



# SCHOOLS TO WATCH – VIRGINIA

## SWIFT CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



### Swift Creek Middle School

### 2016-2017 School Statistics

*(Student enrollment as of February 2017)*

Community: Chesterfield County  
 Enrollment: 991  
 Grade Levels: 6-8  
 School Schedule: Alternating Block

Student Demographics

- 63% White
- 8% Hispanic
- 18% African American
- 5% Asian
- 5% Multi-Racial
- <1% Native American
- 17% Economically Disadvantaged
- 13% Special Education
- 7% English Language Learners

Fully Accredited by VDOE:	'13-'14	'14-'15	'15-'16
Math Pass Rate	86%	88%	88%
English Pass Rate	83%	85%	87%
Science Pass Rate	81%	88%	86%
Writing Pass Rate	82%	87%	85%
History Pass Rate	88%	91%	86%



**Designated in 2017**

Swift Creek Middle School • Chesterfield County Public School • Chesterfield County, VA • Dr. J. Calvin Frye, Principal • 3700 Old Hundred Rd., Chesterfield, VA 23112  
 • Tel (804)739-6315, Fax (804) 739-6322  
[SCMS Website](#)

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

### Academic Excellence

- Swift Creek Middle School is fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education. Moreover, all students are expected to meet high academic standards and are successful in doing so through the use of clear expectations, demonstrations, and meaningful feedback.
- The faculty frequently reviews data and the progress of pupils through Google forms and response sheets, Power School data, MyAccess, and previous SOL scores and use those results to guide future academic decisions and create assignments and activities.
- With the exception of approximately 60 students who take geometry, all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are enrolled in Algebra I.
- The “Honors TEAMS Institute” program was created to provide high achieving students the opportunity to excel beyond the curriculum. “TEAMS” is an acronym for technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and science, which is at the heart of the honors institute program. During their three years in TEAMS, students complete a rigorous program of study, including three years of advanced writing, Latin I and II, Algebra I, Geometry, Earth Science, and an independent Capstone project.

- Swift Creek M.S. was designated as a “trail blazing” school for being one of the first schools to be trained in Project Based Learning (PBL) by the Buck Institute. All courses incorporate PBL experiences in their classes, and students’ work is showcased yearly at EXPO Night.
- Students have a range of electives in the areas of band, chorus, orchestra, art, technology, computers, Spanish, Latin, speech and drama, and photography.
- Speech and Debate is also an elective, which has a corresponding club, and students participate in Virginia High School League competitions.
- All students receive daily instruction in mathematics and English Language Arts/Writing (The exceptions are the TEAMS students who take Algebra I, every other day as 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and take Geometry, every other day as 8<sup>th</sup> graders).
- All students have access to Spanish and Latin courses beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and have the opportunity to progress through Spanish 2 and/ or Latin 2, earning up to two high school credit in each language.
- Students may attend one or more of the career presentations of interest held monthly.
- Teachers have received numerous grants to support academic excellence.
- Teachers are attending Project CRISS training to support increased emphasis on differentiation and mastery learning.
- Core content Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meet weekly to plan and develop common assessments and quarterly benchmark assessments. Data Touch Base meetings are held quarterly with the administration to review assessment results and discuss additional teaching strategies.
- Teachers participate in a minimum of six technology trainings each year as well as 12 hours of professional development outside contracted hours.
- Students have the opportunities to join academic clubs such as: Art Club, Astronomy Club, Battle of the Books, Public Speaking and Debate Team, Jazz Band, Japanese Interest Group, Latin Club, MAC (*anti-bullying*), National Junior Honor Society, Robotics, Science & Ecology Club, Spanish Club, and Technology Student Association (TSA).

### **Developmental Responsiveness**

- Chesterfield County Schools provides appropriate technology on a 1 to 1 basis to students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The majority of students receive a Chromebook, which they may take home nightly. Teachers and students use multiple technology applications with Google Docs being one of the primary platforms.
- Read 180 is available as an elective for low-level readers.
- Exceptional education students are taught real-life skills through their “Creek Café” experiences and are supported in the general education as often as possible.
- “Get Back On Board,” or GBOB, replaced the in-school suspension program and incorporates restorative practices, including reflective writing, meeting with a counselor, community service, character building readings.
- PBIS has been adopted by the faculty as a result of the PBIS Committee’s work with faculty buy-in and professional development.

- The faculty and staff have a high capacity for shared leadership through their work in committees and as members of the leadership team.
- Rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are offered the opportunity to attend “Intro. to Middle School” during the summer to help them with transitioning to a new school.
- Parents receive a weekly communication from the principal with highlights, pictures, and upcoming events and opportunities.
- Students have a multitude of opportunities to become involved through the following clubs: Art Club, Astronomy Club, Battle of the Books, Chess Club, Crime Solvers, Dance Team Sailorettes, Diversity Club, Drama Club, Elevate, Homework Helpers, Public Speaking and Debate Team, Jazz Band, Japanese Interest Group, Latin Club, MAC (*anti-bullying*), Principal’s Advisory, National Junior Honor Society, Robotics, Rotary/Interact (*service club*), Student Council Association (SCA), Science & Ecology Club, Self-Determined Club, Spanish Club, Sparkle Effect, Stress Relief Club, and Technology Student Association (TSA).
- As part of Project Based Learning (PBL), students have the opportunity to present their work to parents and the community at “EXPO Night”, which occurs during the fourth marking period.
- Swift Creek Middle School encourages our students to initiate, engage in, and celebrate service, volunteerism, and the spirit of giving in order to become responsible citizens and servant leaders in our school, community, country, and world. Students are encouraged to complete 30 hours of community service through the course of each school year. Students, who reach this goal by the end of May, are recognized at our end-of-the year awards ceremony.

## **Social Equity**

- All students have open access to all academic courses and are encouraged to enroll in honors courses. Teachers provide differentiated instruction to meet students where they are and propel them to forward. Additionally, all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are enrolled in algebra I, and Spanish and Latin are made available to all students.
- In addition to athletic team sports, students have opportunities to get involved in intramurals such as archery, table tennis, weight lifting, and many more.
- Students, regardless of socioeconomic status, have access to technology, allowing all students equivalent opportunities to advance technological understanding, conduct responsible research, and analyze data.
- Counselors play a major role in students’ school lives, being involved in academics, social-emotional, and career activities.
- Financial assistance is provided for students as needed for all events, activities, and materials.
- Special school-wide activities, like Black History Month, spirit weeks, and attending the movie Hidden Figures, supports our united school culture.
- Swift Creek Middle is a catchment school for Autism and MiID. Exceptional education student are included in the general education setting when appropriate and are involved in

school activities. For example, the Sailorettes Dance team collaborates with the exceptional education students to form the Sparkle Effect Dancers who perform at school events and basketball games. Students also are involved in the talent show and Special Olympics.

- Student led clubs such as Diversity Club, Elevate, Homework Helpers, Make a Change “MAC” (*anti-bullying*), Self-Determined Club, and Sparkle Effect support and promote social equity.

### **Organizational Support**

- Common planning is scheduled to allow for Professional Learning Communities.
- Each administrator is responsible for the behavior and academic expectations of a particular grade level, and departments are also divided among administrators.
- Students sign out of class using a Google form. This provides the front office and other teacher information about students’ movements outside class.
- Classrooms are assigned color-coded passes that correspond to the nearest restroom which allows staff members to easily identify where students should be when in the halls during class.
- PLCs meet quarterly with the principal and content administrator to review data from benchmark assessments. Outcomes include ideas for spiraling content, reteaching, and future instruction.
- Epi-Pen, CPR, and first aide signs on teachers’ doors indicate who has been trained in each area.
- Committees are established each year to address and guide initiatives for the future.
- Ten students from each grade level meet monthly as the Principal’s Advisory team to share thoughts about how to improve the culture and instruction at school.
- PBIS expectations are taught at the beginning of the year through assemblies and in the classroom. These expectations are reinforced by the signs posted in the halls and the classrooms and through booster lessons throughout the school year.
- Professional developments are offered during the teachers’ planning periods and emphasize instructional technology.
- A Maker Space has been funded and is scheduled to be operational in September 2017.