

Edition 3, October 30, 2021

Swanson Eighth Grade Monthly News



It was wonderful to see many of you at our fall conferences! Remember your teachers and counselors are always here to help you! Are you seeing stress and anxiety in your child? Please read our tips for building good study habits and managing stress.

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In this edition:

- ❑ Content area and department overviews for November; including STAR Social-Emotional Lessons and thinking about how to help your student build good study habits.
- ❑ High school information
- ❑ A conversation about building good study habits and managing stress

What's happening in...

- ❑ **English:** Your students have just completed their first writing assignments and will begin their study of *Animal Farm*. We have some novels available for check out, but if you are able to obtain a copy for your child, that would be much appreciated. We will review and discuss the historical and modern-day connections of Orwell's classic allegory. At the end of the month, students will participate in their first Socratic seminar.
- ❑ **Pre-Algebra:** Students are currently in the middle of their unit on Algebraic Expressions & Equations. The focus will be on helping students to develop an understanding of algebraic expressions & equations through modeling and connecting those concepts to traditional algorithms used to solve problems.
- ❑ **Algebra/Intensified Algebra:** Students will finish their Unit on Functions and begin their Unit on Writing and Graphing Equations.
- ❑ **Intensified Geometry:** Students will begin their study of congruent triangles. This quarter will have a particular focus on proofs and deductive reasoning. Students will apply their knowledge of congruent triangles to justify the constructions they learned during the 1st quarter.
- ❑ **Science:** Students will continue exploring how scientists describe and measure matter by conducting hands-on investigations. Through critical thinking tasks, students will understand how properties and changes can be used to improve our lives. Throughout the month, students will design safe procedures and collect data for their independent science projects.
- ❑ **World Geo:** Students will continue their examination of global cultures and influences on culture, and transition to

investigations of economic and demographic topics in the second half of the month. Our homework each day is to re-read the day's activities/handouts and circle any points/terms that are not fully understood, which is a very proactive way for students to study.

- ❑ **French:** Students will be able to give directions in the kitchen and talk about Marseille and Provence. Students will compare French meals to American meals and learn about the regional culinary specialties of France.
- ❑ **Latin:** Latin students have moved to a new set of stories and characters from the Roman Empire, this time-based in Roman Britain. They will be learning a set of irregular verbs and developing their understanding of different tenses in all verbs.
- ❑ **TechEd:** Technology Education students completed the safety unit and practiced safety in the woodshop, using the scroll saw. They will use Adobe Illustrator to design a custom jigsaw puzzle, using the laser cutter/engraver machine. Robotics students completed the 'What are Robots Used For' unit. They will be able to build mechanisms with the VEX EDR components to study motion and force.
- ❑ **Counseling:** Ms. Reardon is currently holding "Minute Meetings" with every 8th-grade student through their STAR classes. It has been wonderful to see all my students in person again! If you have a concern about your child, please reach out to christine.reardon@apsva.us.

High School: Already?

High School Information Night will be held **virtually** on November 1st at 7 PM. The meeting link and more information will be posted here

closer to the meeting date:

<https://www.apsva.us/school-options/high-school-choices/high-school-information-sessions/>

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

High School 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. Reardon will update 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. Reardon will discuss the options with students and have them fill out an electronic Course Request Form.

A conversation about building good study habits and managing stress:

As Quarter 1 comes to a close, 8th-grade teachers and counselors are reflecting on the transition back to in-person learning. Two areas of need we have identified are developing study habits and managing stress. To address the study skills needs, we are creating STAR lessons

to explicitly teach skills like organization, time management, and creating a study plan. To help support students' social-emotional development, we are creating STAR lessons on stress-management strategies, self-care, and developing a growth mindset. As an 8th grade team, we want to encourage students to stay curious, take on challenges, and enjoy learning!

General Resources:

- [Swanson Counseling Office Resources](#)

Tech Support:

- [Middle School Technology Tutorials](#)
- [How to view Feedback & Grades](#) (requires APS account login)