



August 2025

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.

Principal Message

As we prepare to welcome students back this fall, we want to take a moment to let all our families know how excited we are for the year ahead. The start of a new school year always brings a sense of energy, hope and opportunity for students and staff.

Our staff has been working hard to prepare engaging lessons, provide safe learning environments and build strong classroom procedures where students feel valued, challenged and connected. We cannot wait to see the hallways filled with energy and excitement from our students.

The key to a successful school year for all of us is a strong partnership between home and school. We believe that open, consistent communication with our families is essential to supporting student success. Whether it is through our weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters, phone calls, emails or in-person meetings. We want stay connected and work together to ensure each student is reaching their full potential. We encourage families to reach out with any questions or concerns, and we will do our part to keep everyone informed and involved as much as possible.

As we begin the 2025-26 school year, we ask that families help us emphasize the importance of academics. Attending school regularly, staying on top of assignments and taking pride in work are key habits that lead to growth and achievement. Homework and grades are important indicators of progress, and we appreciate our parents and guardians support in helping students develop strong study habits at home.

Together, we can help our students start the school year with focus, purpose and confidence.

Dustin Dooley, Principal

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 with two 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 start of the school year, all students will receive a lanyard with a card containing their lunch and library ID. Once school pictures are taken near the end of August, updated ID cards with student photos will be issued.

When going through the lunch line, students may either scan their ID card or manually enter their number using the keypad. It is essential that students have their ID card with them or have their ID number memorized.

Students without their ID or number ready will be required to move to the end of the line and wait. If a student needs a replacement ID card, there will be a \$1.00 fee. To obtain a new card, students should see Ms. Davison in the counseling office.

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 can all help prevent illness that disrupt learning. Thank you for your support!

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, 2025 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)

New Staff

As we begin the new school year, there are new staff we would like to welcome to our school community. Families will have the opportunity to meet our new and returning staff at our Open House, Thursday, August 21 at 6:30 p.m.

- Sixth Grade Social Studies - Lindsey Clark
- Physical Education - Caleb Copeland
- Physical Education - Elijah Salmans
- Music - Amy Krause
- Behavior Interventionist - Lindsey Sellers
- Special Education - Rachel Wilson
- Special Education - Saralyn Szyndlar
- Eighth Grade English - Jordyn Lane

Receive Important Alerts

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



Student Attendance at South Middle Events

We're excited to share that all South Middle School students will receive free admission to all SMS home events during the 2025–26 school year.

Please note that this offer applies only to SMS hosted events. Admission fees will still apply for parents, family members, and events held at other schools within the district.

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 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 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.

PRIDE Tickets

Parents and Guardians can purchase a "Parent Pride" ticket for \$35.00. This ticket will grant admission into all home SMS contests. Families can purchase the Pride ticket online through Skyward/Rev Track or pay Mrs. Jackson, our financial secretary in the administrative office.

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 southmiddle.attendance@usd305.com.



[Click here to email the office](mailto:southmiddle.attendance@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.

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.

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. Parents and Guardians can drop students off as early as 7:15 a.m., that's when the building unlocks and please pick-up no later than 3:15 p.m.

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 brought to the school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy, or physician, stating the name of the medication, 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.

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.

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 gradebook.

Promotion and Retention

USD 305 has implemented a new policy regarding student grade-level advancement and grading, effective starting the 2025-26 school year.

1. A student must receive a minimum of at least a D average.
2. A student must pass at least one semester of all core subjects (English, Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science)

Cell Phones at SMS

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 infractions.

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

Second Infraction = The teacher will take the cell phone to the office, the parent will need to pick it up at the end of the school day or give office staff permission to return it to the student.

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.

Open House

We invite all our families to join us for our Open House on Thursday, August 21, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in Gym #1.

The evening will start with a brief presentation outlining school procedures and policies, followed by a short meet-and-greet with our counseling and administrative teams.

Afterward, parents and guardians are welcome to visit their student's classrooms.

Dillons Rewards

SMS families can support the South Middle School PTO by using their Dillons Plus shopper's card. A percentage of all purchases are allotted to our PTO.

Here's how to enroll in the Dillons Community Rewards program:

- Sign in to your existing online account or create an account
- Find and select South Middle School PTO or organization #VN011 and click save
- Shop at Dillons and scan your existing Plus shopper's card



Visit Dillons Community Rewards

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Important Dates in August

6-12 - Teacher In-Service

13 - Sixth Grade / First Day of School

13 - New Student Orientation (11:45 a.m.)

14 - Seventh / Eighth Grade First Day

14 - Athletic Parent Meeting (6:30 p.m.)

18 - First Day of Practices - FB,VB,GTN,CC

20 - PTO Meeting (Noon)

21 - Open House (6:30 p.m.)

28 - School Picture Day

Contact Us

Dustin Dooley

Principal

Tina Akers

Assistant Principal

Stacy Garnett

Assistant Principal

Jamie Jackson

Secretary

Main Office Phone Number 785-309-3900

#SMSCougars
#305GrowsGreatness



South Middle



@USD305



School Website



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.