# PAL Program 2012-2013

Kathryn Kelley [Kat.kelley@austinisd.org](mailto:Kat.kelley@austinisd.org) 512-841-1938

1. **Peer Assistance and Leadership Description:** The PAL course is a peer assistance program offering high school students the opportunity to work as trained peer facilitators with other students on their own campuses and/or from feeder middle and elementary schools. The PAL course is intended to provide field experience for young people who are potentially interested in careers in education and/or related helping professions. Participants will be trained in a variety of skills that will **enable them to assist other students in having a more positive and productive school experience**. Positive peer influence will be utilized as a central strategy for addressing such issues as low achievement, at-risk youth, drop-out prevention, substance abuse prevention, teen pregnancy, suicide, absenteeism, negative attitudes about school, behavior problems, students with special needs, and other issues of concern in the school/district.
2. **Nature of PAL Program**
   1. Mentor Program aimed at helping primarily “at-risk” kids
   2. Each PAL is assigned 2 PALees to mentor.
   3. Areas of Focus:
      1. Communication
      2. Problem Solving
      3. Leadership
      4. Team Work
      5. Reflection
      6. Service
      7. Relationships
3. **Admission Process**
   1. Nomination
   2. Recruitment Meeting
   3. Application
   4. Attendance/Behavior/Academic Background Checks
   5. Teacher Feedback
   6. Interview
   7. Final Selection

1. **Role of a PAL**
   1. They accept the opportunity to make a difference.
   2. Not an advice giver, but someone who is a concerned listener who seeks to help others in making informed and responsible decisions.
   3. There to support, listen, and encourage.
   4. Accepting this opportunity is both demanding and rewarding.
2. **Role of PAL Sponsor**
   1. Primary responsibility for the selection, training, and supervision of PALs
   2. High level of trust and rapport
   3. Trained by Prevention Education Associates and familiar with concepts of peer helpers
   4. Forge and maintain collaborative ties with school staff, district representatives, parents, and community programs.
3. **Partner Schools**
   1. O. Henry Middle School
      1. PALs will work with sixth graders who are at-risk in a critical transition year.
   2. Sanchez Elementary
      1. PALs will work with second graders who are often English Language Learners.
   3. Rosedale School
      1. PALs will work with students with special needs who benefit from interaction with same-age peers.
   4. Zilker Elementary
      1. PALS will work with second graders to provide academic and emotional support.
4. **Additional Helping Projects**
   1. Rosedale Rides
      1. Charity bike race benefitting Rosedale School
   2. Adopt-A-Beach
      1. April trip to Texas beach to assist with clean up
   3. Additional events and projects as designed and implemented by PAL class