

# Welcome to Swanson!



# Administrator Team



**Bridget Loft**

Principal



**Blandine LiGuidi**

6th Grade  
Assistant Principal



**Meghan Smeenk**

7th Grade  
Assistant Principal



**Khethiwe Hudson**

8th Grade  
Assistant Principal



**Rana Luthra**

Director of  
Counseling



**Trevor Holland**

Director of  
Activities

# Blandine LiGuidi

Position: Assistant Principal

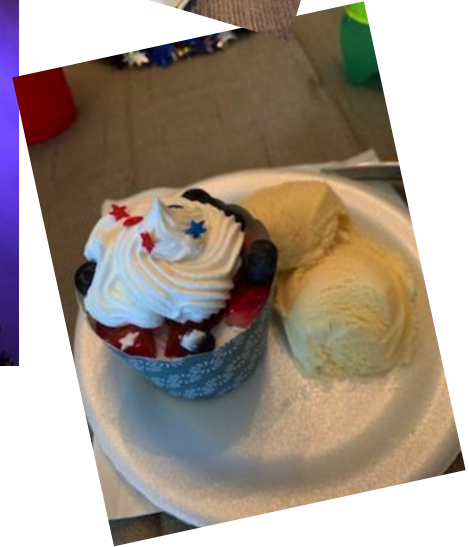
Grade: 6

College: Mercy College, BS  
Mercy College, M. S. Ed  
George Mason University, M. Ed

Hometown: Long Island, New York

Birthplace: New York, New York

Interests: Crafts, Baking, Reading, Traveling, Spending time with family and friends





# Michelle Wilkes

Position: School Counselor

Grade: 6th grade

College: West Virginia University  
(B.S. Education and B.A. History)  
George Mason University (M.ED Counseling)

Hometown: Arlington, Virginia

Interests: Tennis, Archery, Chess, Cooking, Hiking and  
Paddleboarding



# Melissa Lara-Ortiz

Position: School Counselor

Grade: English Learners 1-4

College: George Mason University

- Bachelors of Science in Psychology
- M.Ed Counseling (School Counseling Concentration)

Hometown: Arlington, Virginia

Interests: spending time with my family, book clubs, the beach, and trying new food spots





# Josh Miles- Intervention Counselor

Position: Intervention Counselor

Grade: 6th-8th Grade

College: Rutgers University (B.A. English)  
Kean University (M.A. Elementary Education)  
GWU (M.A. School Counseling K-12)

High School: Los Alamitos High School (Masot: Griffins)

Hometown: Long Beach, California

Birthplace: Long Beach, California

Family: Wife- Colleen, Kids- Jane 6 & Nolan 3

Interests: Rowing, Cooking, Eating, hanging out with my kids, L.A. Dodgers, Green Bay Packers. Music.





## **QUICK FACTS**

- School colors
  - Maroon and White
- School mascot
  - Admiral
- Current enrollment
  - approx. 940 students

# ***THE ADMIRALS' WAY***

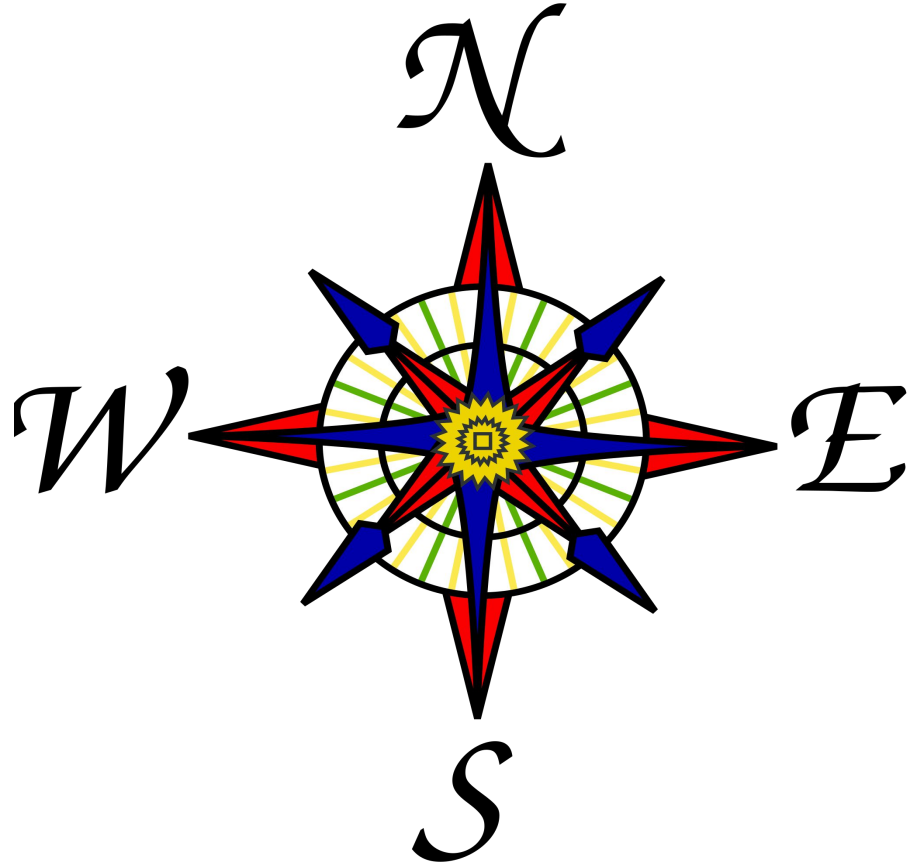
**We are Swanson Admirals.**

**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 ADMIRALS' CODE OF CONDUCT***

## **BE SAFE**

We are a **hands-off school**! We keep our hands to ourselves and our own belongings.

## **BE RESPECTFUL**

Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. **Be kind.** Always.

## **BE RESPONSIBLE**

We are responsible for our shared environments. We take care of our materials and our space when we **leave no trace.**





**School Day**

**What will  
my school  
day look  
like?**



# MORNING ARRIVAL

Students may begin enter the building at 7:20. First/Second period begins at 7:50

6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
Cafeteria	Small Gym	Large Gym
Enter- Door 1 7:20-7:40	Enter- Door B2 7:20-7:40	Enter- Door B4 7:20-7:40

Any student interested in buying breakfast can proceed directly to the cafeteria at 7:20.



# BELL SCHEDULE

**School Day - 7:50-2:35**

Swanson uses a **Block Schedule:**

A Day, B Day, Anchor Day (C Day)

**Length of classes:**

Block: 83 minutes

Anchor Day/Period 5: 43 minutes

A Day	B Day	Anchor Day
Period 1	Period 2	Period 1
Period 3	Period 4	Period 2
Period 5	Period 5	Period 3
STAR	STAR	Period 4
Lunch	Lunch	Period 5
Period 7	Period 6	STAR
		Lunch
		Period 6
		Period 7





# 6th Grade Courses

All 6th grade students take:

- English
- Structured Literacy OR Disciplinary Literacy
- Science
- Social Studies
- Math (recommendations made in July/placement test in August for new APS families)
- Health & PE
- Elective



## Lunch

- Lunches are separated by grade level
- Students will eat in the cafeteria
- Short “recess” time at the end of lunch (10-15 minutes)
- Lunch prices:
  - Breakfast \$2.25 / Lunch \$3.60
  - Set up account at [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com)
  - Apply for Free/Reduced Meals if needed  
<https://www2.myschoolapps.com/>



# Lockers & PE

## Hallway Lockers:

- All students grades 6-8 are required to keep their backpacks, string bags, and totes in their lockers.
- Students will receive a locker, with a built in lock, and sign a locker sharing agreement with their STAR teacher. Students have access to their locker at various times throughout the day.

## Physical Ed:

- Students must wear sneakers or athletic shoes and their PE t-shirt. Loaner PE shirts will be available if a student forgets their shirt.
- This is for safety and hygiene. Use the QR code to order a uniform shirt. If your family needs support with ordering a shirt, please see your child's counselor.
- Students can purchase a Swanson PE uniform (\$10 shirt, \$10 shorts). Uniforms will be given out to students who order them the first week of school.
- Students will have time at the beginning and end of class to use the locker room.
- Bring your own combination lock for the locker room.





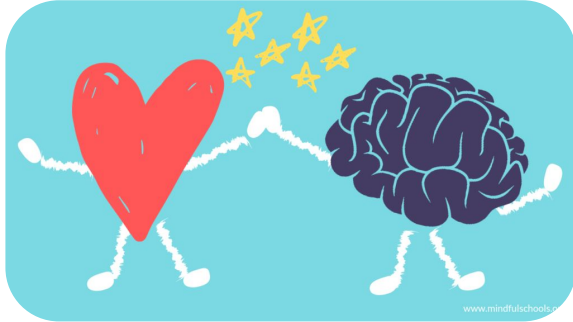
**STAR**

**What is  
STAR?**

**What will it  
look like?**

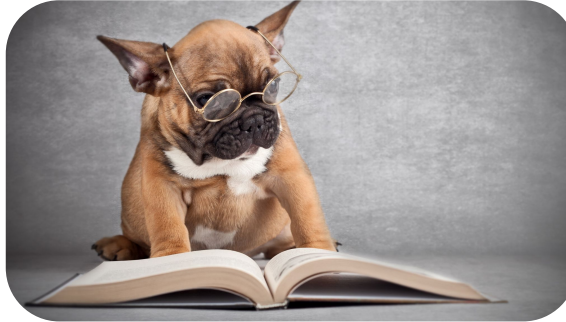


# STAR looks different each day...



## **Mondays/Tuesdays** **Responsive Advisory**

Social-Emotional lessons and activities that support school-wide, grade level, and students' social-emotional needs



## **Wednesdays/Thursdays** **DEAR/Math/Reading Interventions**

Drop Everything And Read, Tutoring



## **Fridays** **Team Building**

Activities that support building positive and supportive relationships

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays		Thursdays		Fridays	Minutes	Total
A-Day	B-Day	C-Day		A-Day		B-Day		
Responsive Advisory	Responsive Advisory	DEAR	Interventions	DEAR	Interventions	Responsive Advisory	20	60
Admiral's Time	Admiral's Time	Admiral's Time		Admiral's Time		Admiral's Time	40	
		Anchor Day Schedule						



STAR

Student Teacher Advisory & Reading



# Building Blocks of Star

In STAR we are focused on:

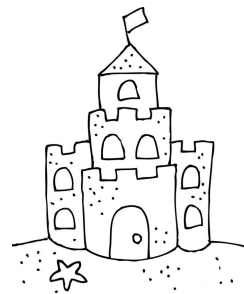
- Building **student-to-students** connections
- **Energize and engage** in STAR, grade-level, and school-wide community building
- Building **advisor-advisee** connections
- Support **academics readiness** through reading, tutoring, and time to organize and complete missing work
- **Reflect** on and **refocus** learning, relationships, and personal and academic goals
- Develop **communication and social skills** through social-emotional learning (SEL)
- Extend learning through **relevant themes**



STAR Lessons focus on building skills in the following competencies:

# CASEL

Competencies for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning



## General Needs



### Safety



### Significance

Being known for a strength, talent or characteristic



### Belonging

Feeling you are part of something greater than yourself



### Fun

Finding joy in a situation, being engaged and feeling motivated

## Academic Competencies



### Academic (Growth) Mindset

- I belong in this learning community
- Effort improves my performance
- I can do hard things even if it means asking for help
- I can find the value in learning I am skeptical of



### Learning Strategies

- Tools that help
- Monitor understanding
  - Trigger self-correction
  - Analyze, reflect, remember
  - Set and achieve goals
  - Manage resources



### Academic Behaviors

- Actions that support performance like
- Showing up, paying attention, participating
  - Sleep, exercise, hygiene, and nutrition



### Perseverance

Distractions, obstacles, levels of challenge are a part of the journey forward

## Social and Emotional Competencies



### Cooperation

Relationship Skills



### Assertiveness

Self-Awareness



### Responsibility

Decision-making



### Empathy

Social Awareness



### Self-control

Self-Management

**OFFICE OF  
STUDENT  
SERVICES**





# OFFICE OF SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICE

School counselors provide support for academic, social and emotional needs of our students

**Director of Counseling:** Ms. Rana Luthra  
(703) 228-5508 [rana.luthra@apsva.us](mailto:rana.luthra@apsva.us)

**School Social Worker:** Ms. Liska Friedman  
(703) 228-2345 [liska.friedman@apsva.us](mailto:liska.friedman@apsva.us)

**6th Grade School Counselor:** Ms. Michelle Wilkes  
(703) 228-5511 [michelle.wilkes@aspva.us](mailto:michelle.wilkes@aspva.us)

**EL School Counselor:** Ms. Melissa Lara Ortiz  
(703) 228-5509 [melissa.laraortiz@apsva.us](mailto:melissa.laraortiz@apsva.us)

**Intervention Counselor:** Mr. Joshua Miles  
(703) 228- 5523 [joshua.miles@apsva.us](mailto:joshua.miles@apsva.us)



# **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**



# OFFICE OF ACTIVITIES

Swanson provides a wide array of after school activities, clubs, sports for all students.

Director of Activities: Mr. Trevor Holland (703) 228-5510

[trevor.holland@apsva.us](mailto:trevor.holland@apsva.us)

**Mr. Holland will be in the small gym after this presentation and is available to answer any questions. He will also present at the first PTA meeting in September.**





## **After School Activities**

- Clubs
- Sports
- Act II Classes
- Check-In (Extended Day)
- There is a late bus at 4:15 for students who need bus transportation.





## Clubs

- Club offerings change each year depending on staffing and student interest
- Club information will be released at the beginning of the school year.
- Most clubs meet 1 day per week after school from 2:35-3:30
- Clubs are considered “drop-in” - students do not have to attend every meeting
- Students can start a new club by talking to Mr. Holland



# Sports

- Soccer\*
- Tennis\*
- Ultimate
- Cheerleading\*
- Basketball\*
- Wrestling
- Swimming
- Track & Field

\* = tryout required

- Students must have an up-to-date (within a calendar year) Sports Physical on file before participating in a Swanson athletic team
- Sports Physical Form: <https://swanson.apsva.us/athletics/forms/>
- Teams have practice/games 4-5 days per week during the season



## **Act II Classes**

- Weekly elective class
- 1 day per week - after school
- Attendance is taken and students receive a grade
- Offerings change each year based on staffing availability
- Class offerings will be announced in the fall



## **Check-In (Extended Day)**

- After-school care from 2:35-6:00 PM
- Register through APS Extended Day office for a fee
- Activities are self-directed
- Students can participate in sports, clubs, ACT II classes, and other activities during this time.
- Fee information and registration process can be found here: <https://www.apsva.us/extended-day/>

# **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**





## **Important Dates**

- Back to School Night
  - Wednesday, September 17th
- Fall Conferences
  - Monday, October 13th
- End of 1st Quarter
  - Monday, November 3rd



# Cell Phones/Smart Watches



Phones **OFF** from 7:20 - 2:35



Watches in **School Mode** from 7:20 - 2:35

- Virginia Law requires schools to enforce cell phones off and away during the school day.
- If your child needs to contact you, they can use the phone in the main office. You may also call the school to get in contact with your child. In an effort to create a distraction-free learning environment, please refrain from contacting your child during school hours.





# Cell Phones/Smart Watches



Phones **OFF** from 7:20 - 2:35



Watches in **School Mode** from 7:20 - 2:35

- No phones/watches should be used in class, hallways, lunchrooms, or restrooms.
- If a student is seen with a cell phone that is not **off or away**, or a smart watch not in **school mode**, the student will receive an appropriate consequence. Families may be asked to pick up the phone/smart watch from the school.



# How do I use Schooltime?

Add School Mode to Apple Watch Control Center

1. Press the side button to open the Control Center on the Apple Watch.
2. Scroll to the bottom, then tap Edit.
3. Tap next to Schooltime, then tap Done.

**When you arrive to the building, press the side button to open the Control Center and select School Mode until 2:35 pm.**



Control Center



Schooltime



# Headphones

- Headphones may only be worn if the teacher explicitly allows it for independent work during class.
- Headphones should not be worn in the hallway, during lunch, or in the restroom.



## 6th Grade iPads



- All 6th grade students will receive a new iPad, case, and charger.
- At the end of 5th grade, students were told to take their iPads home for the summer and bring them to middle school. **Please have your child bring in their 5th grade iPad and charger on the first day of school.** Students will be given a new device once their old device is collected.
- If you opted to return the iPad at the end of the school year to your child's elementary school, please email Blandine LiGuidi at [blandine.liquididi@apsva.us](mailto:blandine.liquididi@apsva.us).



# Who do I contact?

*Academic progress, grades, and other classroom questions or concerns*

- **STAR Teacher**
- **Specific Teacher**

*Conference Request*

- **Counselor**
- **Specific Teacher**

*Notifications of absences, illness, etc.*

- **Attendance Office: Ms. Octavia Harris (703) 228-5524**

*After School Activities/Sports*

- **Mr. Holland- (703) 228-5510**

*Social/Emotional Concerns*

- **Counselor: Ms. Wilkes (703)228-5511**
- **English Learners Counselor: Ms. Ortiz (703) 228-5509**
- **Director of Counseling: Ms. Luthra (703) 228-5508**

*Instructional Concerns or Issues*

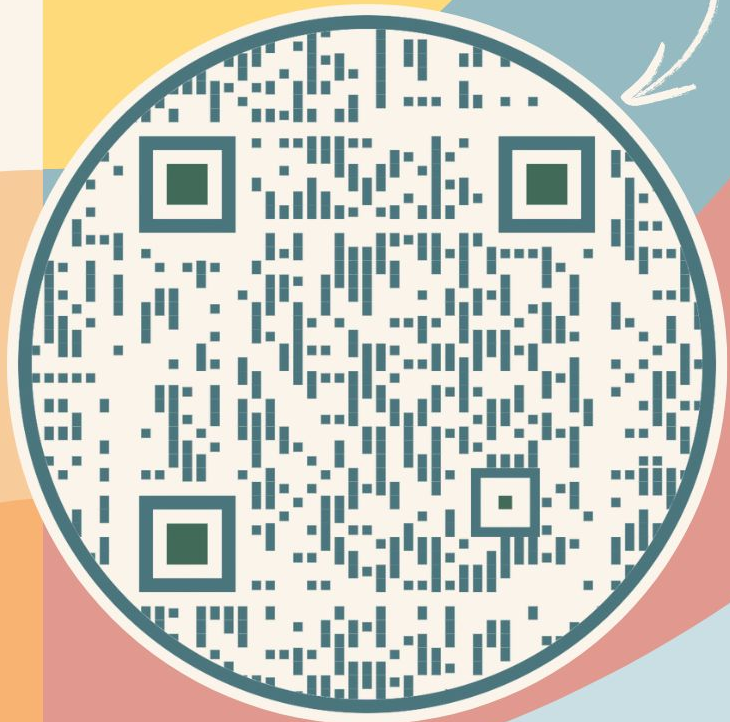
**Grade Level Assistant Principal: Ms. LiGuidi (703) 228-5504**

# SWANSON PTA

The mission of the Swanson PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

We are all Admirals!

JOIN US!





# Contact Information

- Blandine LiGuidi - 6th Grade Assistant Principal
  - [blandine.liquidiguidi@apsva.us](mailto:blandine.liquidiguidi@apsva.us) / 703-228-5504
- Michelle Wilkes - 6th Grade Counselor
  - [michelle.wilkes@apsva.us](mailto:michelle.wilkes@apsva.us) / 703- 228- 5511
- Melissa Lara Ortiz - English Learner Counselor
  - [melissa.laraortiz@apsva.us](mailto:melissa.laraortiz@apsva.us) / 703-228-5509
- Laura Partridge - Math Coach
  - [laura.partridge@apsva.us](mailto:laura.partridge@apsva.us)
- Cindy Chiu - Reading Specialist
  - [cynthia.chiu@apsva.us](mailto:cynthia.chiu@apsva.us)
- Whitney Field - Advanced Academics Coordinator
  - [whitney.field@apsva.us](mailto:whitney.field@apsva.us)
- Nohra Rodriguez- Family and Community Liaison
  - [nohra.rodriquez@apsva.us](mailto:nohra.rodriquez@apsva.us)/ 703-228-5507



# Questions?

