



November 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

November is an exciting month for our middle school students as they begin exploring future career opportunities. On Friday, November 7, our eighth grade students will take part in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Fair held at SMS. During this event, students will hear from high school teachers and students about the various CTE pathways offered at South High School. This experience will help students begin thinking about their interests and potential career paths before enrolling in their high school classes in December. Additionally, on Wednesday, November 19, our seventh graders will attend a Career Fair at the Webster Conference Center, where they will listen to presentations from business leaders, engage in hands-on activities, and participate in small group discussions about future career options.

As we move into the second quarter, I want to remind parents and guardians about our new promotion and retention policy. Any student who fails a core subject during the first semester will be required to retake that class during summer school. Students who do not successfully complete the class in summer school or do not attend, will be required to repeat it the following school year. It's extremely important that students stay on top of their grades, complete assignments on time, and check their progress regularly in Skyward. We encourage families to reach out to teachers, counselors, and administrators, if they have any concerns or need support.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I want to express my gratitude for our students, staff, and families. This season reminds us of the importance of being thankful for the people and opportunities that surround us each day. Keeping open lines of communication between home and school plays a vital role in student success. I wish everyone a safe, restful, and gratitude filled Thanksgiving break!

Dustin Dooley, Principal

Eighth Grade English Language Arts

During the first quarter, students delved into the elements of fiction and creative writing. In the second quarter, our focus shifts to argumentative writing, research, and analyzing an author's purpose. Students will also develop their ability to evaluate sources and think critically about the information they encounter, exploring essential questions such as, "How can we tell a reliable source from an unreliable one?" and "Why is it important to think critically about the content we consume?"



All of this learning will culminate in a thought-provoking essay where students respond to the prompt: "What is the most pressing issue facing your generation, and what can we do about it?"

Seventh Grade English Language Arts

Seventh graders wrapped up the first quarter by writing Personal Narrative Essays about a day they will never forget. Their writing focused on using transition words, sensory details, and dialogue to bring their stories to life.

As we begin the second quarter, students are diving into key grammar concepts such as prepositions, compound subjects and predicates, and compound and complex sentences. In early November, they will begin an Explanatory Essay, learning how to effectively cite textual evidence to support a claim. After Thanksgiving Break, students will read, analyze, and write about Charles Dickens' classic story "A Christmas Carol". We'll conclude the semester by comparing and contrasting the beloved text with its film adaptation. It's shaping up to be a fun and festive season filled with great learning!

Sixth Grade English Language Arts

Sixth grade ELA is off to a fantastic start this year! During the first quarter, students reviewed nouns, adjectives, and adverbs while writing personal narratives about growing up and their favorite childhood memories. They especially enjoyed sharing their stories and using vivid details to bring their writing to life.

As we move into the second quarter, students are diving into verbs—exploring action verbs, linking verbs, and verb tenses. Later this quarter, they'll apply their grammar skills to write an informative essay examining how animals and people interact. It's shaping up to be another exciting and engaging quarter in ELA!

Technical Education

Our Tech Ed students recently wrapped up the Introduction to Woodworking unit, where each student designed and built their own cell phone or tablet holder. Throughout the project, students gained hands-on experience using the drill press, miter saw, and band saw safely and effectively.

Next, we'll be diving into our 3D Printing and CAD unit. Students will learn to use Tinkercad, a computer-aided design program, to create and design a variety of 3D projects. Exciting innovation ahead!

Student Council

We wrapped up September with a Student Council conference in Minneapolis, where members heard an inspiring message from guest speaker Kate Garnes about perseverance and leadership. This month, STUCO helped organize our October pep rally, featuring motivational speaker Adri, who shared her story of overcoming challenges and finding strength through adversity.

Next up, STUCO will lead Red Ribbon Week from October 27–31, promoting healthy choices by handing out bracelets and prevention items during lunch. To end the month on a fun note, our Welcoming Committee will spread some Halloween cheer by passing out Dum Dums on the morning of October 31!

Girls Basketball

The middle school girls basketball season is off to an exciting start! This year, more girls tried out than we've seen in recent years, bringing energy, enthusiasm, and a strong turnout.

Practices will focus on building teamwork, skills, and confidence throughout the season.

The coaching staff is thrilled about the potential of this group and looks forward to seeing the players grow and develop both on and off the court as the season progresses.



Wrestling

We're excited to launch the 2025 SMS Wrestling season! The team will begin competition on November 4 with a road meet at Derby. Our Parent Meeting is scheduled for October 28 at 4:00 p.m., followed by an intrasquad scrimmage at 5:00 p.m. in Gym 1.

This year's roster includes approximately 45 wrestlers, featuring a strong group of returning eighth graders who bring experience and leadership. They'll be joined by a large group of first-year wrestlers, eager to learn and grow in the sport.

We can't wait to see our community cheering in the stands for our first home meet on November 11 at 4:30 p.m. Go Cougars!

Senior Activity Pass Information

Community members age 65 and older are invited to pick up a free Senior Pass from the district office. This pass provides complimentary admission to most regular-season athletic events and district activities throughout the year.

Please note that the Senior Pass is not valid for events held at Tony's Pizza Events Center or Kansas Wesleyan University.

To receive your pass, please visit the District Office, 1511 Gypsum Ave., in person during regular business hours. For more information, call (785) 309-4700.

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



Winter Weather Ahead

There may be days when the start of school is delayed because of weather. This option may be used if snowy roads could be cleared given a few hours or if wind chills are too low during early morning hours but temperatures are expected to warm up within a few hours. The advantage of a delayed start is that we can minimize the loss of instruction while maintaining the safety of students and staff.

Whether a school cancellation or a delayed start is announced, the district will communicate as soon as possible using its rapid notification system. Notifications will be sent to families and staff via phone, email and text.

Details of a delayed start:

- Bus routes: General education and special education bus routes will proceed on a 2-hour delay.
- Pre-K: Morning classes will be cancelled. Afternoon classes will run as normal.
- Foodservice: Breakfast will not be served and there will not be a choice lunch option at elementary schools.
- Elementary Band / Strings: Band / strings at elementary schools will be canceled.
- Heartland: a.m. Pre-K will be canceled. Breakfast will not be served.
- Salina Adult Education Center: All a.m. sessions and any GED testing scheduled for the day will be canceled.

Changes to the school schedule are not taken lightly. While calling cancellation and delayed-start days creates inconveniences for families and impacts instruction time, upholding the safety of students and staff is our top priority.

As always, the final decision about your student's safety is your. If you choose to keep your student at home when inclement weather occurs and school is in session, please contact the school attendance office and follow the procedures to report an absence.

Eighth Grade Parent Night

South High School's eighth grade Parent Night is Wednesday, December 3 at 6:15 p.m at South High School, the meeting will be held in the commons.

This meeting is intended for current eighth grade parents and guardians who will have a student transitioning to South High School for the 2026-27 school year. Counselors and administrators will be covering course options and enrollment procedures.

Building Bridges 2025

Join us for Building Bridges 2025, an event connecting community members, businesses, families, students, and educators to celebrate Career and Technical Education (CTE) in USD 305.

Enjoy student-led tours, project showcases, and delicious hors d'oeuvres prepared by our talented culinary students!

- When: Tuesday, November 11, from 3:30–5:00 p.m.
- Where: South High School, 730 E. Magnolia Rd.



We're Grateful for You!

As we head into Thanksgiving Break (November 24–28), we're thankful for our amazing students, families, and staff who help make every school day count.

Did you know that consistent attendance helps students feel connected, reduces stress, and builds a sense of belonging? Every school day offers valuable opportunities to learn, grow, and connect.

Let's keep showing up and growing together! If your family or child needs support, please reach out to your building's social worker for assistance.



Greatness Grows When You're Here, and we can't wait to see everyone back on Monday, December 1, 2025.

Thanksgiving Break

Thanksgiving Break will be observed Monday, November 24 through Friday, November 28.

School will not be in session and the offices will be closed.

We wish all our families a safe and eventful holiday.



Students of the Week

Week 5

Congratulations to Greyson Frazier for earning student of the week. Greyson is a seventh grader at South Middle School. At school, Greyson is involved in football, orchestra and guitar. His favorite subject is math because it challenges him to think deeply. Outside of school, he is involved in his church and plays baseball. After high school Greyson wants to go to college and study analytics. Some fun facts about him are that he has one brother, one sister, two dogs, two cats and he goes to church every Sunday.



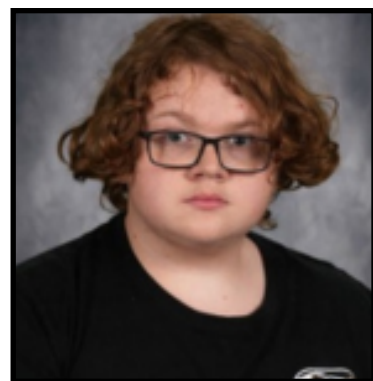
Week 6

Congratulations to Shealynn Main for earning student of the week! Shealynn is an eighth grader at South Middle School. She is involved in Sensations and advanced English. Her favorite part of school is seeing her friends, and her favorite class is Sensations because she loves to sing. Outside of school, she participates in gymnastics. After high school, she plans to go to college. Some fun facts about her are that she loves to read, she has three cats and three dogs and she has landed a back handspring.



Week 7

Congratulations to James Berens for earning student of the week! James is an eighth grader at South Middle School. His favorite part about school is guitar class because he enjoys playing and the teacher makes it fun. After high school, he plans on going to Salina Area Technical College to major in automotive technology. Some fun facts about him are that he is the youngest of five children, he has three brothers, one sister, one niece, one nephew, two cats and one dog.



Week 8

Congratulations to Betsy Blake for earning student of the week! Betsy is a seventh grader at South Middle School. She is involved in volleyball, band, guitar, FCA, StuCo, advanced reading and math. Her favorite part of school is the positive environment teachers create. Her favorite teacher is Mrs. Cooper because she engages with her students. Outside of school, Betsy plays softball, volleyball and she attends Church. She is unsure of her plans after high school. Some fun facts about Betsy are that she has one dog named Rowdy, a brother named Tate and she enjoys going to K-State football games.



Teacher of the Month

Congratulations to Sixth Grade P.E. teacher, Elijah Salmans for earning teacher of the month. Mr. Salmans creates a positive and structured learning environment where students are motivated to stay active and do their best. His engaging lessons, strong organization, and consistent routines help students develop teamwork, discipline and confidence.



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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
30 / 31	24	25	26	27	28	29

Important Dates in November

1 - League Honors Music @ Hutchinson
 7 - Eighth Grade CTE Pathway Fair
 7 - The City Quarter 1 PBIS Celebration
 19 - Site Council Meeting
 24 - 28 - Thanksgiving Break / No School

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



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.

'SOCIAL WORK

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2025

'SELF-CARE

As the holiday season approaches, many of us might begin to feel some added stress. It is a great time to check in with *yourself*. Recognize what you need to stay focused and to feel balanced from day to day or even moment to moment.

- It can be helpful to make a list of your tasks; something visual you can see and check off.
- After completing a task, take 3 minutes and practice a coping skill; deep breathing, mindfulness, or 5 senses exercise (from Oct. newsletter)
- Give yourself grace to take a break in your day and do an activity you might enjoy; reading, coloring, crafting, playing with a pet, yard work, or going for a walk.

Just a few minutes for yourself each day can make a supportive difference.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR THE HOLIDAYS AND MORE

- ***The Salvation Army Community Dinners, Free*** Wednesday-Friday 4:00-5:30p. 1137 N. Santa Fe
- ***The Ark: Free Grocery Giveaway-*** Saturday November 22, 8:45am. Dean Evans Stadium 851 Markley Rd
- ***The Salvation Army Thanksgiving Dinner,*** November 26th 4:00-5:30p. Drive Thru, 4 meals per car
- ***The Salvation Army Angel Tree,*** Apply in person or online Nov. 3rd-7th.

CONTACT INFO:

Social Worker: Rachel Mudloff

785-309-3854

rachel.mudloff@usd305.cOm

Can help with: Food assistance, Clothing & hygiene resources, Mental Health services, etc.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Nov 11: Veterans Day
- Nov 13: World Kindness Day
- Nov 14: National Pickle Day
- **Nov 24-28: No School**