Swansfield Summer Newsletter (3rd Edition – August 3, 2020)

**Meet the Swans in the Pond**

Hello Swansfield Community,

As we welcome August, today we continue introducing you to our staff so you can get to know us better before school begins. We’ve enjoyed getting to meet some of you during our virtual Meet & Greets. In a few weeks we look forward to working with you and getting to know you better! Until then, we hope you continue to enjoy your summer.

Last week we introduced Liz Wyant as part of the first grade team. Due to some staffing changes, Liz is excited now to be working as part of our special education team, which we will introduce in an upcoming newsletter.  With her move, we welcome Rachel Garrett to the first grade staff.

**Rachel Garrett, First Grade Teacher**

Hello families! My name is Rachel Garrett and I am so excited to be joining the first grade team at Swansfield! My prior teaching experience includes PreK-8th grade, including some time in special education. My husband and I have two children, ages 4 and 6. Our favorite things about living in Columbia are the walking trails, parks, and so many yummy places to eat! I can’t wait to meet you all!

**Third Grade**

**Rebecca Stanislav, Instructional Team Leader**

My name is Ms. Stanislav and I am a third grade teacher. This is my third year at Swansfield Elementary and I love teaching third grade! I have a Golden Retriever named Pax that I love. I enjoy reading and spending time getting to know my students during morning circle.

**Emily Benz, Teacher**

Hi! My name is Emily Benz and I will be joining the third grade team this year. I’m looking forward to my fifth year of teaching at Swansfield because I love making learning enjoyable for my students. When I’m not in the classroom I love to ride my horse, Kellie. I graduated from Salisbury University and support the Seagulls. You can spot many different Salisbury-themed decorations in my classroom, including my Sammy the Seagull flag! Go Gulls!

**Chad Byers, Teacher**

My name is Chad Byers and I am a third grade teacher here at Swansfield Elementary School. My favorite thing about teaching is building strong relationships with all of my students while they discover their full potential. I enjoy coaching travel baseball and spending my free time at the beach in the summer and skiing in the winter.

**Sophia Win, Teacher**

Hello Swans! My name is Sophia Win and I will be joining the third grade team this year! I am so excited to become part of the Swansfield family! I am Maryland born and raised and a proud Towson University graduate! I grew up dancing competitively for many years and have directed my own theatre program for the past 11 summers! I love spending time at the beach and with my family! Although this year is off to a different start, I am excited to begin a fabulous year full of fun and learning!

**Allison Witherow, Teacher**

I am Allison Witherow and I am thrilled to be joining the third grade team at Swansfield! I have taught elementary school for 12 years (kindergarten, first, second, third, and fifth grades). I have three elementary-aged children of my own (including a rising third grader!). During the summer, my kids and I love to go on “adventures.” This summer our adventures included discovering an exercise trail—right in our own neighborhood!

**Mary Jordan, Paraeducator**

**Fourth Grade**

**Danielle Van Wyk, Instructional Team Leader**

I’m Danielle Van Wyk and I teach fourth grade. I love hiking, reading, and playing with my dog. My favorite part of teaching is making connections with my students and watching them grow throughout the year. I look forward to a fun and engaging year with a lot of learning!

**Katie Heavens, Teacher**

Hello! My name is Katie Heavens and this is my fourth year at Swansfield teaching fourth grade. My favorite aspect of teaching is being able to help students become their very best selves. This summer I spent a lot of time reading, cooking, and working out. One of my favorite quotes is by Walt Disney: "To dream with your heart makes no dream too extreme." I look forward to an exciting 20-21 school year!

**Nami Kiwalabye, Teacher**

My name is Nami Kiwalabye and I will be on the fourth grade team this upcoming school year. This will be my second year teaching and I’m very excited! One interesting fact about me is that I love Harry Potter.

**Kendra Pastor, Teacher**

Hello everyone! My name is Kendra Pastor and I'm excited to be joining the fourth grade team this year at Swansfield. I recently graduated from Towson University with my Bachelor's in Elementary Education. Teaching has always been my passion, so I'm very excited to be in my dream career! I never thought my first year of teaching would be virtual, but I'm excited to make the most of it! I’m looking forward to meeting all the staff and students.

**Keysha Lassiter, Paraeducator**

**Fifth Grade**

**Rebecca Seering, Instructional Team Leader**

I’m Rebecca Seering and this will be my fourth year at Swansfield, all in fifth grade! I love teaching fifth grade because of all the special events fifth graders get to participate in during their last year of elementary school. In my free time I love to go to the beach, read and hike with my dog, Luna. I’m looking forward to getting to know my new students!

**Raelyn Boras, Teacher**

Hi! My name is Ms. Boras and I am one of the fifth grade teachers at Swansfield. This is my second year working here and I absolutely love the Swansfield community! I am pleased to work with passionate people and amazing students that make every day worth it! When I am not teaching, I love reading, running, being outside and making art. I am so excited to get to meet all of our new and returning Swans!

**Glenn Hayes, Teacher**

Hello! My name is Glenn Hayes and I will be teaching fifth grade this year. This is my 23rd year teaching at Swansfield after finishing my studies at Johns Hopkins University. I’m looking forward to having a productive year in which students learn in an environment that engages, encourages and inspires them to do their best. Keep smiling! It is going to be a great year!

**Shiela Renehan & Kristie Webster, Paraeducators**

**Custodial Services**

**Patricia Boe, Custodial Day Building Supervisor**

I am excited to be starting my 11th year at Swansfield as a Custodial Day Building Supervisor. I love working with students, staff, and Swansfield families. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with family, going to church, taking long walks in the park, watching Netflix, working out at the gym, and my favorite thing is traveling. I'm very grateful to work with a supportive staff and community.

**Terry Brown, Custodian**

I have been with HCPSS for approximately seven years and am entering my fifth year at Swansfield. I enjoy being here and have always felt welcomed and supported by my team, the staff, and administrators. Also, I am very excited to be able to serve the students of Swansfield in any manner that I can to help them be successful. I am a family man, so I enjoy having fun times with my wife and two girls when I am away from work.

**Loriann Matthews, Custodian**

This is my second year at Swansfield, although I have worked for HCPSS for 21 years. This past year was my first experience in an elementary School and I loved it. I am looking forward to getting to know everyone this coming year. I have a great sense of humor and love to laugh.

**Robert Nyorkor, Custodian**

I am starting my eighth year at Swansfield. I enjoy being here and working with the staff. I look forward to getting to know all the new team members and students and look forward to their support as well. I like to joke and make people happy so we enjoy our work.

**Health Services**

**Doris Qano, Nurse**

Dearest returning and new Swans, I am Doris Qano, cluster nurse. This will be my sixth year at Swansfield and I love my job! I have a son who is a rising sixth grader, and a daughter who will be going into fourth grade. They keep me on my toes:) The challenges we are all facing are very real, but we will get through this stronger, together!

**Tracey Ellerby, Health Assistant**

Welcome! My name is Tracey Ellerby and I am the health assistant. It's been my pleasure to help ensure the health and safety of the Swansfield community for 20 years, while seeing many young Swans transition into adulthood. It's such a joyful feeling when students who have moved on take great pride in returning to visit Swansfield. They often share how much Swansfield made it feel like home for them, giving them a great foundation. One of my favorite quotes is, "You never know how strong you are...until being strong is the only choice you have."

**SAVE THE DATES**

* **Live Read Aloud**: Monday, August 3, 7pm. Code: ses-storytime
* **New Kindergarten Student Meet & Greet**: Tuesday, August 4, 7pm. Code: ses-welcome-kinders
* **Live Read Aloud:** Wednesday, August 5, 7pm. Code: ses-storytime
* **Grade 1 Virtual Gathering:** Thursday, August 6, 11am. Code ses-gr1-aug6
* **Live Read Aloud:** Friday, August 7, 2pm. Code: ses-storytime
* **Live Read Aloud:** Monday, August 10, 7pm. Code ses-storytime
* **Grade 3 Virtual Gathering** Tuesday, August 11, 11am. Code: ses-gr3-aug11