

About Us...

School and Community

The Palos Heights School District 128 is comprised of approximately 4 square miles and services children pre-K through 8th grade. A neighborhood school philosophy has been adopted and subsequently, there is one small school in each quadrant of the school district. Independence Junior High School is located just south of the Palos Heights Recreation Department on 127th Street and has a total enrollment of approximately 240 students.

Independence Junior High School prides itself on providing a quality education to all students, regardless of the current academic level. The MAP Test is used in the fall, winter, and spring to ensure that each individual student's academic growth is being measured. This important data is used to help make decisions within the classroom to achieve the maximum growth possible for each individual child.

Independence Junior High School is proud to be a 1:1 school where each student is provided with a district owned iPad for his/her own use throughout the school year. Students are not only allowed to use this technology in class, but they are also allowed to take the computers home. For additional information regarding IJHS please refer to <http://iirc.niu.edu> to access our interactive state report card.

Student Athletics

- Boys Volleyball
- Girls Volleyball
- Boys Basketball
- Girls Basketball
- Track
- Cheerleading
- Poms

Volleyball

Both the boys and girls volleyball teams play during the same season. Our teams are structured in accordance with our local conference where we have one boys and one girls team comprised of students grades 6-8. Tryouts are held during the first week of school in August and the season ends by early October. The boys team is coached by Mr. Joe Dinolfo while the girls team is coached by Mrs. Diane Muller.

Girls Basketball

Girls basketball begins shortly after the volleyball season! There are two girls teams: an 8th grade team coached by Mr. Tony Marinello and a 6th/7th grade team coached by Mr. Corey Breyne. The girls season runs from October through December.

Boys Basketball

The boys basketball season runs from mid-December through early March. There are also two teams for the boys' season. The Mr. Greg Urdal coaches the 8th grade team and Mr. Corey Breyne coaches the 7th grade team.

Track

The girls and boys track teams compete at the same time and will begin conditioning in March. There are normally three meets in April and May with the season ending in mid-May with the Conference Track Meet. The boys team is coached by Mrs. Carolyn Rolla and Mrs. Jessica Gabriel and the girls team is coached by Ms. Dana Boulukos and Mrs. Nicole Woods.

Cheerleading

The Independence Cheer Squad performs at all home boys/girls basketball games as well as in conference competitions. The IJHS Cheer Squad is a competitive cheer team that also performs in three state qualifying competitions to help qualify for the State competition held in early January in Springfield, IL. Our Cheer Squad is coached by Ms. Kristin Szydelko and Mrs. Lindsay Mandra. For more information on the IJHS team, please click on the attached link [More Information](#).

Poms

The Independence Poms team is coached by Mrs. Diane Collier and Miss Andrea Collier. The team performs at halftime of every girls and boys basketball game as well as Pep Rallies

School Activities

- Concert Band
- Symphonic Band
- Jazz Band
- Chorus
- Scholastic Bowl Team
- Speech Team
- Chess Club
- Student Council
- National Junior Honor Society
- Spelling Team
- Math Team
- Environmental Club
- Art Club
- Yearbook
- Spring Play
-

Band

The IJHS Band is comprised of 4 bands which includes: the Independence Concert Band (6th grade), Independence Symphonic Band (7th and 8th grade), Jazz Band

(any IJHS student), and the Independence Patriot Band (all IJHS Band students). Our bands compete in both state and local contest, and our Patriot Marching Band participates in local parades and high school events. [More Information](#).

Chorus

The IJHS Concert Chorus is an extra-curricular group of students who love to sing! We meet from September through April and perform at several events during the year. We practice two mornings a week before school to prepare for the concerts. You can hear the IJHS Chorus perform at the Veteran's Day assembly, the Winter Concert, and the Fine Arts Festival. The chorus is also eager to perform for any other event that may present itself during the course of the school year. [More Information](#).

Scholastic Bowl

The IJHS Scholastic Bowl team is an academic team that consists of seventh and eighth graders who play on teams that require them to buzz in and respond correctly to academic and trivia questions. There are head to head questions rounds and bonus rounds. Practices start in October and the Conference Meet is in April.

Speech Team

Speech is open to sixth, seventh, and eighth grader students. The Speech Team picks what topics they are interested in performing--and with help from their coach--create a declamation speech or a poetry piece. Declamation is the re-giving of an important or famous speech that could be a political, graduation or commencement speech, sermon, or political speech. Poetry can be delivering an original poem or fusing three or four different poems and creating a program regarding different themes. The pieces must be at least 4 minutes long and no longer than 6 minutes in length. Practices start in September and the Conference Meet is held in late January/early February.

Chess Club

Chess Club is an opportunity for students to learn how to play chess in a non-competitive environment. Chess players of all levels are welcome to join. Please see Mr. Maholland for more information.

Student Council

Student Council is the governing group of student representatives for Independence led by Mrs. Durant and Mrs. Werges who help in planning Red Ribbon Week, solicit ideas from peers, organize fundraisers, etc. Student Council is comprised of 4 Executive members and 2 representatives from each homeroom.

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)

The National Junior Honor Society is the junior high equivalent to National Honor Society in high school and is sponsored by Mrs. Gabriel. This group of 8th grade students must hold a cumulative score of 3.0 to even be nominated. Once inducted during the spring of their 7th grade year, NJHS spends their final year in junior high planning fundraisers, hosting dances, participating in outside group activities, etc.

Math Team

Math Team is a competitive group of students from all grade levels who compete in 1-2 outside math competitions at nearby high schools and the South Suburban Junior High School conference competition. The team is sponsored by Mrs. Muller and is asked to join during the early spring. This year's conference math contest will be held on **Tuesday, April 12th at 3:30pm at Hille**. [More Information](#).

Environmental Club

The Environmental Club is sponsored by Ms. Boulukos and its main focus is to teach students about the environment, its cleanliness and what we can do to maintain and preserve what we already have. Students will spend time recycling and picking up trash around the building and cleaning up nearby forest preserves. Field trips are designed to show students what the outdoors is really like and how we can do "our part" to save the environment. [More Information](#).

Art Club

Art Club is open to all students interested in getting more art in their diet. The students are able to explore and experiment with a variety of art supplies and techniques. We will be doing a wide variety of activities this year and meeting Tuesdays, most weeks, after school. [More Information](#).

Yearbook

The Yearbook Club works hard all year long to create a memorable yearbook for the entire school to cherish. The yearbook team will be snapping photos of many school events, such as the Veteran's Day Assembly, sporting events, and much more! The yearbook team also plans the layout of the yearbook, collage pages, and creates surveys for their classmates to take.

Spring Play

The Spring Play is open to all Independence students with auditions starting in December and rehearsals running up to the date of the event. This coming year's spring play will be held on **April 20th and 21st, 2018**. Each year a new play is selected and produced by several members of the IJHS staff.

Official School Enrollment (as of July 1)

- 6th Grade: 70
- 7th Grade: 79
- 8th Grade: 76

IJHS Office Staff

- Mr. Kevin Kirk, Principal
- Heather Meskimen, Head Teacher
- Trudy Walta, Secretary

- Susan Kilburg, Nurse Aide

Grading Scale

- This district has moved to Standards-Based Grading. For more information on standards based grading, please see the district home page under, Standards Based Grading.

Daily Schedule

<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	8:10 – 8:50
2	8:52 – 9:32
3	9:34 – 10:14
4	10:16 – 10:56
5	10:58 – 11:33
6	11:35 – 12:10
7	12:12 – 12:52
8	12:54 – 1:34
9	1:36 – 2:16
10	2:18 – 2:58

Early Dismissal Schedule (1:30p)

<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	8:10 – 8:40
2	8:42 – 9:12
3	9:14 – 9:44
4	9:46 – 10:16
7	10:18 – 10:48
8	10:50 – 11:20
5	11:22 – 11:52
6	11:54 – 12:24
9	12:26 – 12:56
10	12:58 – 1:28

Assembly Bell Schedule

<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	8:10 – 8:43
2	8:45 – 9:18
3	9:20 – 9:53
4	9:55 – 10:28
7	10:30 – 11:03
5	11:05 – 11:38
6	11:40 – 12:13
8	12:15 – 12:48
9	12:50 – 1:23
10	1:25 – 1:58
ASSEMBLY	1:58 – 2:58