PALCS New Student

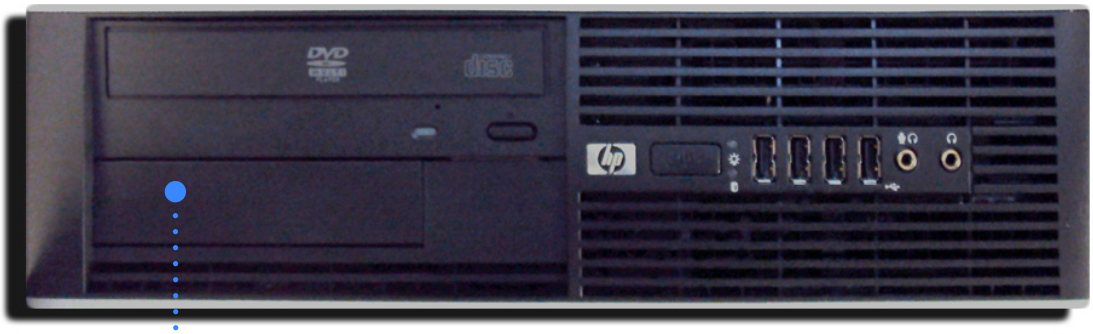
2013-2014

Start Guide

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Computer Equipment: Desktop Bundle



Front View



Back View

Monitor



Keyboard



Mouse



Computer Equipment: Laptop Bundle



Laptop (model may vary)



Laptop Case

Computer Accessories and Other Materials



Scanner

Printer



Headset



Ethernet Cord



Textbooks

Setting Up Your Printer/Scanner

Our school printers must be remotely installed by a Help Desk Representative.

BEFORE calling the Help Desk, please:

1. place your printer on your desk
2. insert paper
3. plug it into a power outlet (but not the computer!) and turn it on
4. **install ink**, if not pre-installed

Installation will be faster if you have already performed these steps. However, we can provide over-the-phone instruction on the above steps, if you do not feel comfortable.

DO NOT plug the printer into the computer until you call the Help Desk representative directs you to do so. We will remotely access your computer, install the printer and network it, if necessary.

When ready to set up your printer, please call **1-877-PALCS-TLC** when you are at home and able to access the computer for approximately 20 minutes.

What to Expect When You Call and Helpful Tips

The Help Desk representative will direct you to a **Remote Assistance Page** and give you a code to enter into the box. After agreeing to allow the representative to access your computer, he or she will remotely download and install software. Once your representative tells you to do so, you can plug your printer into your computer (If you plug in the printer before calling Help Desk, your computer will tell you that you do not have permission to install new hard ware, and ask for the Admin password).

Your Help Desk representative will install the printer drivers and then attempt a test print to make sure the printer installed properly and functions as it should. A test scan will also be performed to ensure the scanner works as well.

Running smoothly, a printer can be installed in 10-20 minutes. However, please budget 30 minutes for installation time to allow for unforeseen problems and any questions you may have.

Tips

- Once installed, *do not* use the scan button on your scanner. Instead, use the appropriate **scanning** program to scan.
- If your printer does not have ink cartridges pre-installed (some come with ink pre-installed, some do not,) you will have to install the ink. If you need assistance installing ink, **watch the video** that goes with your printer.
- Plug your printer's USB cable into the computer tower *after* your representative installs the software. It is usually best to plug the cable into the back of the computer, as you do not need to unplug it and it will be out of the way.

Installing Ink

HP Deskjet 3050A



HP Deskjet 3050



HP Deskjet F4280



Hp Deskjet F4480



Lexmark X3350



Lexmark X5270



Lexmark X3550



Using the Scanner

Lexmark x3350 *or* Lexmark x5270 | Lexmark x3550 | All HP Printers (F4280, F4480, 3050)



Need Technical Assistance?

Call Us: 1-877-PALCS-TLC

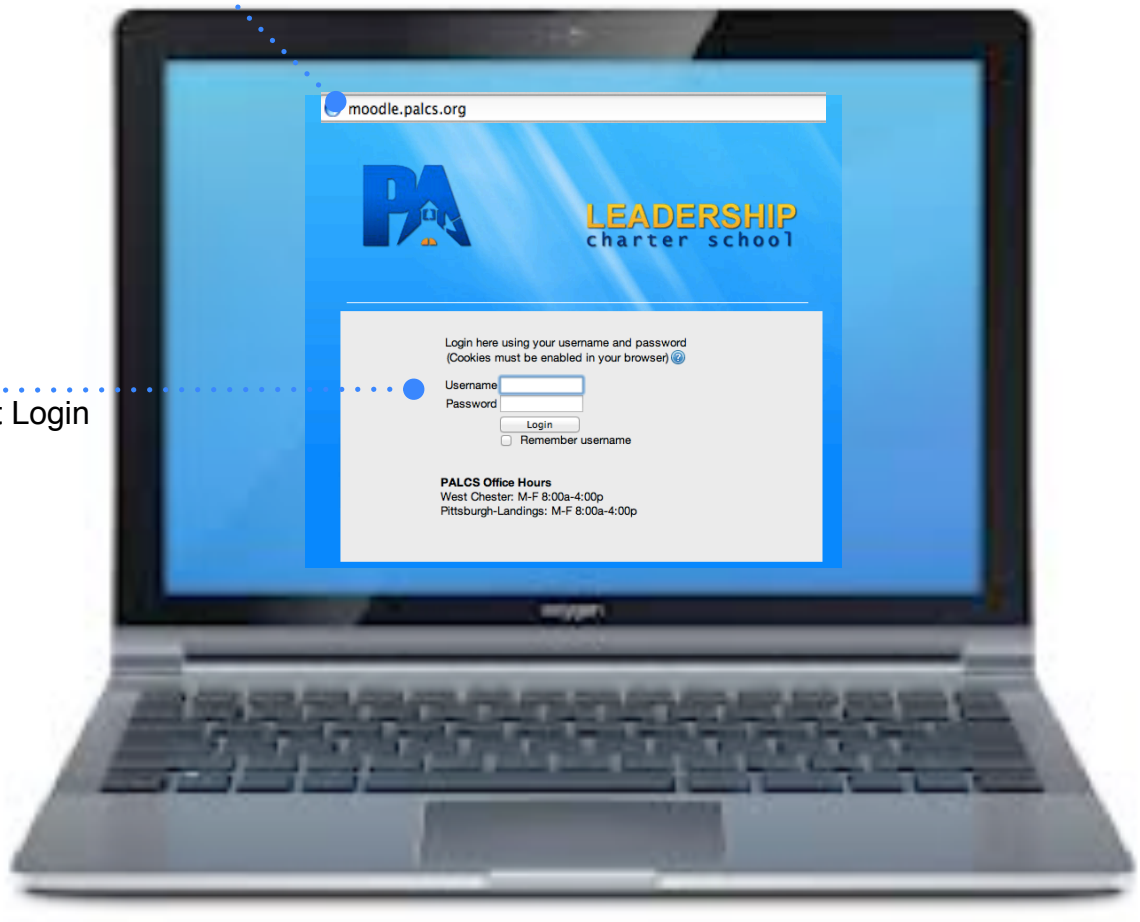
or

Visit Us: www.palcs.org/techsupport/index.html

Logging into school (Moodle)

Moodle is where you will attend and complete school everyday. To access Moodle, click on the Firefox icon that looks like this:

Once you click on Firefox, place the following web address in the address bar: moodle.palcs.org



User Account Login

If you have trouble with this, please contact our Helpdesk at 1-877-PALCS-TLC.

Your beginning steps

Your first few days/weeks of school will be a learning process, and we're here to help. Below are some steps to start you on the right track:

Complete your Intro to Online Learning course

(For students enrolling after September 3rd)

The information in this course may look familiar or brand new. Either way, we ask that you complete this exercise. It's a nice first step in helping you become familiar with doing school online.

Read the School Announcements (daily)

We have lots of events and activities happening at PALCS! In order to help you stay connected, we ask that you read our announcements every day.

Read your Moodle Messages (daily)

Moodle Message is our primary way to communicate one-on-one. It's our instant message system. If you have a Moodle Message, chances are it's something important. Make sure you read your Moodle Messages and respond - we love hearing from you! This is also a great way to ask a question or just say "hi" to teachers and classmates.

Check your PALCSMail (daily)

PALCMail is our school email system. Here you'll find feedback on how you're doing on your assignments. This is also a great way to contact your teachers.

When in doubt, give us a call

Sometimes you just need to talk it out - that's okay! If you're confused or have a question, please call us. We're waiting to help you - really!

Eastern Office - 610-701-3333

Western Office - 412-828-3331

The Parent Overview

We view our Home Facilitators as partners in the learning process, and think it's important that you stay involved with how your student is doing at PALCS. We've made this easy for you through our Parent Overview.

Logging into the Parent Overview

To access this feature, log into Moodle (moodle.palcs.org) with your Home Facilitator user account information and click on the tab entitled, "My Students." For best use, the Parent Overview should be checked at least once a day.

Parent Overview features

From this overview, you can see the following information:

- Report Card (4 times a year)
- Progress Report (every three weeks)
- Lesson Overview (track student's task list)
- Attendance (track student's attendance and submit excuses)
- Access overdue assignments
- Access student's courses and grades

Have questions about this feature?
Give us a call at 1-877-PALCS-TLC or visit www.palcsnetwork.org

The Student Overview

In cyber school, we use technology to help our students stay organized. We offer a resource called the My School tab. The My School tab (along with a feature called “Lesson Overview”) acts as a task list to help students keep track of their assignments.

Accessing the My School tab

To access this feature, log into Moodle (moodle.palcs.org) with your PALCS user account information. For students, the Lesson Overview link is directly on the homepage. For parents, the Lesson Overview link is located in the Parent Overview section.

My School tab features

From this overview, you can see the following information:

- Any Past Due assignments
- All assignments that are due within a time frame. For example, you can organize assignments that are due by day, week, month, or even the whole marking period!
- Lessons organized by course. You may want to focus on one course at a time. That’s ok! You can use the lesson overview to see assignments due in all courses or just one.
  Have questions about this feature?
  Give us a call at 1-877-PALCS-TLC or visit www.palcsnetwork.org

Setting Up Your Webcam

Webcams are not shipped to all students by default - they are only shipped to students who require them for certain courses. If you are receiving a webcam, it will included with textbook materials; they are not included in computer equipment boxes.

If you need a webcam for one of your courses, please call the Help Desk at 1-877-PALCS-TLC and indicate which course requires the webcam.

When you receive a webcam, a Help Desk Representative must remotely install it. To set up your webcam, please call **1-877-PALCS-TLC** *before* you plug the webcam into your computer and when you are able to access the computer for approximately 10 minutes.

DO NOT plug the webcam into the computer until you call the Help Desk representative directs you to do so. We will remotely access your computer and install the webcam.

What to Expect When You Call and Helpful Tips

The Help Desk representative will direct you to the Remote Assistance Website and give you a code to enter into the box. After agreeing to allow the representative to access your computer, he or she will remotely download and install software. We will need your help to identify the model of the webcam, which is marked on the bottom. Only when your representative directs you to do so, you can plug your webcam into your computer (the software needs to be installed before plugging in the webcam.)

When everything is working correctly, the computer will acknowledge your webcam with a "Found New Hardware" popup balloon. Your representative may need to enter a password to finish installation, and your computer may need to be restarted. Your representative will then test your webcam by using the Amcap or HAmcap program to make sure it works properly.

Running smoothly, a webcam can be installed in 5-10 minutes. However, please budget 20 minutes for installation time to allow for unforeseen problems and any questions you may have.

Tips

- Your webcam has at least one black, rectangular USB plug. It may also have a pink, circular microphone jack. Only plug in the USB plug once your representative directs you to do so. Do not plug in the pink microphone plug - your headset's microphone will take care of audio-in, and you should not have two microphones plugged in at the same time.
- It is usually best to plug your webcam into the back of the computer and leave it plugged in. If you need to unplug it, turn off your computer first. When you plug it back in, plug it into the same USB port. If you do not, you will have to call the Help Desk to have it reinstalled.
- Only use the Amcap/HAmcap program to test your webcam's picture. You cannot run the Amcap/HAmcap program when you are in a chat. To use your webcam in a chat, view the chat tutorial.
- To make a video, use Windows Movie Maker.

Pictures and Screenshots

There are two independent methods of taking a screen capture. You can try either method and decide which you prefer.

Method 1: Print Screen button

Start with the item you want to take a screencap of on your screen, then press the **Print Screen (Prnt Scrn) key** on your keyboard. They key is toward the top of the keyboard. This will copy whatever is on your screen as a picture.

To paste your copied screen, go to Start > Programs > Accessories > **Paint**, then go to Edit > Paste to paste your screencap into Paint.

To save your screencap, go to File > Save As, name your file and be sure to save it as a JPEG. Then click Save.

Method 2: IrfanView

Go to Start > Programs > IrfanView > **IrfanView**

In IrfanView, select Options > Capture/Screenshot.

There are several settings that can be adjusted. By default, pressing **Ctrl + F11** will take a screencap of your screen that you can save later. You can select how much of the screen you want to capture:

- **Desktop area**: your entire monitor
- **Foreground window**: your front-most active window, including the title and menu bars
- **Foreground window** – Client area: your front-most active window, without title and menu bars

When happy with your settings, click the Start button in the capture setup window.

IrfanView will minimize so you can see your screen. Be sure the window or image you want to take a screencap of is up on your screen, then press **Ctrl + F11** keys on your keyboard to take the screenshot. IrfanView reopens with your screenshot

To save your screenshot, select File > Save as. Pay attention to the Save location so you can find your file later and give your file a name you will remember, then click Save.

Submitting Your Screencap

Teachers have students submit screencaps in several different ways.

- **Submitting a Screencap in a Lesson**
- **Attaching Your Screencap to PALCSmail**

Class Chats

Chats allow you to communicate with your teacher and other students in a live web classroom.

To access the classroom chat, click on the class chat link, provided in your teacher's How to Contact Me box, at the time noted by your teacher. You can also access Homework Help chats and fun "open" chats from the drop-down boxes on the Moodle Home Page.

Once you click on a chat link, a screen comes up asking for a username. Students can enter chats using the same username and password they use to log in to Moodle. Type your **Moodle username and password**, then click **Enter Room**.

Your teacher may have to approve your entry to the room. If so, click the **Request Entry** button and wait for your teacher to allow you into the room.

Once you are in a chat room, you will often see a large window in the center. This is where your teacher will share information. Your teacher may use a whiteboard, which allows students to see a live screen that your teacher can write on; sometimes teachers let students write on the whiteboard, too. Your teacher may also share a prepared presentation or show running programs on his or her screen.

You will be able to hear your teacher through your speakers. If your teacher turns on your ability to speak in the chat, and if your headset is properly installed, click the **Talk** button in the lower left. Then, click **Allow** to verify you want to use your microphone. The Talk button works like a walkie-talkie - when you press the button, your microphone is on. When you release the Talk button, your microphone turns off.

The **Lock** button next to the talk button turns on your microphone and keeps it on, even when you are not speaking. The Talk button is usually locked on when you first turn on your microphone. Teachers usually prefer students *not* to lock their microphones on, so please be sure the Lock button is not pushed.

If your teacher turns on video, you can see your teacher in real-time and any other students using webcams. You can usually see the camera box in the upper left. If your teacher allows you to use video and you have a webcam, click the **Share my Camera and Voice** button in the lower left of the video box. Click **Allow** to verify you want to use your webcam and microphone.

If you get a pop-up in the top right corner asking you to install the **Adobe Connect Add-In**, click Install. This will improve the multimedia in the chat room, like your camera and voice.

Usually below the camera box is the **Attendee List**. This shows you who else is in the chat room. When someone is using a microphone, a microphone icon will appear by his or her name.

The **Chat** box enables you and your classmates to type a message. Students usually use the chat box when they prefer not to or cannot use their microphones.

If you are watching a **recorded chat** session you will be able to stop, pause and play using the toolbar.

Computer Folders

It may help to **create folders for each of your courses** within the My Documents folder to organize your files. Folders within other folders are called **sub-folders**.

Creating Folders

There are several different methods of creating new folders, but all produce the same results. Two are listed here. You can do whichever method you prefer.

Making Folders in My Documents

1. Double click **My Documents** on the desktop
2. Click the **File** menu > **New** > **Folder**
3. **Type** a name for the folder (such as the name of a course,) and then press **Enter**

Making Folders by Right-Clicking

1. Right-click an empty space where you would like your folder to be
2. In the menu that appears, go to **New** > **Folder**
3. **Type** a name for the folder (such as the name of a course,) and then press **Enter**

Moving Files

If a file is saved somewhere on your computer, but you would like it to be somewhere else, you can **Move** the file or folder. There are several methods for moving files and folders. Two are listed below, you can do whichever you prefer.

Using Cut/Paste

1. **Find** the file or folder you want to move
2. Go to the **Edit** menu and select **Cut**. (Alternately, right-click the file and click **Cut**)
3. Find and open the folder where you want to put the file
4. Click the **Edit** menu and click **Paste**

Using Drag/Drop

1. **Find** the file or folder you want to move
2. Open the folder where you want to put your file
3. Click and hold the left mouse button on the file you want to move, and **drag** the file to the new location you want it to be. When your mouse is over the new preferred location, let go of the mouse button. The file will be moved to the new location.

Finding Files

1. Right-click the **Start** button on the Taskbar, then click **Search**
2. Under "What do you want to search for," click **All files and folders**
3. Under "Search by any or all of the criteria below," type the name of the file or folder you want to find
4. Click the "Look in" drop-down menu and select where you want to search
5. Click **Search.** The results of your search appear in the Search Results window. You can double-click files to open them.

Renaming Files

1. Right-click on the file you want to rename and click **Rename**
   Note: Do not change the **extension** (the last three characters after the period in a filename.) Changing the extension could make the file unrecognizable to the computer.
2. **Type** the new filename and press **Enter**

Setting Up Your Sound/Headset

All PALCS students should receive a **headset** with computer equipment. External **speakers** are usually not included, as PALCS computer towers have internal speakers built-in.

Your headset requires several adjustments to make sure you have the best sound output and microphone input. There are settings on your physical headset, then there are settings on your computer. Please try all of these steps to test your headset.

Plugging in your Headset

Always check that your headset speakers are correctly plugged into the correct ports. The easiest place to plug in your headset is the **front of the computer**. The plugs and cords are very sensitive, though: do not bend them sharply, tug on them, run them over with your computer chair, or allow pets to chew on them. Keep the cords loosely tucked away.

The black earphone plug should go into the Earphone port; the pink microphone plug should go into the Microphone port. The icons on the plugs and ports will match.



Microphone



Earphones



You can alternately plug your headset into the **back of the computer**, but only if you have a microphone port available. If you have a pink microphone port, plug in the pink microphone plug. Plug your black earphone plug into the green Audio Out port. If you do not have a pink microphone port in the back of your computer, plug your headset into the front of your computer.



Checking Volume on your Headset

There is a knob on your headset cord that will control volume between you and your computer called the **in-line control switch** (pictured at right.) Move the mark on the slider up toward the + to turn up the volume. It is recommended you keep this slider all the way up.

There is also a switch on the left hand side that will mute the microphone. Be sure this switch is down (un-muted) if you want to use your microphone.

Testing Your Headset

The fastest method of checking your headset is to try and made a recording with Audacity. **Click here to find out how to make an MP3 with Audacity**. If you are still having trouble, please try our **headset troubleshooting techniques**, or call the Help Desk at 1-877-PALCS-TLC.

Get Connected

As a new PALCS family, we're excited to welcome you into our school community. Just like entering a school building for the first time, entering an online community can be a little intimidating. Don't worry - we've all been there! As a matter of fact, we thought you might feel this way, so we've dedicated a whole section of the school to helping you get connected.

The PALCS Network

Our PALCS Network (www.palcsnetwork.org) is designed to help parents and students connect to other members of our school community as well as faculty and staff. The PALCS Network features:

- A virtual recap of the orientation presentation
- Connection groups for parents and students
- The school events/activities calendar
- Resources, videos, and tutorials on how to be successful at PALCS

Student to Student messaging

This feature allows you to Moodle Message your classmates. Please visit our PALCS Network (http://www.palcsnetwork.org/#/quick-links/forms) to sign up for this option.

Class chats

A great way to get to know your classmates is to attend your class chats. Each class offers live chat options throughout the week. Pop in to get to know your teachers and to connect with other students at PALCS!

Join a club

Just like a district school, PALCS offers various clubs. Watch the daily school announcements for opportunities to get involved! Art club, Book club, National Honor Society, and Student Government are just a few of our many options.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate from PALCS, students must successfully complete all of the following:

- 4 credits of English
- 3 consecutive credits of Math (including 1 credit of Algebra 1)
- 3.5 credits of Social Studies (including 1 credit of US History or US Government and .5 credit of Economics)
- 3 credits of Science (including 1 credit of Biology)
- 1 credit of Arts and Humanities electives
- 1 credit of Technology
- 1 credit of Health/Safety/Phys. Ed.
- 4 credits of additional electives (which may be core courses)
- .5 credit of Senior Seminar (or equivalent)

Total minimum required credits for graduation: 21

In addition to the above PALCS requirements, college-bound students are encouraged to take:

- An additional credit of Math
- An additional credit of Science
- An additional credit of Social Studies
- At least two consecutive years of the same Foreign Language

Standardized testing requirements

The PA Department of Education requires all 11th grade students to take standardized tests called Keystone Exams in Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature. Please see our PALCS Course Description Book (www.palcsnetwork.org) for more information on this graduation requirement.

Contact Information

As a new member of our school community, it might feel a little overwhelming to figure out who to contact for what. If you're not sure who to call for assistance, a good starting place is our main office. We have representatives waiting to direct you to the right place.

Main Office locations

West Chester, PA: 610-701-3333 Pittsburgh, PA: 412-828-3331

Methods of communication

At PALCS, we offer 3 ways to connect with faculty and staff:

- **Moodle Message** - our instant message system that is best used for one-on-one and personalized communication.
- **PALCSMail** - our school email system that is best used to review teacher feedback and more formal communication.
- **Phone** - every faculty and staff member has a direct extension, and are happy to talk with you over the phone. If you're unsure of your party's extension, never fear! Just call one of our main offices, and we'll transfer you to the right place.

Our Toll-Free number and Helpdesk

If you're having technical difficulties or if you need to dial us toll-free, please call 1-877-PALCS-TLC. Our representatives are happy to assist you.

School Directory

Looking to connect with a specific department or faculty/staff member? A comprehensive school directory can be found on our PALCS Network (www.palcsnetwork.org).

School Calendar

PA Leadership Charter School
2013-2014 School Calendar

September 3	**First Day of School**
September 24	*End of Progress Check 1 (MP1)*
October 14	**Columbus Day - No School**
October 15	*End of Progress Check 2 (MP1)*
November 5	*End of Marking Period 1*
November 26	*End of Progress Check 1 (MP2)*
November 27-29	**Thanksgiving - No School**
December 20	*End of Progress Check 2 (MP2)*
Dec 23 - Jan 1	**Winter Holiday - No School**
January 21	*End of Marking Period 2*
January 22	**Teacher In-Service - No School**
February 11	*End of Progress Check 1 (MP3)*
February 17	**President's Day - No School**
March 4	*End of Progress Check 2 (MP3)*
March 28	*End of Marking Period 3*
April 14 - 21	**Spring Break - No School**
April 22	*End of Progress Check 1 (MP4)*
May 20	*End of Progress Check 2 (MP4)*
May 26	**Memorial Day - No School**
June 10	**Last Day of School**
June 14	***Commencement***

Final Tips

You're just moments away from starting your educational journey with us. We have just a few more things for you to keep in mind as you get started...

✓ **Moodle (moodle.palcs.org) can be accessed from any computer.** So, if you find yourself at a friend's house, a library, or on a mobile device...feel free to join us! All you need is the internet.

✓ **We're open for you to do school 24/7.** The learning never stops!

✓ Remember, **our teachers are online during typical school hours.** To get the best learning experience, you'll want to complete school when they're available to help you - typically 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

✓ Just like a district school, **you have to attend (log in) to school everyday (Monday - Friday)**. If you forget to log in, it counts as an "absence" from cyber school, and you'll need to submit an excuse.

✓ We're going to give you all the materials you need to be a successful cyber school student: computer, books, internet reimbursement, and more! **Kindly keep all materials boxes in a safe place**. You never know when you may need to send a computer back to us for repair or switch out a book (free of charge, of course).

✓ This Start Guide is just the "tip of the iceberg." **We invite you to dive in and experience all that PALCS has to offer.** For more detailed information on how to begin your successful PALCS learning experience, please visit the PALCS Network tab on Moodle.

✓ Call us when you need us: **1-877-PALCS-TLC**.

✓ We're happy to assist you!

Thank you for choosing PALCS.