

## AT A GLANCE

25-26 School Year

January / February

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## Quick Reference Guide

### [Student Services Team](#)

The Student Services Team is here to support the whole child - socially, emotionally, and academically. We provide individual counseling, small group counseling, academic advising, career exploration and classroom lessons. Additionally, we consult and collaborate with parents/guardians, other staff, and community providers. For more information about supports and resources at WMS, visit our [Counseling page!](#)

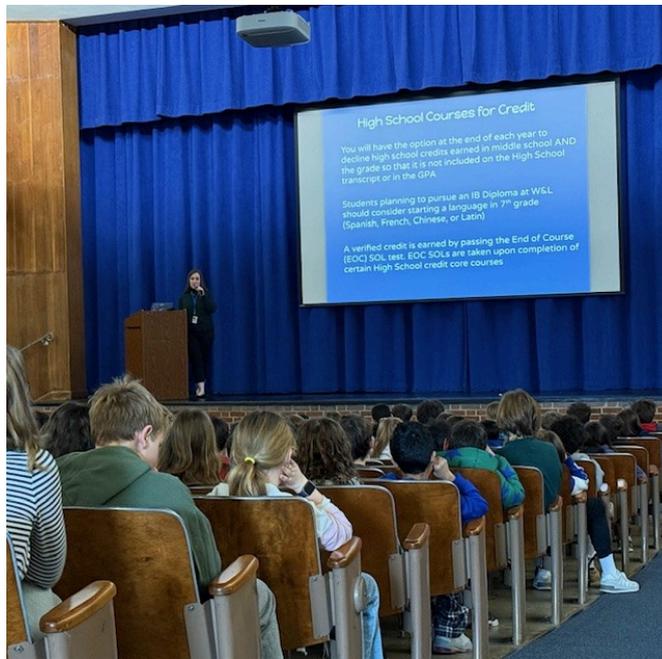
Name	Role	Phone (703-228-xxxx)	Email
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Ashley Bleakley	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor	5481	<a href="mailto:Ashley.bleakley@apsva.us">Ashley.bleakley@apsva.us</a>
Paul Gardner	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor	5457	<a href="mailto:Paul.gardner@apsva.us">Paul.gardner@apsva.us</a>
Gretchen Brenckle	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor	5469	<a href="mailto:Gretchen.brenckle@apsva.us">Gretchen.brenckle@apsva.us</a>
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Peggy Sabouni	Interlude Therapist	5453	<a href="mailto:Peggy.cole@apsva.us">Peggy.cole@apsva.us</a>



*Almost the whole Student Services Team pictured - "Putting the 'W' in Everything!"*

## What's Been Happening in Jan/Feb?

- **Williamsburg Course Planning Night** on January 21<sup>st</sup> was a great success with an amazing turnout and awesome discussions. See the next section for resources for Course Planning for your student and information about using SchoolLinks.
- **Academic Planning Lessons and Presentations and 1:1 Student Advising** have been ongoing for the month of February. Delayed a bit by the snow-cation, grade level counselors have been working double-time to make sure your student has all they need to make informed decisions about their course selections for next year and to start drafting a plan for the future.



- **National School Counseling Week** was February 2-6. Thank you to all the kind messages from parents and students that shared appreciation for all the ways our counselors “amplify student success.” Find out more about what our school counselors do [here](#).



- **Virginia Kindness Week** was February 9-13<sup>th</sup> and it was a wonderful chance for students to see how small acts of kindness can make a big impact. Intervention counselor, Ms. Battle, had fun giveaways for students during their lunch period and students had the opportunity to recognize students and staff who are “**Caught in the Act**” of kindness with shout-outs on announcements throughout the week. Over 50 staff and students were nominated by students to be recognized!



- **Growing Strong: Supporting Middle Schoolers Through Change Quarter 2 Parent Coffee** – was a resounding success! Several parents joined in the library to discuss helping their child build confidence, navigate social drama, and develop their own goals. Parents were able to swap stories and strategies and create a network that they hope to continue throughout their child’s middle school experience. We highly recommend reading [Middle School Superpowers - Raising Resilient Tweens in Turbulent Times](#) by Phyllis Fagell for more information.



- **Small Group Supports for 6<sup>th</sup> Graders:**

- *"SuperFlex Skills Squad"* - Students are strengthening the skills of teamwork, flexible thinking, and respectful communication to help them succeed both academically and socially, led by Ms. Bleakley and Ms. Battle
- *"Coping Cat"* - an evidence-based group program designed to help children manage and reduce anxiety based on the modality of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). The program "teaches skills to recognize anxious thoughts and bodily responses, challenge cognitive distortions, and face anxiety provoking situations through exposure" and is being facilitated by WMS Social Worker, Ms. Karns.

- **Spotlight on Tessa Karr, WMS Counseling Intern** ~ Tessa has jumped right into Williamsburg learning the ropes with small groups, academic advising, and student support. As part of her coursework, Tessa has informed parents of a select group of TAs about the option for their student to take a short survey about how students experience perfectionism. The anonymous survey will help the counseling department plan supports that promote healthy learning habits, resilience and student well-being.



## Resources for SchoolLinks and Course Planning

- Presentations from the WMS Course Planning night can be found here: [WMS Course Planning Night - Williamsburg](#)
- The district maintains a webpage about all things [SchoolLinks](#) including videos of how-to presentations and FAQs.
- **NOTE:** All Course Plans need to be submitted to your child's grade level counselor by **February 27<sup>th</sup>**! If you have any questions, please reach out! (contact info at top of the newsletter)

# Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Williamsburg uses the [Responsive Classroom](#) structure to align lessons with [VDOE SEL Standards](#) and meet emerging needs of students during **Teacher Advisory (TA) lessons on Tuesdays and Thursdays**. See TA SEL topics and standards for February below! (Click to enlarge.)

FEBRUARY		
T	W	Th
<p>3</p> <p><b>B TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: An Introduction to Black History Month; Black History Month: Connections We See Every Day; Black History Month: The Stories Behind What We Use            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 26            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 26            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 26            SoA1: 5-5b, I can gain a broader understanding by asking questions and listening to those with different perspectives, backgrounds, and cultures. SoA1: 7-8b, I can develop an understanding and appreciation of different abilities, backgrounds, cultures, and social groups. <b>Social Awareness</b></p>	<p>4</p> <p><b>C</b></p>	<p>5</p> <p><b>A TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: Fact or Cap: Black History; What... That's Black History?; Black History Trivia: Quick Facts; Big Impact            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 27            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 27            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 27            SoA1: 5-5b, I can gain a broader understanding by asking questions and listening to those with different perspectives, backgrounds, and cultures. SoA1: 7-8b, I can develop an understanding and appreciation of different abilities, backgrounds, cultures, and social groups. <b>Social Awareness</b></p>
<p>10</p> <p><b>B TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: Be a RAKivist (Random Acts of Kindness Activist); Small Acts, Big Impact: It's the Small Things, The Energy You Bring            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 28            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 28            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 28            ReS1: 5-5a, I can explain and demonstrate how positive communication skills help build and maintain healthy relationships. ReS1: 7-8a, I can explain how my interactions directly impact my reputation and relationships. <b>Relationship Skills</b></p>	<p>11 ER (PL)</p> <p><b>C</b></p>	<p>12</p> <p><b>A TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: The Science of Kindness (RAKivist Edition); Kindness as a Choice: What Science Says, Small Choices, Real Impact            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 29            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 29            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 29            ReS1: 5-5a, I can explain and demonstrate how positive communication skills help build and maintain healthy relationships. ReS1: 7-8a, I can explain how my interactions directly impact my reputation and relationships. <b>Relationship Skills</b></p>
<p>17</p> <p><b>A TA Lessons</b>            Topics: The Value of Different Perspectives            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 30            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 30            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 30            DeM1: 5-5b, I can explain how the perspectives of others should be considered when making decisions. SoA1: 7-8a, I can accept when the viewpoints or perceptions of others are different from mine. <b>Social Awareness/Decision Making</b></p>	<p>18</p> <p><b>B</b></p>	<p>19</p> <p><b>A TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: Listening to Different Perspectives            Telephone phrase: "Ledger Smith, 27 years old, faced up his skate and rolled"            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 31            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 31            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 31            SoA1: 5-5b, I can gain a broader understanding by asking questions and listening to those with different perspectives, backgrounds, and cultures. <b>Social Awareness</b></p>
<p>24</p> <p><b>B TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topics: 3 Breaths Can Change Your Brain; Don't Believe Everything You Think Your Brain Does            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 32            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 32            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 32            SeA1: 5-5a, I can differentiate among a variety of complex emotions. SeA1: 5-5b, I can identify examples of how my positive and negative self-talk can impact my emotions. SeM1: 7-8a, I can identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy stress levels. SeM1: 7-8b, I can apply coping skills to process thoughts, express my emotions and manage stressful situations. SeM1: 7-8c, I can reframe a challenging situation into a positive or learning opportunity for growth. <b>Self-Awareness and Self-Management</b></p>	<p>25</p> <p><b>C BLUE DAY</b></p>	<p>26</p> <p><b>A TA SEL Lessons</b>            Topic: Making Real-Life Connections            SEL_Lessons_6th Day 33            SEL_Lessons_7th Day 33            SEL_Lessons_8th Day 33            SoA1: 5-5b, I can gain a broader understanding by asking questions and listening to those with different perspectives, backgrounds, and cultures. DeM1: 5-5b, I can show curiosity about a social problem by asking questions and gathering evidence to identify potential solutions. DeM1: 7-8a, I can reflect on lessons learned from actual experiences to inform future practices. <b>Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Decision Making</b></p>

The **WMS C.A.R.E. Council** is shaping up to be an amazing student leadership group for **7th and 8th graders** promoting Compassion, Awareness, Responsibility, and Empathy. These student leaders are currently planning SEL lessons that they will co-facilitate in TA at the end of March!

## Other Resources

Hazel Telehealth is a free service to all APS students in grades 6 through 12. Learn more here: [Virtual Therapy with Hazel Health - Arlington Public Schools](#)

Find more resources here: [Mental Health Resources - Arlington Public Schools](#)

**Featured article:** [Child Therapists Say These Behaviors Can Harm Kids' Happiness | HuffPost Life](#)