

SOUTH

DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



CONNECT



DISCOVER



SUCCEED

SMS Falcon Character Theme



-December-



YOU HAVE A CHOICE
EACH AND EVERY SINGLE DAY.

I CHOOSE TO FEEL BLESSED.

I CHOOSE TO FEEL GRATEFUL.

I CHOOSE TO BE EXCITED.

I CHOOSE TO BE THANKFUL.

I CHOOSE TO BE HAPPY.

Thankfulness is the
beginning of
gratitude. Gratitude is
the completion of
thankfulness.
Thankfulness may
consist merely of
words. Gratitude is
shown in acts.

DAVID O. MCKAY

SHOWING GRATITUDE
IS ONE OF THE
SIMPLEST YET MOST
POWERFUL THINGS
HUMANS CAN DO FOR
EACH OTHER.

ATTITUDE
IS
every
THING.

Gratitude

CHOOSE
JOY

Express appreciation to others; Give a gift to someone; Be thankful for who you are and what you have; Share the goodness in your heart



As we approach this season of thankfulness, we want to take a moment to express how truly grateful we are for the incredible staff and students who make South such a special place. Every day, we see kindness, hard work, and a commitment to learning that inspires us all. This month, NJHS member **Brielle** invited South students to share what they are most thankful for in their lives. Their heartfelt responses have been turned into a beautiful display in the science wing, showcasing the many ways gratitude shines in our community. From family and friends to teachers and opportunities, our students remind us of the importance of appreciating the big and small things that make life meaningful.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to making South a supportive and caring environment. We are proud of our students and staff—and grateful for each of you!

Falcon Calendar

December 2 - Grade 7 Field Trip - UWEC Band Clinic

December 4 - CVTC Tours

December 10 - Grade 8 Field Trip - Guthrie

December 11 - Grade 8 Band Concert

December 18 - Grade 7 & 8 Orchestra Concert

December 19 - MID Quarter 2

December 19 - Dental Clinic

December 22 - Grade 5 Music Extravaganza

December 24 - January 2 - School Closed



December 24 - 25 - No School - All Buildings Closed

December 26 - 30 - No School

December 31 - January 1 - No School - All Buildings Closed



Deposit Dates:

December 4

December 11

December 18



December Concert Dates:

Band Grade 8
December 11

Orchestra Grade 7 & 8
December 18

Ski Trip
Dates



Friday, January 9

Friday, February 6

Friday, March 6

Students will be informed when sign ups are available during the morning announcements.

NorthLakes COMMUNITY CLINIC

The next Dental Clinic through NorthLakes Community Clinic will be held on Friday, December 19th. If you have any questions, please have your student contact Mrs. Stevens in Student Services, or call 715-852-5203 .





Principal's Corner

FALCON PRIDE

CONNECT

DISCOVER

SUCCEED

SMS Families:

At South Middle School, our motto—**Connect, Discover, and Succeed**—guides everything we do. We continue to expect our students to be **Respectful, Responsible, and Ready**, and we are proud of the progress we've made together as a school community. This month, we want to celebrate some incredible achievements and share important updates.

Our **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction School Report Card** results are in, and we are thrilled to announce that over the past three years, South Middle School has grown **10.9 points** and improved in nearly every area. We are just shy of the "Exceeding Expectations" category. This success is a direct reflection of the strong shared practices among our staff and the outstanding work ethic of our students. Thank you to our families for supporting learning at home—your partnership makes a difference every day.

Finally, we are pleased with the successful rollout of the **Speak Up, Speak Out** safety initiative. This tool empowers students to report concerns and helps us maintain a safe and supportive environment. Please continue to encourage your child to use the app or make a report to a trust adult if they see or hear something that could impact safety. Together, we can ensure South Middle School remains a place where every student feels secure and ready to learn.

From all of us at South Middle School, we wish you and your family a joyful holiday season and a Happy New Year! Thank you for being an essential part of our school community—we look forward to continuing our journey of growth and success in 2026.

Caleb Hundt

South Middle School Principal

chundtl@ecasd.us

O- 715.852.5210

C- 715.492.2577

R³ Award Recipients

South Middle School
Proudly presents
2025-2026 Quarter 1 Grade 6

 **R³ Award** 

CONGRATULATIONS!

South Middle School
Proudly presents
2025-2026 Quarter 1 Grade 7

 **R³ Award** 

			
 No Photo			
			
CONGRATULATIONS!			

At the end of the quarter, the **R³ Award** is presented to students who consistently follow South's core principles of **Respect, Responsibility, and Readiness**. To be eligible, students must have zero major behavior infractions and no missing assignments. Staff nominations ensure that these students are acknowledged for their dedication and positive contributions to our school community.

SOUTH 
MIDDLE SCHOOL

Connect • Discover • Succeed

South Middle School
Proudly presents
2025-2026 Quarter 1 Grade 8

 **R³ Award** 

CONGRATULATIONS!



**Quarter TWO
Sports Season**

November 3- January 15

Boys Basketball (Grade 7-8)
Dance (Grade 6-8)
Girls Swimming (Grade 6-8)



TO ORDER:

- Scan the QR Code
- jostens.com/btsoffers
- 1 (877) 767-5217
- Or click the [LINK](#)



Order Your 2025 Yearbook Today!

Capture the memories of this school year with our official 2025 Yearbook!
Secure your copy today and ensure your student has a keepsake they'll treasure for years to come.
Let's make this year unforgettable!



SFAC (South Falcon Advisory Council)

The South Falcon Advisory Council (SFAC) is a parent group supporting the work of SMS and our mission of Connect | Discover | Succeed. The primary goal of the SFAC is to open dialogue about strengthening the home-school connection to improve educational experiences for all students. We are very appreciative of the work of the SFAC and

continue to seek new members. Contact our Building Secretary, Rhonda Pederson, (715-852-5289) for more information.



April 6
June 8

Meeting are held in the Media Center, room C203 at South Middle School 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM.

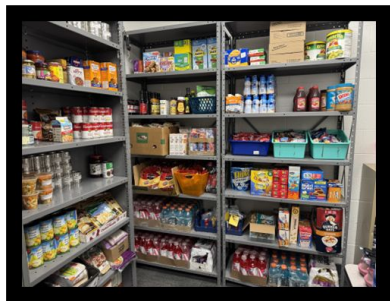
All are Welcome!!

Falcon FOODS



The South Middle School works with Feed My People Food Bank to provide nutritional support to our families who are challenged with having enough food in their cupboards for everyone in their family to thrive. To access our food pantry, an adult must fill out this confidential order form each time (paper copies available by request). Students may fill this out with an adult at school as needed. Form must be submitted every Monday by 8AM for the week the family would like to receive items. Orders may be picked up on Tuesday-Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm, inside door 1 of the Attendance Office. Bags will be marked with your student ID number and initials. Should you have questions or want a physical order form, please contact South Middle School Social Worker, Ms. Austin Kruger at 715-852-3417 or akruger@ecasd.us.
<https://forms.office.com/r/fbatjZxMZx>

Falcon Foods Order Form



Falcon Foods Pantry – Donations Always Welcomed

Our Falcon Foods pantry is always accepting donations to support students and families in need.

We are especially in need of **individually packaged snacks** such as granola bars, crackers, fruit snacks, and trail mix—perfect for quick nourishment during the school day. Non-perishable food items and hygiene products are also appreciated. Thank you for helping us keep our pantry stocked and our Falcons supported!



FORM LINKS:

[Permission Slip](#)

Rental Form will
be available after Thanksgiving



Mid quarter is December 19 all late work is due January 5, 2026



Thank You, 8th Grade South Families!

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our 8th grade families for your generous donations and support for this year's Veterans Day program. Your contributions helped us honor our veterans in a meaningful way, and we are truly grateful for your continued involvement in making this event special for our students and community.

Ski Trip Sign-Up Information

Ski trip sign-ups will be available on a **first come, first served** basis. To secure a spot, students must submit a **permission slip**, **rental form** (if renting skis or a snowboard), and **payment** at the time of sign-up.

Forms will be distributed the week of **December 1**, and **sign-ups officially begin on Monday, December 8**. Please note: once the bus is full, no additional forms will be accepted.

Trips take place on Fridays, with students dismissed at the start of **Falcon Time** and returning to school by **10:00 PM** the same evening.





ROYAL
CREDIT
UNION

MIDDLE SCHOOL

COMING UP...

RCU at South is getting in the holiday spirit! This December, we'll have a fun holiday-themed activity with a money twist. Stop by the teller stand in the cafeteria to join in — it's the perfect way to celebrate, learn, and maybe even earn a prize!

HOURS:

RCU at South is open every Thursday, before school in the cafeteria. Stop by the RCU teller stand to make a deposit of at least \$0.50 to earn a prize!

Royal Credit Union at South!



4 SMART TIPS FOR A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY SEASON

The holidays are fun—but they can also get expensive and a little tricky. Here are four ways to stay on top of your spending and avoid scams this season:

1. 🎯 **Set a Budget**
 - Think ahead and decide how much you want to spend.
 - Include gifts, travel, food, and decorations.
 - Keep track so you don't go overboard.
2. 👁️ **Keep an Eye on Your Spending**
 - Give yourself a limit for each person on your gift list.
 - Use a budgeting app or a simple spreadsheet.
 - Save your receipts and adjust if needed.
3. 🛒 **Shop Smart**
 - Compare prices before buying.
 - Look for deals, coupons, and sales.
 - Homemade gifts or gift swaps can be awesome and affordable.
4. 🚫 **Watch Out for Scams**
 - Only shop on secure websites (look for the lock symbol 🔒 and "https").
 - Don't click on sketchy ads or links

If your student would like to sign up for our program, follow this link to open an account www.rcu.org/schoolaccounts.

We welcome your questions about Royal Credit Union and how you can get your student started saving at school.

*Happy
Holidays*

Please contact Rachel Orlovsky at rachel.orlovsky@rcu.org with any questions.



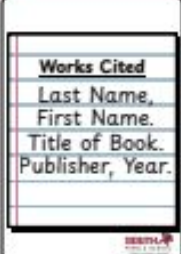
These are our twelve “Power Words” that often confuse students. This list is intended to help you:

- Better understand what each question means
- Become familiar with words that require higher-order thinking skills
- Relieve test anxiety and improve achievement

For students to reach their full potential, we will:

- Use these words daily
- Ask students to use the words in written responses
- Ask students to make up questions utilizing these words
- Include these words in activities and assessments to make students more familiar with them



Analyze	Cite	Compare
- To break apart into pieces - Look at it closely and think it through - Interpret/explain in detail 	To give credit to the source by using examples, quotes, or details from the text 	- Tell ALL the ways they are the <u>same</u> - How are they <u>alike</u>? 
Contrast	Describe	Explain
- Tell ALL the ways they are <u>different</u> - How are they <u>not</u> the same? 	- Tell about it - Give details - Paint a picture with words 	- Tell the steps - Make something easy to understand by describing it 
Evaluate	Formulate	Infer
- Judge it! - Tell the good and bad - Form opinions and develop ideas from text 	- Create - Put together 	- Read between the lines - Look at clues, use experience, and background knowledge - Draw a conclusion about the topic, event, or person in the text based on evidence 
Predict	Summarize	Support
Make an educated (smart) guess using evidence from the text 	- Tell the main idea - Tell the beginning, middle, and end 	- Back up the information - Prove - Provide evidence 

WSMA State Honors Orchestra PHOTOS



Congratulations to the following students for representing South Middle School in Madison. These students won a highly competitive state-wide audition to perform in Madison during the annual Wisconsin Music Educators Convention last week.

2025 Wisconsin School Music Association's State Honors Orchestra Members from South Middle School...

Middle Level Honors Orchestra:

Bruce Yoon (9th Grade-Violin), Emily Larson (9th Grade-Cello) , Kate Pacho (8th Grade-Violin)



Red Ribbon Week PHOTOS



Students say no to drugs during Red Ribbon week!



Veteran's Day PHOTOS



Thank you
veterans!

Patriot's Pen

"How Are You showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?"



AUBREY

8th Grade Essay Winner



Young Sherlock PHOTOS



On November 6 South students performed Young Sherlock for the public. Congratulations to all who contributed to the production.

AVID Field Trip



AVID Students visited the Emergency Services Education Center at CVTC. They learned about FireMecic, Paramedic, and EMT, Criminal Justice, and Criminal Justice Law Enforcement Academy programs.



Student
★ Council ★

Student Council PR Committee



South's Student Council PR Committee recently visited Manz and Meadowview Elementary Schools. Our members enjoyed creating festive "harvest hands" and engaging first- and second-grade students in conversations about gratitude and the importance of sharing thanks.



Navigating the Holiday Season: Tips for Parents



The holidays can be a joyful time, but they also come with a fair share of stress. Here are some practical tips to help families stay grounded, connected, and organized during the festive season:

1. Keep Routines as Consistent as Possible

Children thrive on routine. While holiday events can disrupt schedules, try to maintain regular meal times, bedtimes, and homework habits to provide stability.

2. Set Realistic Expectations

Not every moment has to be picture-perfect. Focus on creating meaningful memories rather than striving for perfection. Let go of comparisons and embrace your family's unique way of celebrating.

3. Involve Kids in Planning

Let children help with decorating, baking, or choosing activities. This gives them a sense of ownership and can reduce resistance to changes in routine.

4. Practice Gratitude

Encourage children to reflect on what they're thankful for. Consider starting a gratitude jar or having a nightly "thankful moment" to keep the spirit of the season alive.

5. Budget Wisely

Holiday spending can add up quickly. Set a budget and stick to it. Focus on expensive gifts—family game nights, movie marathons, or volunteering together can be just as memorable.

6. Manage Screen Time

With time off school, screen time can creep up. Set boundaries and encourage offline activities like crafts, reading, or outdoor play.

7. Take Care of Yourself

Parents need support too! Make time for rest, connect with friends, and don't hesitate to ask for help. A calm parent helps create a calm home.

8. Stay Connected with School

Check in on school communications for updates on events, deadlines, and return-to-school dates. Staying informed helps reduce last-minute stress.



SOUTH LINKS



CONNECT



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[Lunch Menu](#)

[ECASD Family
Service Website](#)

[South Middle
School Website](#)

[My School Bucks](#)

*Check balance and deposit
money into your child's lunch
account.*

[ECASD School
Calendar](#)

[Community
Events](#)

[Family Tech
Support
Information](#)

[Skyward Family
Access](#)



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