



# SWIS Newsletter

October

2023

Swanson Road  
Intermediate  
School

## From the Principal's Desk...

Greetings Swanson Road Intermediate Families,

What a great month we have had, and October looks equally as busy. I am thrilled with the start of our school year and sincerely appreciate the support our school community has provided to ensure a strong beginning to the new academic year. Our goal each year is to provide a well rounded education that is both rigorous and engaging while addressing the needs and learning styles of each student. With the first month of the school year completed, instructional routines are well under way, benchmark testing is completed, and numerous clubs have already begun.

I am so grateful not only for the talented staff at SWIS, but also for the generosity of our school community in all of our endeavors.

### Curriculum update:

Literacy through the content - Focus:

- Instruction is focused on strategies used to deepen comprehension, increase fluency, utilize Higher Order Thinking Skills and analyze text using multiple sources.
- Embedding reading strategies in all core subjects, as well as constant technology integration.
- Instructional decisions continuously are based on analysis of current data and teacher observation, to both remediate skills and enrich student learning.
- Explicit instruction to strengthen the writing process along with 'short writes' requiring text evidence are practiced daily.

\*You can help your child improve their literacy skills by reading with them nightly. Try to keep reading material in every room of the house. Discuss current events and ask them to explain their thinking. Debate "controversial" issues and ask them to argue the other person's perspective. Practice writing skills by mailing letters or emailing family members living outside of Auburn using proper spelling and grammar. Apply the "caption setting" on the TV for an extra boost of vocabulary, word recognition and fluency.

Math Focus:

- Practice utilizing reading strategies to comprehend and answer word problems.
  - Identifying key information in problems.
- Using multiple strategies to answer multifaceted problems.
- Daily interventions continue to be refined to meet every child's needs.
- Opportunities for students to work in small, flexible groups with math teachers and support staff, providing support and additional challenges to students.

## From the Principal's Desk cont...

\*You can help your child improve mathematically by quizzing them on their facts while in the car, incorporating fractions and decimals while cooking etc. For more complex problems, add multi-step operations to help with their fact fluency. Insist they use the strategies learned in school on nightly homework. (This builds different mathematical thinking strategies). Box and underline key information in directions, write out all mathematical processes and label every problem. When checking over their homework, have them find their own errors, rather than pointing them out. This will encourage independence, critical reading, self-checking, accuracy and precise calculations. Use online math games and resources on our web site and in Go Math for extra practice and to challenge their mathematical skills.

Science and Social Studies:

- Students love science and social studies. You can support our units of study by taking your child to enjoy local museums, concerts, and historical sites. This not only reinforces their learning but will spark your child's creative and inquisitive mind. There are many discounted or free passes at local libraries, as well as free family events to be found on line. So fun!

\*You can help you child by researching easy fun innovative problem solving projects using S.T.E.M. thinking. \*\*\*Stay tuned for S.T.E.M. project fun being sent home.

So many wonderful things happen each day, that there are too many to mention. You can catch a glimpse of some of these through the Auburn Facebook Page. Follow us at : <https://www.facebook.com/auburnps>

In closing, I can't thank you enough for your continued support!

**"They may forget what you said but they will never forget how you made them feel." - Carol Buchner ..... Love, guide, support.**

Yours in Education,  
Dr. Lopez



## From the Desk of Mrs. Pitsillides...

Dear Parents & Guardians,

We are excited to introduce you to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at SWIS, an approach that shapes a positive and supportive environment for your child's education and growth.

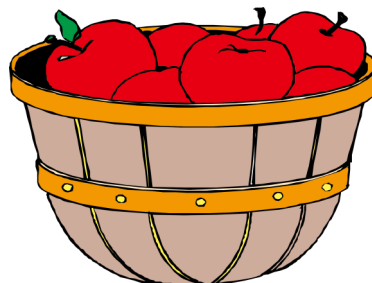
PBIS is built on three fundamental expectations: Responsible, Respectful, and Safe behavior. These principles guide our efforts to create a learning environment where every student can thrive. Here's what each expectation means:

1. **Responsible:** Your child is encouraged to take ownership of their actions, complete tasks on time, and make choices that benefit themselves and the community.
2. **Respectful:** We teach your child to treat others kindly, listen attentively, and embrace diversity. Respect is at the heart of fostering positive relationships.
3. **Safe:** Safety is our top priority. We ensure your child knows how to follow safety rules, report concerns, and contribute to a secure atmosphere.

PBIS doesn't stop at setting these expectations; it's about consistently teaching, modeling, and reinforcing them. By doing so, we aim to prevent challenging behaviors and create an inclusive, equitable environment for every child.

Key PBIS Principles:

- **Prevention:** We focus on teaching and encouraging positive behaviors rather than just reacting to negative ones.
- **Data-Based Decision Making:** We use data to continually improve our approach.
- **Proactive Approach:** We address issues before they become bigger problems.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** PBIS promotes fairness and welcomes every child, no matter their background.



## From the Desk of Mrs. Pitsillides cont...

SWIS School-Wide Expectations:

### **Be Responsible**

1. Be Here; Be On Time
2. Be Ready to Learn
3. Follow School Rules
4. Take Care of School and Personal Property

### **Be Respectful**

1. Use kind Words
2. Wait your Turn
3. Follow Directions from Staff
4. Remember Personal Space

### **Be Safe**

1. Stay in Area
2. Safe Body
3. Walking Feet



We're committed to working together with you to make our school a place where your child can learn, grow, and thrive. If you have any questions or would like more information about PBIS, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your partnership in creating a positive educational experience for your child.

### **September Recap:**

What a super start to the new school year! Both students and staff were really pumped to be back in school and getting into our daily routines. In September, we made sure everyone knew our school-wide PBIS expectations and routines. We kicked things off with grade-level PBIS Assemblies on Thursday, September 21st. Then, on Thursday, September 28th, we went even deeper into the expectations and routines during our PBIS Station Rotations, focusing on the Bus, Bathroom, and Cafeteria.

Students have been excited about earning Blue Tickets for following these expectations throughout our school. At SWIS, these Blue Tickets are coveted because students use them to trade-in for items from their classroom prize box, special privileges, or to grab a ticket to our monthly PBIS special event. Our first school-wide event was an Extra Recess on Friday, September 29th!

Many SWIS students collected the 25 Blue Tickets they needed and enjoyed an extra 20-minute recess with their grade-level pals. Way to go, SWIS Rockets!

## From the Desk of Mrs. Pitsillides cont...



### Character Education:

As part of our character education program, we started the year off by highlighting the trait: **Respect**

#### September - Respect

To show high regard for authority, for other people, for self, for property, and for country; to understand that all people have value as human beings

*Congratulations to all of our amazing, hard-working, and **respectful** September students of the month!!!*

October's character education trait will focus on being **Responsible**.

#### October - Responsibility

To be dependable in carrying out obligations and duties; to show reliability and consistency in words and conduct; to be accountable for your own actions; to be committed to active involvement in your community.



### Grade 3

Mrs. Caplette	Cameron Cole
Mrs. Chalupka	Harper Novia
Ms. Clough	Issac Nash
Mrs. D'Agostino	Jack Eisnor
Mrs. Furmanik	Briela Loce
Mrs. King	Jason Farrell
Mrs. Murray	Rock Watson
Mrs. Scanlon	Oliver Krol
Ms .Auger	Garrett Kowal

### Grade 4

Mrs. Barbour	Mathew Molinari
Mrs. Burbank	Isabella Shea
Mrs. Cody	Elizabeth Grimshaw
Ms. Connerton	Brae Bousquet
Ms. Dyer	Aria Mitchell
Mrs. Gagne	Brodie Bousquet
Mrs. Reno	Paula Reno
Ms Terlizzi	Tyler Manzano
Mrs. Vessio	Kathryn Rosenthal



### Grade 5

Mrs. Bowes	David Lessard
Mrs. DeRobbio	Dylan Maus
Mrs. DiMeglio	Emily Sassine
Mrs. Fontaine	Kaya Resnick
Mrs. Forgues	Makai Walton
Mrs. Kane	Laurelie Lensele
Mrs. Locke	Karen Ortega Ortiz
Mrs. Lundy	Jackson Vienneau
Mrs. MacCormack	JoJo Schompe

## Grade 4 News



The Fourth Grade Team is off to a great start! We have had a busy September establishing classroom routines to ensure a respectful, responsible, and safe learning environment. Students are doing a fantastic job adjusting to their new grade level and diving into their new curriculum:

- **Math:** Our first chapter began with Place Value and Adding & Subtracting Larger Numbers. Students should continue to review their addition and subtraction facts for mastery. However, they should also strive to master their multiplication facts because that is the main focus of Chapter 2. Automaticity of multiplication facts will make learning most 4th grade math concepts much easier. Practicing facts for 15 minutes each night *is part of their daily homework assignments.*
- **Reading:** We are currently establishing routines for our new Wonders reading program.  
In fourth grade our focus is on reading to learn, so we will be applying many comprehension and vocabulary strategies to become more effective readers. This new series is rich with opportunities for the application of these strategies.
- **Writing:** This year we will focus on the 3 types of writing; opinion, narrative, and expository. Plus, we will add grammar and spelling skills along the way. We have started the year developing a foundation for writing by reviewing sentence and paragraph structure. We already see a lot of potential in our 4th grade authors!
- **Science/Social Studies:** Our first science exploration has us delving into Earth's features. This unit shows the students how many of earth's landforms were formed. This topic correlates nicely with our first social studies unit on landforms and map skills.

On October 24, 2023 we will travel to the Hanover Theater to see a musical based on the book, *The Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan. Be sure you have sent in the permission slip by October 9, 2023. It should be a great cultural experience for our fourth grade students!

It was wonderful meeting many of our families at the Know Your School Night. We look forward to working with you and your child this school year. Our 4th grade classrooms are always looking for donations of tissues, paper towels and antibacterial wipes. Thank you for all your support.

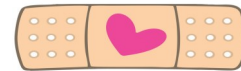
-The Fourth Grade Team

## From the Nurse's Office,

SWIS Nurse's Office is in need of some supplies! If you can contribute we've set up an Amazon wish list and items will be shipped directly to school. Thank you so much for considering!

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/20D41FW5YBARF?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/20D41FW5YBARF?ref_=wl_share)

[SWIS Nurse's Office Wish List](#)



In accordance with Massachusetts State Law, all school children are required to provide documentation of a physical examination prior to entering 4th grade. Any routine health examination completed by your healthcare provider within a year of entering 4th grade is acceptable. Please return the exam form with updated immunizations to the school nurse.

**Kelly Ann Walsh, BSN, RN**

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## Music Notes

This month in music has been all about getting to know one another! We are learning about different activities we like to enjoy after school, what our favorite color is, and most importantly, what our names are! We have also challenged one another to see how much music knowledge we remember by playing review games and working as a team to solve tricky questions. Music is getting ready to dive into note name reading, instrument playing, and more group songs in the next few weeks.



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## PE News

We hope all of our students are enjoying the start of PE. Please help your student in remembering to wear sneakers on PE days, unfortunately students without sneakers can not participate. To start our year we have been working on cooperative games to develop teamwork and communication skills and have started our beginning of the year fitness testing. Please never hesitate to reach out directly to your PE teacher.

Mr. Moriarty

Mr. Dunn





Dear Swanson Road Intermediate Parents:

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves as the School Clinical Team at Swanson Road Intermediate School! We are thrilled to be part of this learning community. As the School Clinical Team, our role is to promote the academic, personal, and social development of all students. In addition, we look forward to supporting not only the students, but also the staff, families and community.

Your child's SWIS School Counseling Department is as follows. Please note that Counselors are grade level based, and loop with your student each year until they move on to middle school.

**Mrs. Samantha Bryan - All Grade 3 students**  
[Sbryan@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:Sbryan@auburn.k12.ma.us)

**Mrs. Terri O'Donnell- All Grade 4 students**  
[todonnell@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:todonnell@auburn.k12.ma.us)

**Mrs. Amy Peck- All Grade 5 students**  
[apecck@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:apecck@auburn.k12.ma.us)

**Mrs. Jennifer Bricher-School Social Worker, All grades**  
[jbricher@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:jbricher@auburn.k12.ma.us)

Auburn Public Schools value your child's social emotional wellbeing. We are excited to have a strong counseling staff at Swanson Road Intermediate School to support your child and your family. Our role includes meeting with students individually and in small groups, meeting with parents, collaborating with teachers and staff, and consulting with community organizations. We also serve as the 504 coordinators for the building.

Classroom lessons will occur weekly for all grade levels using the *Second Step Curriculum*. Our lessons will focus on, but not limited to, problem solving skills, empathy, conflict resolution, and coping skills.

Please feel free to reach out to your School Counselor with any questions or concerns about your student throughout the year.





## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade October News

Welcome to Fifth Grade! It was a pleasure meeting many of you on Get To Know Your School Night! If you were unable to attend and are in need of the information that was handed out that evening, please contact your child's teacher. We are looking forward to helping your child become a more responsible student this year as the first steps to their middle school transition. Please make sure your child has written down all of the homework assignments in his/her planner every day. In addition to the daily assignments, we ask that your child spend at least 15 minutes reading each night. It is also important to continue practicing multiplication and division facts.

### Classroom happenings:

Your child has been switching for science class. It is nice to visit another teacher with a different teaching style and classroom expectations. In Math, we will be finishing up chapter one on place value and multiplication. Social Studies projects are being worked on to demonstrate their understanding of the colonies of Jamestown and Plymouth.

Parent conference will be held on November 9, 2023. Be on the lookout for more information from your child's teacher.

As always if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher. We are more than happy to help in any way we can.

Happy fall!

The Fifth Grade Team

## Technology News



SWIS students are thriving in Technology class! Our students' enthusiasm for STEM has given them a great advantage this year, as they continue to show and cultivate their understanding of their iPads, apps, and digital learning tools. In class, students have been learning the ropes of digital citizenship-- they have been demonstrating the keys to being responsible, trustworthy, and kind members of their online communities. Our third graders have learned that the "Rings of Responsibility," duties to themselves, their community, and the world, apply online, not just in the "real world." In grades four and five, students have demonstrated great maturity in their understanding of digital citizenship, and are working to understand how we can each find media balance. I look forward to our students' continual growth as creative problem solvers in the Technology classroom.



## Grade 3 News



It is hard to believe that September is over, and summer is long gone. We are settling into our schedules and routines and learning tons! It was so nice to see families on Curriculum Night, we look forward to working together with you as partners in your child's learning. Third graders are enjoying the beautiful fall weather while playing outside at recess. Please make sure you check the weather so that they are dressed appropriately; New England weather is unpredictable and can be quite cold as we enter October.

During ELA we are reading about different traditions and cultures. We continue to practice applying reading strategies to better comprehend text. We are also practicing reading aloud with fluency, accuracy and expression. We are continuously learning new spelling patterns and working to apply them in our daily reading and writing. In math we are wrapping up rounding, estimating, and addition and subtraction with regrouping in Chapter 1 and are working on Graphing in Chapter 2. These skills will be fundamental in the rest of our math learning. Social Studies is in full swing as we have talked about map skills, Massachusetts and soon Wampanoags. We look forward to some fun STEM activities at the end of the month to celebrate the season and Halloween.

Please continue to study math facts at home using XtraMath or any other way that works for your child. This work will make math so much easier for them. Also, continue to read each night and practice your weekly spelling words. Continue to check your child's planner and clean out their home folder of important notices and see their work.

As always, reach out to your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.



## A Message from the Art Room

Hello! Let me give you an overview of how I approach teaching Art at SWIS! In the art room your child is provided the opportunity for self-expression through the creation of visual works of art. The process of creating art fosters decision-making skills, self-confidence and the acceptance of the wonderful diversity found within our school and the world. The concept-based Art curriculum aligns with the Massachusetts Arts Frameworks. Students are exposed to a variety of art media, tools and techniques, in addition to influential artists and cultures from around the world. Prints of Master Artists' work are always on display to illustrate and reinforce what is being taught. To further spark the creative spirit within your child, instrumental music is played in the background of every art class. Research shows that music stimulates the mind to promote deep thought, imagination and creativity!

All artwork done in class is kept in individual student portfolios that remain in the art room throughout the school year. A portfolio review takes place at the end of each trimester for the purpose of assessment and communication on Report Cards. Assessment is based on each student's participation in class and their ability to show an understanding of the art concepts taught, through the creation of visual works of art. In preparation of the all-inclusive ART FESTIVAL held at SWIS, each student will choose a work of art from their portfolio for display. (Stay tuned for more information about this fabulous March exhibit as the date approaches!!)

I truly enjoy my interaction with the students at SWIS! I teach with a passion for Art and see it as a necessary part of a well-rounded education. I have compassion and appreciation for the unique artist found within every child. Art students at SWIS know that they, as individuals, matter!

Your support of the Fine Arts is always appreciated. Please contact me for any reason at Swanson Road Intermediate School or email me at [Gbieksha@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:Gbieksha@auburn.k12.ma.us) .

Sincerely,  
Gayla Bieksha  
Art Specialist, SWIS



## SWIS CALENDAR of EVENTS

<b>October</b>				
10-18-23	Wednesday		Bus Evacuation	3-5
10-18-23	Wednesday	Team Building Act.	National Day of	ALL
10-20-23	Friday	*5:00PM-9:00PM	SWIS Spooky	3-5
10-24-23	Tuesday	9:00AM-12:00PM	Field Trip: Hano-	4,5
		4,5	DA Cyber-bullying	4,5
10/30	Monday		Rob Surette - He-	3-5
10/31	Tuesday	All Day	S.T.E.A.M. Day	3-5
10/31	Tuesday	All Day	The Color Chal-	3-5
<b>November</b>				
11-3	Friday	1:00-2:30	Grade 5 Puberty	5
11/6-11/9	M-F	All Day	Scholastic Book	3-5
11-9	Thursday	1-4:15 and 5-7:00	Parent Teacher	3-5
11-9-24	Thursday	All day	Veterans' Day -	ALL
11-17-24	Thursday	All day	Idiom Day - Dress	ALL
11/14-11/18	M-F	All Day	Food Drive	SWIS Community
11/13	Monday	All Day	World Kindness	SWIS Community
		TBD	Turkey Trot	3-5
11/30	Thursday	5:00-6:00 Gr 3,	Literacy Night	SWIS Community