

Edition 3, October 30, 2020

Swanson Eighth Grade Monthly News



We wish you were here!

It was wonderful to see many of you at our fall conferences, and to see some of your children participating in Spirit Week these past few days! Remember your teachers and counselors are always here to help you! Your team leaders can be reached via email at:

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In this edition:

- ❑ Content area and department overviews for November
- ❑ High school information
- ❑ Reminders about asynchronous Mondays
- ❑ A conversation about camera use

What's happening in...

- ❑ **English:** Students will draft their narrative, polish, and revise and turn in their final on November 6th. The week of November 10th, we will begin our study of *Animal Farm*. Novels will be available for pick up at Swanson on November 2nd from 11 - 1 and 5 - 7 pm. Please email your teacher if you would like a copy.
- ❑ **Pre-Algebra:** Students are continuing their real number system unit and will move onto consumer math applications in November. Let them calculate the tax, tip, and discounts next time you go shopping or get takeout!
- ❑ **Algebra:** We are ending our unit on expressions and exponents. Our next unit will be on solving algebraic equations and will take us to Thanksgiving break.
- ❑ **Intensified Geometry:** We are wrapping up Unit 1: Basic Geometry. Next week we will be starting Unit 2: Formal Proof Writing.
- ❑ **Science:** We wrapped up our forces and motion unit in the last week of October. We will be rolling into our sound and light unit for November.
- ❑ **World Geo:** Students are delving into culture, economics, and demographics in November. As a reminder - late assignments are accepted through the Monday immediately after the unit assessment unless otherwise noted on Canvas (as in the case of a unit split by the end of a quarter). There are no late work penalties this year.
- ❑ **Counseling:** Please join us for High School Information Night this coming **Monday 11/2, at 7 PM**. You should have received an email with the link, and you can also find it on the Swanson website, on the Counseling tab, under "High School Information." Details below.

Asynchronous Mondays:

- ❑ Monday **Office Hours** are a great way for your child to get caught up on missing work, ask questions, or just come for the community! Please encourage your child to attend if you think it would be useful.
 - ❑ **Science** 8am - 9am
 - ❑ **Math** 9am - 10am
 - ❑ **English** 10am - 11am
 - ❑ **World Geo** 11am - 12pm
 - ❑ **Electives** 12pm - 1pm
- ❑ **STAR Attendance Check-ins** are mandatory for all students on Mondays. Students must log in to their STAR Canvas course and complete a brief Google Form by 2:43 pm to be counted as present.
- ❑ **Students are expected to spend about 3.5 hours on schoolwork on Mondays.** Teachers are expected to assign about 30 minutes of new or continuing work for each course. Students can expect that work will be posted to Canvas by 7:20, Monday morning.

High School: Already?

High School Information Night is this coming **Monday 11/2 at 7 PM.**

It will be held via a virtual Livestream which will be available for playback after the event. You should have received an email with the link, and you can also find it on the Swanson website, on the Counseling tab, under “High School Information.”

The purpose of High School Information Night is to share information about all of the high schools in APS and to walk families through application deadlines and procedures.

High School Information Night frequently asked questions:

Do I have to apply to a high school?

No. You can simply attend your neighborhood high school next year. The “application process” only applies to students who want to apply to special programs, like the IB program at WL, Arlington Tech, and HB Woodlawn.

When will we learn more about the programs?

Ms. Ortiz and Ms. Goodwyn are updating the Swanson Counseling website with information about important dates and will be sending you and your family information.

What is the deadline to apply?

You have until January to apply. They will communicate the actual deadline at the high school information night.

What about private schools?

If you need records or information or need your teachers to write a recommendation letter, please give at least two weeks’ notice.

When will we pick our classes?

Sometime in January/February. Ms. Ortiz and Ms. Goodwyn will discuss the options with students and have them fill out a form as they’ve done in the past.

A conversation about camera use:

As Quarter 1 comes to a close, 8th-grade teachers are reflecting on how to bring our students closer together in the virtual classroom. To that end, we have talked with classes about the benefits and challenges of turning on cameras. Many students report that it can build community and improve focus.

On the other hand, students point out that it can be awkward or potentially distracting. Some students say that they would be more likely to turn on their cameras if they could expect it from others.

In keeping with APS guidelines, we will not require camera use; however, we will recommend cameras for certain activities, especially class discussions and break out rooms.

You may want to talk with your child about his or her use of the camera during class. Also, you may have ideas for how to encourage your child to participate in this way.

It has been a lot of fun to learn about our students this quarter. We are enjoying a great variety of new tech tools that provide opportunities for students to make their voices heard, including the chat, surveys, and discussion boards. All of these modes of communication will continue to enhance every lesson.

Learning conditions have changed a lot for us all in recent months, and we are impressed by the overall resilience and ingenuity of our 8th graders!

General Resources:

- [APS Parent Guide to Distance Learning](#)
- [2020-21 Swanson Supply List](#)
- [Swanson Counseling Office Resources](#)

Tech Support:

- Call 703-228-2570, Monday - Thursday, 7 am - 9 pm and Fridays, 7 am - 6 pm, for live Tech Support in English & Spanish
- Submit a Swanson Tech. Help form if live tech support can't resolve the issue (tinyurl.com/swansontech)
- [Middle School Technology Tutorials](#)
- [How to view Feedback & Grades](#) (requires APS account login)