



**SWMS**  
**New Coug**  
**Orientation**  
**n**

# SWMS GOALS for 6th-8th grade students

- Engage SWMS learners in exciting, challenging and collaborative classroom experiences to prepare them for high school
- Bridge between dependent to independent learning and thinking
- Learn and practice social emotional strategies and skills to create resilient, empathetic students

# SWMS STAFF

Kayla Phillips- SWMS Principal

John Sommer- Director of Safety & Athletics

Lindsey Grimm- School Counselor

Emmy Atwood-Health/School Nurse

Mary Eaton- Office Manager

Chantell Petty- Attendance Secretary

Christine Anderson -Math

TBD -Math 8

**Nicole McNeil- Math/Social Studies**

**Erik Stine-Science/PE**

Chris Broderick- Science

Kymy Johnson- ASB Secretary

Lindsey Richards- Social Studies

**Patty Maddux-Resource Room**

Christine Reid-ELA/History

**Rosie Donnelly-ELA/History**

Erik Jokinen- PE

**Seth Raabe-electives**

**Catherine Ballestrasse- BAND**

- **TBD - English Language Arts**

# Day to Day Bell Schedule for SWMS

## SWMS BELL SCHEDULES



# Template of our schedule:

1st period	2nd period	3rd period	4th Period	Lunch	5th period	6th period
6TH GRADERS: CORE CLASSES	6TH GRADERS: ELECTIVES	All students in grade level CORE CLASSES	All students in grade level CORE CLASSES	<b>6th graders:</b> Lunch in the Falcons Nest <b>7th/ 8th graders:</b> Cougar Den	All students in grade level CORE CLASSES	All students in grade level CORE CLASSES
7/8TH GRADERS: ELECTIVES	7/8TH GRADERS: CORE CLASSES			<u>Intramurals</u> in Winter <u>Outside play</u> in Fall/Spring		

# Sample Schedule - Fall 2026

1st period	2nd period	3rd period	4th Period	Lunch	5th period	6th period
Math 6 with Mrs. McNeil	Garden Elective with Mr. Raabe	PE with Mr. Stine	Science with Mr. Stine	<b>6th graders:</b> Lunch in the Falcons Nest  OPTIONAL: Outside play or a club meeting	Social Studies with Ms. Donnelly	ELA with (insert new hire here)

# SWMS Electives

Aside from Band, students rotate through a variety of elective opportunities quarterly



6th grade:  
Speech &  
Drama  
Ceramics  
Garden  
Band

7th/8th grade  
Band  
Health  
Leadership  
Garden  
Ceramics  
Study Skills  
Yearbook  
Nature &  
Wellness



# Phys. Ed.

PE is a yearlong class taken daily by all students.

The goal of PE is LIFELONG fitness and individual progress in your skills and abilities.

## **Pending Locker Room availability:**

Everyone wears a uniform, this is for continuity, equity and accessibility.



# Lunch Time

- **Cougar Den-** 7th/8th graders, **Falcons Nest-** 6th graders
- **Courtyard is a neutral space where you may eat and socialize**
  - No running, jumping or throwing of anything or you will have an assigned seat at lunch
- **We DO NOT clean up after students. At the end of lunch you will:**
  - Stack your chairs
  - Clean up any food/trash on your table or eating area!
- **Supervision:** Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Warnett, Ms. Grimm, Ms. Mallorie, Mrs. Nero-Wirth
- **MOVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:**
  - In warmer weather months we go out back for some fun movement activities ( basketball, soccer, frisbee, football, 4 square)
  - Intramurals-during winter months
- **Lunch detention-** not often and not fun- an intervention and supportive place for a reset and reflection



# SWMS Campus

- Campus tours, wayfinding and designated spaces are defined.
  - Due to construction, final details and communications will be sent in Fall and in anticipation of the school year.
  - EVERY student will receive explicit tours, lessons and opportunities to understand our campus
- ~~Pick Up Patrol~~
  - communication with transportation, front office and student

# SWMS

## Home – **Student** – School

- Your student
- **GOOGLE CLASSROOM** is our school's primary platform for communication and organization for academics and daily work
- **Parentsquare-** the most direct place for regular updates and communications (building, clubs, events, activities)
- **SKYWARD-** for lunch fees, for grades, and attendance tracking

# SWMS Sports Opportunities

**Fall**      Football (7th & 8th only)  
Volleyball  
Cross Country

**Winter 1**   Girls Soccer  
Boys Basketball

**Winter 2**   Co-ed Wrestling  
Girls Basketball

**Spring**      Track & Field

Note: All sports other than football, are open to 6th-8th. However, 6th grade participation will be conditional on space and coach availability. Communication from the Athletics Department prior to each season will be sent out.

# SWMS Sports Opportunities

Fall sport enrollment starts now. To enroll your athlete in a fall sport, go to the school website, under the activities tab you will find athletics.



We use Final Forms to register athletes in their sports, sign all documentation, pay fees and upload physicals. Athletes will need a valid physical to begin practice. Fall sports generally start the first week of school, MS sports do not have official summer practices.

<https://swms.sw.wednet.edu/activities/athletics>

Fees: Must pay \$20 ASB fee, and then a \$50 fee for each sport, 4th sport is free. Financial hardship forms are available at the ASB office.

Questions: Contact Kymy Johnson (360) 221-6808 ext. 5423 .

# Registration & Class Scheduling

- Students registered for classes earlier this month.
  - Band?
    - Verification with Ms. Grimm on family commitment
- Students are enrolled in courses via teacher input, special accommodations (IEPs/504s), grades, assessments
- IEP/504 student accommodations and needs are always communicated by and with our staff
- Student schedules will be available in person the first day of school
- Requests for schedule changes can be submitted the first 3 days of school year, for academic reasons-not social

# Social Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a continuous priority of our staff.

We use 2 primary sources for explicit teaching of SEL:

- Restorative Practices via RJ ED through CSU
- Collaborative School Community
  - CASEL's Collaborative School Community link [here](#)
  - Continued research and planning with [DBT Steps A-Problem-Solving](#) steps for adolescents

SEL is 24/7/365. We have explicit lessons in advisory and the classroom. We have spontaneous opportunities and interactions in all settings, including outside the school day.

## SWMS STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION

<b>LINDSEY GRIMM</b>	<b>KAYLA PHILLIPS</b>	<b>JOHN SOMMER</b>	<b>LAURA MICHALOPOULOS</b>	<b>MARGUERITE BERG</b>	<b>JENNY HOLBROOK</b>	<b>SONJA RINGSRUD</b>	<b>EMMY ATWOOD</b>
M-F 7:30-3:00	M-F 7:30-3:00	M-F 7:30-3:00	M-F 7:30-3:30	TH-F 7:30-3:30	varies	By appointment	M-F 7:30-3:00
lgrimm @sw.wednet.edu	kphillips @sw.wednet.edu	jsommer @sw.wednet.edu	lmichalopoulos @sw.wednet.edu	mberg @sw.wednet.edu	jholbrook @sw.wednet.edu	sringsrud@ sw.wednet.edu	eatwood @sw.wednet.edu
SWMS COUNSELOR	SWMS PRINCIPAL	DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AND STUDENT SAFETY	ESD STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONAL	ESD MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL	MCKINNEY - VENTO SPECIALIST	SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST	SWSD SCHOOL NURSE MANAGER
POINT OF CONTACT FOR COUNSELING, 504 PLANS AND ACADEMIC NEEDS	POINT OF CONTACT FOR GENERAL STUDENT CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS	POINT OF CONTACT FOR ATHLETIC INQUIRIES, DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY CONCERNS	SERVES STUDENTS REFERRED FOR SUBSTANCE PREVENTION/ USE & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	SERVES STUDENTS REFERRED FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC COACH FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS	POINT OF CONTACT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATIONS	POINT OF CONTACT FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SPECIFIC INFORMATION



South Whidbey  
Middle School



## CELL PHONE POLICY

SWMS's campus and community will participate in a phone, earbud, & personal electronic device free environment. Students will place any device they choose to carry on silent or turned off and store them in backpacks and/or lockers for the entirety of the school day. We will work together to focus on face to face interactions and a positive academic and social environment.

**WHY:** Cell phones can be detrimental to relationships and learning, which are the two most important aspects of school.

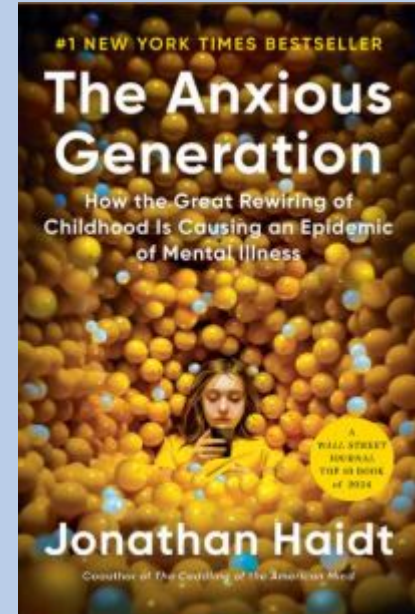
**COMMUNICATION:** The school office is available to take messages from parent/guardians and get those messages to your student in a timely manner. Students may also use school phones when necessary. Students are able to use their personal devices when school releases at the end of the day.

# What is our TECHNOLOGY POLICY?

100% of SWMS staff members follow this policy with fidelity. If a student has a personal device out, it will be taken, sent to the office and a guardian must retrieve the device.

Habitual? Additional restrictions will be in place with collaboration with guardians

“Give your child a smartphone when you’re ready for their childhood to end”



# Chromebooks and 6th grade students

## SWMS is pivoting its technology implementation

- chromebooks stay in classrooms (6th grade)
- used as a compliment to curriculum
- explicit, intentional lessons on digital citizenship
- slow implementation and responsibility



# Advice from current 6th graders to incoming students:

- **Academics and Effort:** Focus on asking questions, checking and getting better grades, and being ready for the heavier workload, which includes homework. Try your best and work as hard as you can, recognizing that school gets harder in middle school.
- **Social Advice:** Avoid getting involved in drama, stick with inclusive friends, and don't let others' comments or opinions affect you. Be yourself and don't try to be someone you're not to fit in. Teachers and staff are there to help, don't be shy to ask for it!
- **Mindset and Preparation:** Be confident and prepared, as some things will be more difficult than expected. While changing schools can be scary, the transition isn't as hard as it looks, and the first day is not difficult to navigate.
- **Logistics and Fun:** Go right to your next class when the bell rings during passing periods. Consider packing your lunch, though some find the school lunch good. Be sure to go to the extra activities, they will surprise you with how fun they can be.

# Advice from current 6th graders to parents/guardians:

**Need for Support and Availability** Students asked parents/guardians to be there for them, offer continued support, and be available to take questions or help with editing schoolwork, particularly because the school day can be "draining," "tired and worn out."

**Academic Assistance and Expectations** Multiple responses touched on homework, advising parents to help with assignments and trust the student's method, even if it differs from the parent's understanding, suggesting they communicate with the teacher to learn the correct way. One student advised accepting Bs and Cs as long as they are trying their best, rather than pressuring them for As, which could lead to cheating.

**Appreciation and Independence** Many students expressed that they either didn't need advice, didn't need help with homework, or were unsure, with several explicitly stating their appreciation for the help already given ("thank you," "nothing they dont have to improve anything").

# Asking 6th graders what has surprised them about Middle School:

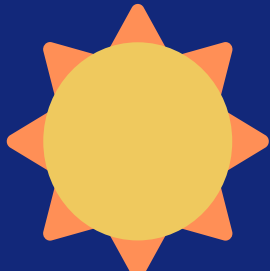
- **Social Environment:** Responses consistently highlight the friendliness and acceptance among students, with one respondent noting the experience was "nice" and another surprised by how accepting everybody is.
- **School Activities:** The organized dances exceeded expectations, featuring a DJ, lights, and decorations, and one response noted the availability of many sports compared to previous schools.
- **Academics & Structure:** Contrary to expectations of daily piles of homework, students generally reported not having any or very much.
- **Freedom and Size:** Students were surprised by the amount of freedom and opportunity for independent responsibility from elementary school that they experienced and the sheer number of people in the school.

# Q&A

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Will we be able to get lockers or is that an "older kids" kind of thing?	YES! All students can and are encourage to get a locker. A PE Locker is required and you need to use it to keep your belongings safe!
how much homework will we get every week and also how many classes do we have	6 classes, HW- some for math, occasionally for science, and daily reading. This will ebb and flow. Sometimes projects, sometimes day to day work
is there a way to sign up for asb?	Yes! We love when you dive into new opportunities! In the Fall we will offer some ASB opportunities for anyone interested!
do you guys have detention	Lunch detention is common- when your behaviors impact others After school? Rarely. Restorative work is the goal
Do we have dances	Yep! 1 in Winter, and typically 1 in spring for 8th grade Promotion
do you support lgbtq?	Yes, our entire campus does. This is a non-negotiable
Are we allowed to have our phones out at like lunch or a break time.	No. Communication to staff when you have a NEED for your phone is crucial.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
can i do band and volleyball	Yes, band is an elective. Volleyball is a sport that you can sign up for after school
do we get to walk around the school freely ?	No, no one does. At lunch you have the courtyard or your assigned common place to eat.
Will we have to share classes with High Schoolers	No. You shouldn't see high schoolers much. After you get off the bus, we don't see one another as we have different wings of the school. Some days, some have a passing period during our lunch. Sometimes in the locker room, but there's always an adult supervisor
are all of the teachers giving homework every week?	Nope! If you use your class time well, you won't have much homework at all!
Is one grade gonna be upstairs and the oher down stairs	No. SWMS and SWHS share an office and lunch room. Otherwise you will have some upstairs, and some downstairs. You have 5 minutes between periods to get where you need to go.
when do we have to wake up to go to school	First bell at 8:10, classes start at 8:15
Are a lot of your classes trouble?	Nope. We all agree to what is acceptable and hold each other to it.
How does the bus work?	You sit in the MS section and follow bus rules. Otherwise, you don't ride the bus.

# Health Reminders from Nurse Emmy

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1. Tdap vaccine is required for every 7th grader.
    - All students entering 7th must have one booster dose of Tdap vaccine (on or after age 10 years).
    - Access your records at MyIR.net
    - Contact school nurse regarding exemption paperwork
  2. Updated Health Form required for new campus.
    - Complete in Skyward before August
  3. Medications must have parent AND provider authorization.
    - Schedule appointment with healthcare provider
  4. Sports physicals are good for one year.
    - Schedule appointment with healthcare provider

Emmy Atwood, [eatwood@sw.wednet.edu](mailto:eatwood@sw.wednet.edu), x5420

# **Who do I contact?**

**Class specific concern?**

**Teacher** and (if relevant) the case manager

**Kayla Phillips- MS Principal**

**Lindsey Grimm--School Counselor**

**Gay Bitts-Registrar**

**Mary Eaton- Office Manager**

**Kymy Johnson- ASB and Athletics Secretary**

**Email- [firstinitial@sw.wednet.edu](mailto:firstinitial@sw.wednet.edu)**

# What Next?

Stay tuned into ParentSquare for communications. Construction over summer will determine details and be shared out widely and frequently.

## SUMMER HOMEWORK:

Maintain low/no screen time, read for joy, parent actively and with love, connect with trusted/loved ones. Parenting a tween/teen is the most rewarding challenge