

Calendar

October 5

Walk & Bike To School Day

October 7

No School - Conferences

October 10

No School - Columbus Day

October 17 - October 21

Swanson School Spirit Week

October 18

PTA Meeting - Library

October 19

Early Release - Dismissal at 11:54

* To subscribe to the Swanson Calendar (iCal or Google) you can download:

https://swanson.apsva.us/calendar

THE SWANSON STATEMENT

WE ARE SWANSON ADMIRALS!

WE ARE SCHOLARSHIP, STRIVING TO THINK DEEPLY AND OPEN OUR MINDS.

WE ARE SERVICE, CONNECTING TO ONE ANOTHER, OUR COMMUNITY, AND THE WORLD.

WE ARE SPIRIT, CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES, OURSELVES, AND OUR SCHOOL.

WE ARE SWANSON ADMIRALS!

THE SWANSON ANCHOR, October 2016



THE PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

- Bridget Loft, Principal

ARLINGTON TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (ATSS)

Arlington Public Schools has instituted the Arlington Tiered System of Support (ATSS). The focus of this countywide initiative is to address the whole child and what supports he or she needs to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally. The goal is to identify students who are in need of remediation or extension, and create timely action plans. At Swanson, the data shows that our students are in need of both intervention and enrichment:

- 1 in 10 Swanson students did not pass the Reading SOL.
- 1 in 10 students did not pass the Math SOL.
- 3 in 10 students scored a "pass advanced" on reading and math SOLs.

With this in mind, Swanson has adopted a daily intervention/enrichment model in four-week rotations during our STAR period.
Students will have the opportunity to participate in one or more kinds of STAR:

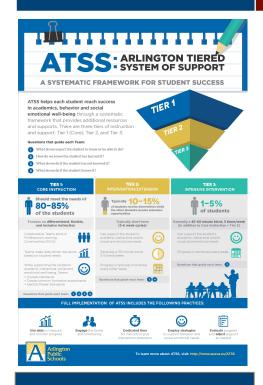
- Anchor focus on key principles of Scholarship, Service, Spirit, Compassion and Perspectives
- Specialty pre-enrolled enrichment activities with a variety of themes and topics
- Student Skills support for students requiring organizational skills
- Academic Intervention support for students in math or reading

How will it work?

Academic Intervention STAR- Using student performance assessment data in reading and math from the first four weeks of school, teachers will place students needing support into an Academic Intervention STAR. These smaller group classes (8-10 students) will allow for more targeted instruction in essential concepts. The Academic Intervention STARs will continue through a four-week session, after which students will return to their original Anchor or Specialty STAR class. If you have questions regarding academic interventions, please contact your child's English or Math teacher.

Student Skills STAR - Within the same timeframe, students who need extra support in organization will be placed into a Student Skills STAR to work on strategies in planning, organization, and time management. After the four-week rotation they will return to their original Anchor or Specialty STAR class. If you have questions about Student Skills STAR, please contact your child's counselor.

Specialty STAR - In an effort to enhance our enrichment offerings, Swanson teachers have created Specialty STARs with a range of topics for students to explore creative passions, affinities, service, and leadership. Seventh and 8th grade students who were enrolled in Swanson last year had the opportunity to review and apply for these STARs. Our 6th graders and 7th and 8th graders who are new to Swanson had the same opportunity starting Monday, 9/19.



Daily STAR Categories

- Anchor focus on key principles of Scholarship, Service, Spirit, Compassion and Perspectives
- Specialty pre-enrolled enrichment activities with a variety of themes and topics
- Student Skills support for students requiring organizational skills
- Academic Intervention support for students in math or reading

They received information about all of the options and were given the opportunity to apply. Students will be notified on October 3rd of their new STAR, if selected, and will join that STAR starting October 11th. Students in Specialty STARs are still eligible for Academic Intervention rotations, as well as Student Skills intervention. (It should be noted that, given the limited number of slots available in each specialty STAR, students might not be selected to join a specialty STAR.) For more information on Specialty STARs, there is a presentation located on the Swanson website (https://swanson.apsva.us/about-us/intervention-and-enrichment/) through which you can access the Specialty STAR Google classroom.

Key Upcoming Dates

<u>September 19-23</u> – 6th grade and 7th/8th grade students who are new to Swanson were able to browse the Specialty STAR catalog and apply for the STAR of their choosing. The request form closed on September 23rd at 4:00PM

<u>September 29-30</u> - Students selected for Academic Intervention and Student Skills STARs were notified.

October 3rd - Students who have been selected for Specialty STARs will be notified.

October 11th - Students will begin their rotation in Intervention or Student Skills. Students who were selected for Specialty STARs and were not recommended for intervention will report to their new Specialty STAR.

Timely attendance to STAR is crucial to our students' success. Please work with your child to ensure that he or she is in his or her STAR class promptly at 7:50 each morning. If tardies to STAR become an issue, please note Swanson's tardy policy as follows:

- ✓ <u>Students will receive a warning</u> and <u>explanation of the process</u> by the teacher after his/her first tardy to STAR or class.
- ✓ If a student is tardy to STAR or class for a <u>second time</u>, a conference between the teacher and student will take place after class. The teacher will explain to the student that a <u>third tardy</u> will <u>result in a teacher assigned detention</u> and a <u>phone call home</u>. The student will also be advised that a <u>fourth tardy</u> would result in a discipline referral to the office.

Thank you for your support of your our students' success. For more information about ATSS including our September PTA Presentation and Frequently Asked Questions, please visit our website (https://swanson.apsva.us/about-us/intervention-and-enrichment/)



Welcome to Swanson Middle School's Special Education Corner.

Each year we use this section to guide you through the special education process. Our goal is for you, as a participating member of the team, to know what to expect throughout the year. All information will be updated, annually, to reflect any and all changes in the process.

From the APS Office of Special Education

"Arlington Public Schools (APS) provides a continuum of services for students with disabilities, preschool through high school, found eligible to receive special education services. Identifying a student as eligible for special education services is a carefully managed process guided by State and Federal regulations, as well as APS Special Education policies and procedures (25-4.4). Evaluations required to make this determination are completed only with parent permission.

School-based student study committees review available information regarding students who are experiencing problems that adversely affect their education performance. Students suspected of having a disability are referred for evaluation. An eligibility committee at the student's school reviews assessment data from school-based evaluations as well as any information provided by parents to determine if the student has a disability which requires special education services. When a student is found eligible for special education services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed with the participation of the school staff, the parents and the student (when appropriate). An IEP is a statement of the special education and related services that will be provided to the student which is updated at least annually throughout a student's eligibility for special education."

Please read future issues that will detail the step-by-step process for determining eligibility. You can also view this information in full on the APS Special Education website (https://www.apsva.us/student-services-special-education/special-education-office-of/).

- Shannan Ellis, Assistant Principal



CAPACITY UPDATE

As you travel around Swanson you may notice our new 7th Grade classrooms and additional spaces for lunch and for PE activity.

After much work on the part of our Facilities Department and from Swanson's own custodial staff, the new **Seven Seas** classrooms are open for business. Our students and teachers have already adjusted to life in these new classrooms, despite the work that remains.

Over the next few weeks you may see workers completing some of the siding on these units, smoothing over walkways, completing an administrative office, and adding technology to classrooms. Once this work is completed, both our PTA and our art students plan to spearhead beautification efforts on the exterior of these classrooms.

- Scott McKeown, Assistant Principal

FYI: Important Swanson Contacts & Numbers

Administration
Principal
Bridget Loft

Assistant Principals
Scott McKeown
Meghan Henning
Shannan Ellis

Numbers
Main Office Hours
7:30 A.M. – 4:40 P.M.

Main Office 703.228.5500

Attendance Line (call by 8 A.M.) 703.228.5506

Homework Line 703.228.2003 (If student is out for two or more consecutive days)

Counseling Services 703.228.5508

Clinic 703.228.5515

Activities Office 703.228.5510

Check In 703.228.5497

MISSING SCHOOL IS MISSING OUT

Attendance: A key to your student's success

We are responsible for teaching your child, but we can't do our jobs if your child is absent frequently. A child who misses a day of school misses a day of learning.

The coursework in today's middle schools is more challenging than it used to be — and students who are frequently absent are setting themselves up for serious academic problems.

Being late for school hurts a child's learning as well. A student who is 10 minutes late everyday will miss 30 hours of instructional time during the year. STAR is an important time for students to gain information and form important relationships.

The bottom line: Making sure your child goes to school every day and on time is one of the most powerful ways parents can ensure success — in middle school, high school and beyond.

Tips for helping to improve your child's attendance

- 1. Talk with your child about the importance of attending school regularly.
- 2. Avoid scheduling family trips or doctor's appointments during school hours.
- 3. Make sure your child stays healthy by eating nutritious foods and getting exercise.
- 4. Support rules and consequences for absenteeism.
- 5. Try to keep a consistent bedtime. Children need at least 8 to 9 hours of sleep.
- 6. Have a regular morning routine.
- 7. Teach your children to use an alarm clock.
- 8. Stay in touch with the school. Your child's counselor is an important contact.
- 9. Remember to celebrate and reward good attendance

Our school social worker Liska Friedman will be working with students who have attendance issues. Please feel free to contact her if you have any questions or concerns. She can be reached by phone at 703-228-1345 or by email at Liska.Friedman@apsva.us

- Liska Friedman, School Social Worker

COUNSELING CORNER

Credit-By-Exam

Arlington Public Schools allows students with the ability to comprehend and communicate in languages other than English to earn high school credits through selected world language tests. Credit-by-Exam measures students' foreign language proficiency in order to award up to four high school world language credits.

There is one testing date per year. The testing date for 2016-2017 is November 8th (Election Day, no school for students) at Wakefield High School. More information and registration may be found at https://www.apsva.us/world-languages/ Registration is open from September 16th-October 14th. Please notify your child's school counselor if they have registered for the test.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month

In observation of **National Bullying Prevention Month**, Swanson counselors will deliver grade-specific lessons to students on bullying. During **National Bullying Prevention Month**, and throughout the school year, students are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying, whether they are a victim or a bystander, to teachers, counselors, administrators, or any other trusted adult in the building. If students wish to report bullying anonymously, they can use the Anonymous Bullying Report form found on the Swanson homepage.

College and Career Fair

Date: October 18, 2016, 6-8 p.m.

Location: Washington-Lee High School (1301 N. Stafford Street)

Students and families can speak with representatives from over 100 colleges, universities, and trade schools and participate in workshops.

Middle School Information Night

Date: November 7, 2016, 7-9 p.m.

Location: Washington-Lee High School

Families and students who will be entering middle school in the fall of 2017 will hear about what to expect in middle school, program options, and resources available.

News for 8th Graders

Promotion and High School Credit Classes

This is a reminder that the school board policy on promotion from 8th to 9th grade states that a student must pass 8th grade Math, English, Physical Science, and World Geography.

Virtually all 8th grade students are taking one or more high school credit class this year. The final grade in these classes will appear on the middle school report card as well as the high school transcript. The grades in these classes will also be included in the calculation of the high school grade point average (GPA), which is requested by many colleges in their admissions process. Please note that the final exam grade in a high school credit class is equal to a quarter grade (or 1/5 of the final grade). In addition, students passing SOL tests in Algebra, Geometry, and World Geography earn verified credits towards high school graduation. Students must earn 22 credits and 6 verified credits to receive a Standard Diploma and 26 credits and 9 verified credits to receive the Advanced Studies Diploma.

High school credit classes offered at Swanson include: French 1 & 2, Spanish 1 & 2, Spanish for Fluent Speakers 1&2, Latin 1&2, Chinese 1, 2, & 3, Arabic 1&2, Algebra, Geometry, World Geography, and Investigating Computer Science.

High School Information

There are several high school program options to consider with specific deadlines. Please consult the APS website for information about the various programs and deadlines: https://www.apsva.us/high-school-choices/high-school-countywide/

Information about interest sessions and deadlines for application will be posted in announcements and the PTA listserv as information becomes available. Students interested in Arlington high school options other than their target school must have a guardian attend transfer orientation sessions both at their home school and the high school they wish to attend.

High School Information Night

Date: December 12, 2016, 7-9 p.m. Location: Washington-Lee High School

Families and students who will be entering high school in the fall of 2017 will hear about what to

expect in high school, program options, and resources available.

(Snow date: December 19)

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST)

TJHSST held an information session at Swanson for interested students on Wednesday, September 28. This competitive Governor's School for high achieving students with a passion for math, science, and technology has an online application process that includes a processing fee as well as required teacher recommendations, a two-session test administration, and strict deadlines. Applications close October 11. More information is available on the TJHSST website:

https://www.fcps.edu/registration/thomas-jefferson-admissions



Counseling Services Team (Shown Left to Right): Chrissy Reardon (Dolphins, Pelicans, and HILT) · Michelle Wilkes (Starfish, Sea Dragons, and Narwhals) · Rana Luthra, Director of Counseling · Judy Jankowski (All 8th Grade Teams) · Hillary Hawes (Orcas) · Laura Goodwyn (Sea Horses, Manatees)

Counseling Services

School counselors recognize and respond to the need for mental health and behavioral prevention, early intervention and crisis services that promote psychosocial wellness and development for all students. School counselors are prepared to address barriers and to assess ways to maximize students' success in schools, communities and their family structure by offering education, prevention, and crisis and short-term intervention until the student is connected with available community resources.

Have questions? We can be reached at 703.228.5508.

FROM THE MATH CORNER

Here are some school-wide math opportunities available to all students.

Morning Math Help - Room 133

Every morning from 7:20 to 7:40 there is a math teacher available in room 133 to help students with math. As time is limited, morning math help is most effective when a student comes with specific questions about his/her homework, notes, or assessments.

Dreambox

APS students now have access to Dreambox, a computer adaptive program that is accessible anywhere there is an internet connection. Students may use their iPad or a computer. Our APS goal is for students to use Dreambox for at least 60 minutes each week. Dreambox provides students with choice about different math topics and adapts to provide students with appropriate intervention or extension as needed.

Parents can track Dreambox progress using the following link: https://support.dreambox.com/hc/en-us/articles/214606238-Understanding-the-Family-Insight-Dashboard. However, please don't use your child's Dreambox account, as the program would adjust your child's targeted math activities based on your math knowledge!

Here is the access information:

Computer: https://play.dreambox.com/login/bqt4/e5p7

iPad: Download green Dreambox app, school code: bqt4/e5p7

Username is student's APS ID number

Password is student's birthday in MMDDYY format

AMC 8 Math Contest

Swanson offers students the opportunity to participate in the AMC 8, which is 25 questions, 40-minute contest open to middle school students. It is a national contest sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America. The contest is designed to be challenging for strong 8th grade math students, so all students who participate should enjoy math problem solving. Sign up for the contest will occur in early October (as contests need to be ordered) while the actual contest will be held on Tuesday November 15th.

MathCounts

MathCounts is an after school club for any middle school student who is interested in math problem solving. Students do not need to commit to attending every session. For those who are interested, there are opportunities for students to participate in math competitions involving individual and team problem solving.

- Laura Partridge, Swanson Math Coach



Emerging Scholars

These students are true leaders in the making! In the past few weeks they have been learning all about the "Growth Mindset" and how their beliefs can alter their future.

They also were assigned "Success Bios": Each student chose a person they admired and did research on their life and how they became successful. They presented their findings in an oral presentation for their peers. In the end, the students found that each person had one common denominatoralthough they had obstacles, they always overcame them because failure is really an opportunity to learn and grow.

These scholars are learning that - "True success is not the end product but how much you learn along the way."

- Monique Caldwell, Theatre Teacher/Director

ACTIVITIES CORNER

I hope that everyone has settled in and is enjoying the new school year. Here are a few updates about the happenings of our sports and clubs!

Sports

Boys Soccer, Tennis, and Dive are well underway. Make sure to come out and support your Admirals! Boys Basketball and Girls Soccer will be starting up in late October, so if you are interested, keep an eye to the morning announcements and web calendar for tryout dates and the game schedules. A physical exam dated within a calendar year of the sports season must be on file to participate. Good luck and have fun!

Student Athlete Grade Monitoring

Just as in the Swanson statement where Scholarship comes before spirit, we emphasize the Student in student athlete first! To participate in the interscholastic sports teams at Swanson, you must maintain at least a C in all of your classes, including electives, PE, and ACT II. Grades for our athletes will be pulled once a week. If there are any discrepancies, the teacher, coach, athlete, and Activities Coordinator will work together to create a plan towards eligibility.

Clubs

We enjoyed seeing everyone out at our after school activities fair! All of our clubs should have begun meeting, or will start shortly. The best place to find out when and where a club is meeting is the morning announcements. It's also never too late to get a new club up and running!

As always, if you have any questions about Swanson's after school programs, feel free to email me at trevor.holland@apsva.us or by phone at 703. 228.5510.

- Trevor Holland, Activities Coordinator

Swanson Sisterhood

Are you new to Swanson?

Do you want to meet new people?

Do you have great ideas but no one to share them with?

Have you wanted to join a club where there are fun activities, school spirit, and community service opportunities?

Well, the SWANSON SISTERHOOD is the club for you!

Swanson Sisterhood is a group for girls only. If you are interested in hearing more about Swanson Sisterhood, join us on Mondays, at 2:30 during ASP I, in Seas 16. Listen to morning announcements for changes to the schedule.

Hope to see you there!



Walk & Bike To School Day - Wednesday, October 5th

Swanson students are invited to join International Walk and Bike To School Day. Swanson is one of over 2000 schools across the country registered to participate in the event, which educates participants on the health and environmental benefits of walking and bicycling. Look for more details soon.

THE SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic Book Fair is almost here to help you with your 40 Book Challenge!

Starting Monday, October 3 through Thursday, October 6, purchases can be made during the school day in the library. We will also be open Thursday evening and Friday morning during conferences. We do not add taxes to the purchase total. Checks can be made payable to "Swanson Middle School," but we are not allowed to give change for checks written over the cost of the purchase. Book fair hours are:

 Monday, October 3
 7:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

 Tuesday, October 4
 7:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

 Wednesday, October 5
 7:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

 Thursday, October 6
 7:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

 Friday, October 7
 7:20 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Book fair profit will be used to support library and English Language Arts programs.

The Swanson Book Fair website is:

https://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bookfairs/cptoolkit/homepage.do?method=homepage&url=swanson
By visiting this site you can view the times we are open and shop online. Online shopping will be open
from September 20 until October 10. Online purchases will be shipped to the school at no additional
charge, but you will be charged taxes. All online orders will be shipped after October 10 when the fair
ends. We can be reached at 703-228-5517 or by email at cynthia.chiu@apsva.us, amy.hailey@apsva.us
or tamara.metz@apsva.us.

Volunteers are needed to help with the Book Fair!

If you would like to volunteer to help with the Book Fair - there are still a few slots available - please sign up at: http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f044da9ab2baa8-swanson



Swanson Theatre Department in Full Swing!

The **Theatre Sports Star** is having a blast learning team building skills, how to work together and communicate.

Both yearlong and semester drama students are working on a story telling unit. For their final project we will invite other classes to come hear our stories being performed.

Also, in celebration of "Hispanic Heritage Month" each theatre class was introduced to Rita Moreno a famous actress and performer.

- Monique Caldwell, Theatre Teacher/Director

PTA Executive Committee

Madelon Brennan - President president@swansonpta.org

Zoe O'Neil - Vice President vp@swansonpta.org

Poppy McDonald - Secretary secretary@swansonpta.org

Anne Henrich - Treasurer treasurer@swansonpta.org

Carri Berenson - Fundraising fundraising@swansonpta.org

If you are interested in volunteering for a specific event or would like more information on how to be involved, contact Carri Berenson

at volunteer@swansonpta.org

SWANSON PTA

Join · Volunteer · Support

The school year has gotten off to a great start and we look forward to meeting many of you at an upcoming event!

Our next **PTA Meeting** will be held on October 18th at 7:00 P.M., in the Swanson library. James Lander, School Board Member, will be our guest presenter. PTA meetings are a great way to get updates directly from the administration, learn more about our school and meet other families. Please join us!

Our theme for this year is **Join. Volunteer. Support.** We hope that you will be a part of that effort. Every family makes a difference in creating the amazing and supportive network we have here at Swanson. Here are the best ways to be involved:

- 1. Become a member of the PTA
- 2. Order a Swanson directory
- 3. Make a donation to our No Stress Fundraiser is to visit our http://swansonpta.org/ezform.
- 4. Stay informed is to add your name to our new http://swansonpta.org/communications.

Again, we look forward to meeting you and to enjoying a great year!

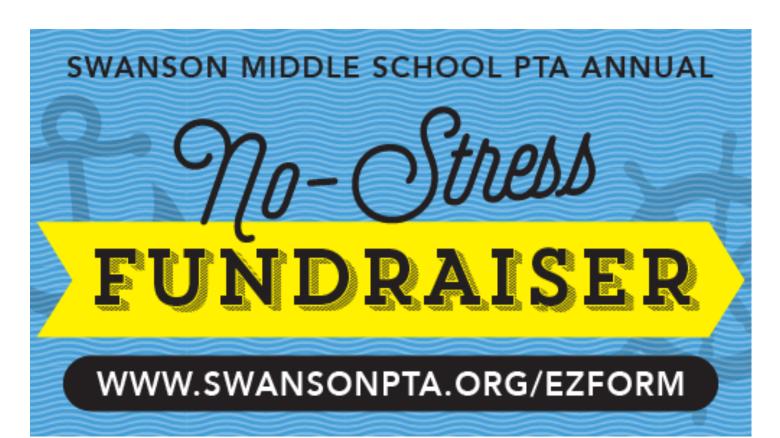
HANDMADE ARLINGTON AN ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW JEWELRY / CERAMICS / CLOTHING / GLASSWORK / SKINCARE APRIL 1, 2017 10AM TO 4PM WWW.HANDMADEARLINGTON.COM SWANSON MIDDLE SCHOOL 5800 NORTH WASHINGTON BLVD ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

Join the Handmade Arlington Team

Would you like to be involved in one of Swanson's most fun and creative events that raises funds for the PTA? Planning has started for HANDMADE ARLINGTON 2017 and we need your ideas and help! Chair Leslie Saenz is looking for a HA2017 Co-Chair in planning all aspects of the show, in addition to team members to help with other planning aspects.

HANDMADE ARLINGTON is looking for a corporate sponsor for the 2017 show. Are you a business owner who might be interested in sponsoring the show? Or are you interested in finding a sponsor for the 2017 show? Corporate sponsorship is the next big step in growing HANDMADE ARLINGTON's fundraising success and this effort is key to HANDMADE ARLINGTON's successful future. We want you and your ideas.

If you're interested in working with HANDMADE ARLINGTON 2017 please send an email to HAShow@handmadearlington.com.



No cupcakes to deliver, no wrapping paper to buy. Just give online or send a check!

This is our main fundraising event of the year. All donations directly benefit the school and our kids, with 100% of donations going to the Teacher Grant Program.

Why donate? The regular school budget doesn't cover all the needs and wants of the Swanson faculty and staff as they seek to provide our kids with the best educational experience possible, and the PTA wants to help fill that gap.

- 8th grade Mock U.N. Debate
- 7th grade community service project to support "Food for Others"
- Purchase of Texas Instrument CBR2s for 7th and 8th grade Algebra I classes
- Light boxes and polymer clay machines for the art room
- 7th Grade economics curriculum materials
- Book purchases for the 6th grade novel project
- Awards for sports, academic and other extra curricular activities
- School supplies and calculators for the HILT program
- Audio materials and posters for foreign language instruction
- Field trip funding for all grades and a number of extracurricular programs

Please, help us reach our goal of \$20,000 today! http://www.swansonpta.org/ezform

The Swanson Anchor is a monthly newsletter for the Swanson community. The content for **The Swanson Anchor** is provided by Swanson teachers, staff, and the Swanson PTA. If you have questions or comments, or would like to see something included, please feel free to reach out to Gillyn Croog at: mailto:gillyn.croog@gmail.com.