B). **Four (4) detentions will result in a parent meeting with administration to discuss the next steps which will include an in-school or out-of-school suspension.**

DETENTION

- Detention A will be held every Monday through Thursday after school from 3:05-4:05 PM.
- Detention B will be held every Monday through Thursday after school from 3:05-4:30 PM.
- **Parents will be charged \$35 via FACTS for each detention.**
- Teachers will monitor detention on a rotating basis.
- When a detention is issued, it is to be served on the next school day. Detentions issued on Thursday will be served on Monday.
- Detention will not be held on early release days. Detentions issued on the day prior to the early release day will be served on the next day that detention is held.
- **Detentions take priority over all extracurricular activities and sports.**
- Students are to serve detention on their assigned day. We will not change the detention schedule due to students' prior commitments.
- Failure to attend an assigned detention will result in an additional detention.
- Students may not complete homework during detention.
- Students will be given a detention assignment to complete and reflect on a plan for improving their behavior.
- Students will be silent during detention.
- Students may not use any electronic devices during detention, including school iPads.
- Students who do not comply with the detention guidelines will receive an additional detention.
- **Students who receive 2 detentions in a month, 3 in a quarter or 4 in a semester will be put on Disciplinary Probation, begin a Tier 2 Behavior Plan, will be suspended from sports and extracurricular activities (including Student Council and National Honor Society) for 1 month, and will meet with the School Counselor once per week.**

LUNCH DETENTION

Students who are issued a lunch detention will report during their lunch period to the teacher who gave them the detention (grades 3-5) or to the assigned lunch detention moderator (grades 6-8). During lunch detention, students are to remain silent and eat their lunch. Teachers may assign an assignment during this time as well. Students may not work on homework or classwork assignments or use any electronic devices during lunch detention.

UNIFORM/DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Our Uniform Policy is implemented for several reasons which align to the values, traditions and mission of the school. These reasons include:

1. Fostering a sense of unity and equality
2. Encouraging modesty and dignity in dress
3. Instilling discipline and focus
4. Enhancing school spirit and identity
5. Minimizing peer pressure and bullying

Students who are in violation of the Palmer Catholic Academy uniform policy/dress code (see Parent Handbook for specifics on uniform policy/dress code) will receive a uniform violation. **When a student receives a uniform violation, an email will be sent to the parent detailing the violation and the family FACTS account will be charged \$5.** Some examples of uniform/dress code violations are (but are not limited to): failure to wear school ID badges, wearing improper sweatshirts, not wearing a belt (boys), having skirt length too short (girls), wearing improper shoes, sporting hair style that is against the school regulations, wearing make-up, wearing nail polish. (*Note: If applicable, student will be sent to the uniform closet to retrieve an appropriate/needed uniform item **and the family FACTS account will be charged for the item.**)

PROBATION FROM SPORTS/CLUBS/HONOR SOCIETY/STUDENT COUNCIL

A student may be put on probation for sports/Honor Society/clubs/Student Council. ***The probation will last for a period of two months.*** During probation, the student may participate in the sports/Honor Society/clubs/Student Council, however, any additional behavior infractions as described in the Code of Conduct during the probationary period will result in the student being removed from these activities for the remainder of the school year.

DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

Students can be placed on Disciplinary Probation depending on the frequency and severity of their infractions. Administration will meet with parents and the student to discuss the details of the Disciplinary Probation, and all parties will sign the Disciplinary Probation form which will outline a plan for behavior improvement. If during the time of the Disciplinary Probation, the student continues with misconduct, he/she will face suspension and possible expulsion/de-enrollment from Palmer Catholic Academy.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from his/her regular program for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. The suspension will be served as an out-of-school suspension (OSS). Parents needing an in-school suspension (ISS) will be charged \$150 per day of suspension via their FACTS account to cover the cost of sub coverage. Suspension from school is a severe disciplinary procedure and is imposed for very serious misconduct.

A good faith effort shall be made by Administration to employ parental assistance or other alternative measures prior to suspension, except in the case of emergency or disruptive conditions which require an immediate suspension as detailed in the Code of Conduct.

Suspension guidelines:

- Students are responsible for making up all work and homework they missed during their suspension. Students are responsible for finding out what work was missed.
- Students who are suspended may not attend any school events on the day(s) they are suspended (dances, games, clubs, etc.).
- **First suspension** – Student will be put on Disciplinary Probation and begin a Tier 3 Behavior Plan. Student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, for 10 days following the suspension. **Students will be removed from Student Council positions and/or National Honor Society.** All missed assignments must be turned in when the student returns from their suspension, and missed tests must be taken upon return, but 20% of the total score will be deducted from all tests and assignments.
- **Second suspension** – Student may be asked to meet with the Disciplinary Review Board to determine conditions for continued enrollment at Palmer Catholic Academy. Student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, for 20 days following the suspension. Students will NOT get credit for any missed assignments and tests. They will receive a 0%.
- **Third suspension** – Parents will meet with administration to discuss possible de-enrollment from Palmer Catholic Academy. **Student will be removed from all extracurricular activities, including sports.** Students will NOT get credit for any missed assignments and tests. They will receive a 0%.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

At the discretion of Administration, students may be required to attend Saturday School based on the Code of Conduct. A fee of **\$300** will be charged to the family FACTS account to cover the cost of Saturday School coverage. Saturday School will take place from 8:00-10:00 AM as needed. Students will be given special written assignments and/or work detail within the school building during Saturday School.

EXPULSION/DE-ENROLLMENT

Sometimes it might be necessary to dismiss a student from school because of incorrigible behavior or conduct which threatens the physical and moral welfare of other students and/or faculty. This removal could be for the remainder of the school year, or it could be permanent, depending upon the circumstances. De-enrollment is for serious infractions of the diocesan/school policies and regulations as set forth in the school's faculty and student/parent handbooks. **Any student who strikes school personnel will be de-enrolled from PCA.**

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Physical force, spanking, verbal abuse, etc. will *NOT* be used *OR* tolerated in our school environment *UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES*. Discovery of this type of behavior by any employee of the school will result in immediate suspension. Volunteers found to be practicing this type of behavior will be escorted from the premises and denied future volunteering opportunities.



Palmer Catholic Academy

Code of Conduct

Family Last Name (please print): _____

Please read and sign this form once you have reviewed the Palmer Catholic Academy Code of Conduct. Scan and return to the school via email: palmercatholic@pcapvb.org.

I have read the Palmer Catholic Academy Code of Conduct and I agree to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in this document. In signing this form, I am confirming my understanding of the various levels of infractions and possible consequences/costs for each. In supporting Palmer Catholic Academy's mission and core values, I will help my child be accountable for his/her behaviors by supporting any consequences that are instituted per the Code of Conduct. I have read and understand the guidelines **for demerits**, detention, suspension, disciplinary probation, and expulsion/de-enrollment. I understand that my FACTS account will be charged \$5 when my child receives a Uniform Violation. I understand that due to privacy laws, the school is not permitted to discuss another student's consequences with me.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Students should print/sign their names below to acknowledge that they understand the rules.

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____