



August 2024

South Middle

The mission of South Middle School is to provide a high quality education for all students in a safe, equitable learning environment. This mission is best accomplished through a partnership including students, family, community, teachers and staff, preparing students to become life-long learners in an ever-changing world.

A Note from the Principal

Welcome to the new school year! We hope everyone had a relaxing summer break filled with memorable experiences. As this new school year begins, we are excited to continue our journey together and build on the success of the past.

Over the summer, our staff have been working on planning engaging lessons, enriching activities, and developing new initiatives to enhance the learning experience for all students. Our goal is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Communication between school and home is vital for fostering a strong and collaborative school community. We encourage you to stay informed and engaged through our website, Facebook page, monthly newsletters, weekly bulletins and your student's Skyward account. Please feel free to reach out to teachers, staff, or myself with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have.

We extend a special welcome to our new families and students. We are delighted to have you join our school community and look forward to getting to know you. To help with the transition, we have planned an orientation session on Friday, August 9 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m., where students can meet our staff and learn more about our school.

We want to thank our families for their continued support and partnership. Together, we can ensure that South Middle remains a place where every student feels valued, challenged, and inspired.

Dustin Dooley - Principal, South Middle School

Screen Your Students for Symptoms of Illness

It is important to screen your student for illness every day before coming to school. Keep your student at home if sick with any illness. By making sure students are healthy when they come to school, we all can help prevent illness that disrupt learning. Thank you for your support!

Steps to Success: Communicating with Your Child's School

We strive to be the best place to learn. The only way we can improve is to know about concerns so we are able to address them. Here are some tips for communicating with your child's school when concerns arise. The fastest way to a positive result is to start with the people closest to the situation in the school. Talk with the teacher or coach about your questions and concerns before going to the principal.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to reach out to teachers and school staff by:

- Calling the school's phone number. Because they are teaching, you often will need to leave a message for your child's teacher or coach.
- Emailing the teacher or coach directly. All teacher emails are available on our school website.

We want to be responsive to parents' questions and requests for information. Our staff will respond to your call or email as soon as possible, in most cases within 2 school days. If you have had a conversation with your child's teacher and the principal and are still needing assistance, the director of elementary or secondary programs will be able to provide additional support.

We are excited for this new school year and look forward to partnering with you to support a great school experience for your student.

Lunch Identification Cards

At the beginning of the school year, all students will receive a lanyard with their lunch ID and library ID on the cards. After we take school pictures near the end of August, we will distribute new ID's with student's pictures. Students can scan their ID or manually enter their ID on the key pad, whichever they prefer. Also, ID's from last school year will work as well. If a student needs to replace their ID, it will cost them \$1.00. In the event this happens, they will need to visit with Ms. Davision in the counseling office.



New Staff

As we begin the new school year, there are new staff we would like to welcome to our school community. Parents will have the opportunity to meet our returning staff as well as our new staff at our Open House.

Jessica Herrs - 6th Grade Social Studies

Chris VanKooten - Physical Education

Sarah Praytor - 7th Grade Reading

Andrea Moreland - Art

Lauren Turner - Special Education

Gavin Blehm - Band

Allison Suarez - Special Education

Hernan Hernandez - ESL

School Attendance

Do you need to call in your student's attendance or let us know of an upcoming absence or tardy? If so, please call the Attendance Office directly at 785 - 309 - 3904 or email our attendance secretary at lorena.hernandez@usd305.com. The attendance office hours are 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please communicate with the school if your child will be absent.

Directory Information

In accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), USD 305 has designated certain information as directory information. This information is considered public information which may be released from the school district without your prior consent. Please inform your school building in writing that any or all of the directory information should not be released without your prior consent (by August 25, 2023 to ensure it is not included in a parent directory). The following information is considered directory information:

- I. The student's name and age
- II. Parent's name, address and telephone number
- III. The student's major field of study and class designation(i.e. first grade, tenth grade)
- IV. The student's participation in officially recognized activities or sports
- V. The weight and height of members of athletic teams
- VI. Dates of attendance (period of time during which a student was enrolled in an educational agency or institution, i.e. academic year, spring semester)

School Day

We would like to remind all families that the length of the school day for students has been adjusted, beginning this school year (2024-25). The school day will start at 7:45 a.m. and students will report to their advisory class upon entering school. The school day will conclude at 2:55 p.m. We ask that all students leave campus by 3:05 p.m.

Receive Important Alerts

In order to get text messages (cancellations, emergencies, and other education communications) from South Middle and USD 305, please make sure your cell phone information is up-to-date in Skyward.



Medication at School

When the administration of a medication either prescribed or over-the-counter is required during school hours, the school can provide the service. Kansas law requires written permission from the parent and a signed order from the physician for prescription medication.

Prescription Medication: The medication is to be brought to the school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy, or physician, stating the name of the medication, the dosage, and the time to be administered.

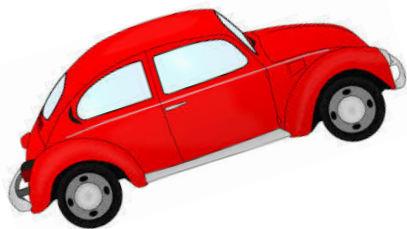
Over the Counter Medication: SMS requires only a parent signature for dosing as recommended. Please send over-the-counter medication in a small bottle. We do not stock over-the-counter medication in the building.

MS Attendance at HS Events

At Salina Public Schools, we prioritize creating a safe and enjoyable environment for all who attend our high school athletic events. To ensure that this remains the case, we would like to remind our families about our guidelines for middle school students who wish to attend these events. Importantly, all middle school students must be accompanied by an adult in order to enter.

While there is not a specific section for middle school students, we absolutely encourage them to attend - as long as they are under the supervision of a parent or guardian. These events are an excellent opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate the accomplishments of our students, and we want to make sure that everyone enjoys themselves in a positive atmosphere. We truly appreciate your help in ensuring that our events remain a rewarding experience for all.

Pick Up and Drop Off



We would like to remind all of our families to pay close attention as you drive through crosswalks and on the streets by the building. If families could drop their students off on the curb closest to the school sidewalk, that will help deter students from running into the street. Families can help by encouraging your student(s) to utilize the crosswalks when crossing the street.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Wednesday, September 11 from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, September 12 from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Advisory teachers will be scheduling conferences with students. If your student is in a class first hour (Sensations, Yearbook, Student Council), one of their core teachers will schedule your student's conference. After visiting with your child's advisory teacher, parents and guardians will have the ability to visit with other teachers on your student's schedule.

Late Work Policy

It is important and necessary for students to prioritize turning assignments in on time. Late work will negatively impact student grades and eligibility for athletic and fine art participation. Beginning this academic year (2024-25) students will have one week to turn in an assignment from the original due date. Any assignment turned in later than the designated due date, but within the one week time frame will be deducted twenty percent. After the one week time frame it is the sole discretion of the classroom teacher whether to accept the assignment as late or not. If it is not accepted as late it will be marked with a zero in the grade book.

PRIDE Tickets

Students who purchased a yearbook for this school year will automatically receive a student activity ticket that will grant them admission into all South Middle home athletic contests. Parents and Guardians can purchase a "Parent Pride" ticket for \$25.00. This ticket will grant admission into all home SMS contests. Families can purchase the Pride ticket on-line through Skyward / RevTrack or pay Mrs. Jackson, our financial secretary.



Tardy Policy

Arriving to school on time and classes on time throughout the day is vital. Regular attendance is crucial for academic success and personal growth. Once a student receives their fourth tardy at the beginning of the school day or their fourth tardy in any class throughout the day, they will serve a 30-minute detention. Any tardy after the fourth tardy will result in a 60-minute detention. Regular and on time attendance ensures that students do not miss out on crucial lessons, participate in interactive and collaborative learning activities, and stay engaged with their peers and teachers.

Physical Education Policy

Students will not be assigned a locker for Physical Education (PE) and Eighth Grade Weightlifting classes this school year. Sixth graders have never suited out and we will move forward with doing this for seventh and eighth grade as well. A few reasons behind this change is that most students wear athletic clothing to school anyway and this saves lost class time by not having to waste time changing. This allows students to begin the activity for the day quicker and have more PE class time. Secondly, this helps with the challenge of supervising two locker room areas. Students who are enrolled in PE or Weightlifting need to be sure to wear tennis shoes to school so they can perform in class.

Cell Phones in School

Although a great communication device, cell phones are a distraction to the learning environment and the safety of our school. Bullying and other forms of harassment via social media has led to many distractions over the last few years. Therefore, student cell phones will not be allowed to be out and visible during the school day. Cell phones should remain in students' book bags from 7:55 a.m. to 2:55 p.m. Below are the consequences for cell phone usage.

First Infraction = Teacher will take the cell phone to the office, student can pick it up at the end of the day.

Second Infraction = Teacher will take the cell phone to the office, parent will need to pick it up at the end of the day.

Third Infraction = The teacher will take the cell phone to the office, the student will lock their cell phone in a secure lock box in the office for two weeks.

Fourth Infraction = The teacher will take the cell phone to the office, the student will lock their cell phone in a secure lock box for the remainder of the semester.

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Important Dates in August

7 - 6:00 p.m. - FLC / ALC Open House
 9 - First Day of School - 6th Grade
 9 - 11:45 a.m. 7/8 New Student Orientation
 12 - First Day of School - 7th / 8th Grade
 15 - 6:30 p.m. - Athletic Parent Meeting (All Sports)
 19 - First Day of Fall Practices
 21 - 12:00 p.m. - PTO Meeting
 22 - 6:30 p.m. - Open House
 29 - 3:30 p.m. - First Athletic Competitions

Contact Us

Dustin Dooley Principal
 Tina Akers Assistant Principal
 Curt Exline Assistant Principal
 Jamie Jackson Secretary

Main Office Phone Number: 785-309-3900

#SMSCougars
#305GrowsGreatness



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@USD305

➔ School Website

305 District Website

Unified School District #305 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Any person having inquiries concerning Unified School District #305 compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, ADA, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to contact the Unified School District #305 Executive Director of Human Resources, P.O. Box 797, Salina, Kansas 67402, 785-309-4726.