



August 2023

News From the Nest

South Middle School | 2115 Mitscher Ave | Eau Claire, WI | 54701 | 715-852-5200

Hello South Families:

Thank you all for welcoming me to South Middle School. I am excited to be a Falcon and hope to meet as many of you as possible in our time together. Thank you for your continued efforts and for simply being a part of our great school system! I am excited about the school year ahead and cannot wait to see what we are able to accomplish day in and day out. As a school, we will always aim our focus on providing a great experience for everyone. We hope to provide the best environment for YOU!

We will focus on improvement and getting better, and are thankful for everyone who is taking part in our students' successes. Our teaching staff and administration want you and your family to know that we will always be there for you. We hope you feel valued and begin to understand the importance of showing up to school every day, of working together, and focusing on the positive things in your lives. We promise to work hard and be nice and hope you will too!

If we as a school community all use our energy with these values, we cannot go wrong. As we continue to improve our school and make necessary changes to grow, please reach out to myself, a teacher, or a trusted adult with any questions or concerns you may have.

The following document is meant to provide you with some important events and dates coming up and to help you get ready for your school year.

Have a GREAT rest of your summer and THANK YOU for being a Falcon!



Caleb Hundt

South Middle School Principal

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He, Him, His

**WORK HARD
BE NICE**
 [@hundtcaleb](https://twitter.com/hundtcaleb) [#GoFalcons](https://twitter.com/GoFalcons)



SAVE THE DATES!

Athletic Sports Meeting

August 16, 2023 – 6:00pm

Students interested in participating in a SMS sport must attend this meeting with a parent/guardian. Fall sports include football, soccer (6,7, & 8 grade), girls' tennis, volleyball, and cross country (6, 7, & 8 grade)

New to the Nest tours

August 22, 2023 - 11:00 AM

Welcome to SMS! There will be an informational meeting for All New to SMS 7th and 8th graders. Any new students and families are welcome to attend. Students will receive information about:

- ✓ School Schedule
- ✓ Given a tour of SMS
- ✓ Open lockers

If you have any questions, please email counselor Ms. Roberta Kostka, at rprokopkostka@ecasd.us

7th & 8th Grade Schedule Pick-up and Picture Day

August 29, 2023 -12:00-3:00 PM

Schedule pick-up and picture day for 7th & 8th grade students will be on August 29th. Parents are encouraged to bring their student sometime between 12:00-3:00 pm. Students will report to the gym to pick up their schedule and have their photo taken for their school ID and yearbook. All 7th and 8th grade students will receive their locker on the first day of school.

6th Grade Family Night

August 29, 2023 - 5:30 pm

Welcome 6th graders! Transitioning to middle school is an exciting time for students and families. Here at SMS our staff want to ensure that all incoming students begin the year feeling confident about their first days at middle school. Our 6th grade staff has designed this evening with that need in mind. We encourage families to attend together, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Students and families will receive information about:

- ✓ School Schedule
- ✓ Using your school planner
- ✓ Opening lockers
- ✓ Lunch time procedures
- ✓ Fee payments
- ✓ Getting to know staff

★ 6th grade students will have special activities the first two days of school to help transition to our building. Details will be shared at Family Night. School pictures for school ID and yearbook will be taken.

Reminder: ALL students need ID cards

All students should get an ID picture taken during their back-to-school event on August 29. Students do not need to purchase pictures but will be given an ID card for library and textbook checkout. Parents wishing to order pictures from Lifetouch can order online at www.my.lifetouch.com PICTURE DAY ID: EVTN3F2DT.

*Photo retake day is scheduled for October 5, 2023.

FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES -Please note: All schools closed

Family/Teacher conferences will be held at SMS in the fall and spring

FALL: Thursday, October 12, 2023 (7:45 am-8:15 pm)

SPRING: Thursday, February 29, 2024 (7:45 am-8:15 pm)

***The entire 2023 - 2024 School Year Calendar can be found under Calendars on the ECASD website.**

ATTENDANCE

Attendance and academic performance are closely related. To benefit fully from the instructional program, all students are expected to attend school and to be on time for all classes. State law indicates that parents are responsible for reporting their child's absences to the school.



Attendance Procedures - Please call the school before 9:00 am stating the reason for the absence.

Calls can be made day or night; press "1" for "Attendance" and leave a message. If no call is made, the absence will be recorded as unexcused until a note or call is received.

- ✓ Please arrange any foreseen absence. Students must check out of and into the attendance office when leaving or arriving back to school. SMS's phone number is 715-852-5200;
- ✓ Students who arrive after 7:30 am must check into the Attendance Office before reporting to class. You may earn a detention after three unexcused tardies;
- ✓ If you are absent on the day of an extra-curricular activity, you will not be allowed to participate in that activity.

Ways parents can help:

- ☺ Encourage good attendance from day one;
- ☺ Plan to attend every day;
- ☺ Encourage routines that allow for homework, hobbies, and interests, but which also encourage a healthy sleep pattern;
- ☺ Be on time;
- ☺ Do not excuse unnecessary absences.

Student Services – Counselor Assignments

GRADE 6 - Mike Polzer, mpolzer@ecasd.us

GRADE 7 - Roberta Kostka, rprokopkostka@ecasd.us

GRADE 8 - Maggie Kison, mkison@ecasd.us

Please call with questions and/or to set up an appointment with a counselor to assist with scheduling issues, 715-852-5200. Check out the [Student Services webpage](#) for more information.

2023 - 2024 SMS Teams

All SMS students are assigned a team. Team assignments will be provided during the students' back-to-school event.

SMS Web Page

The SMS web page is a valuable source of information for happenings at SMS. If you want to know specific dates for performances, athletic events, conferences, and school closings check the web page at <http://www.ecasd.us/South-Middle-School/Home>.

It is important to check often as event additions, deletions and corrections are made throughout the school year.

SMS Apparel Sale

SMS apparel will be made available again. Watch for a Skyward message with a link to order merchandise and/or a clothing order form will be available for those who do not want to order online.

Yearbooks!



2023-24 yearbooks may be purchased online at Jostens. The Back-to-School purchase price is \$23.00, and it will increase as the school year progresses. Buy early to save money! <https://jostensyearbooks.com/?REF=A09284600>

South Falcon Advisory Council (SFAC)

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 Partnership Coordinator (715-852-5207) for meeting dates and times.

CAMP MANITOU

Attention 6th Grade Parents:

Our annual Spring Camp Manitou Field Trip will now occur in the Fall. The dates will be Wednesday, September 27th – Thursday, September 28th for Team K and Thursday, September 28th – Friday, September 29th for Team J. We are looking for adult volunteers to help during the day and/or stay overnight. More information, including which Team your child will be on, will be available on 6th grade orientation night on August 29, 2023



SMS Partnership Coordinator

Our Partnership Coordinator (PC) is Jen Whatley. Jen can assist families with questions or concerns. Feel free to contact her at 715-852-5207. A valuable way to stay informed with current SMS news, events and volunteer opportunities is to check out the [Partnership Newslette](#) that is sent electronically bi-weekly to each parent email. When you update your email in Skyward Family Access you will receive news and other important communications we want to share with our SMS families. You can easily change your email on your Skyward Family Access page or contact SMS at 715-852-5200.

SMS 2023-24 Bell Schedule

2023-24 South Middle School Bell Schedule		
Period 1	7:30-8:22*	52 minutes
Period 2	8:25-9:15	50 minutes
Period 3	9:18-10:08	50 minutes
Period 4	10:11-11:01	50 minutes
Period 5	11:04-12:34	60 minutes
Lunch A	Lunch B	Lunch C
11:02-11:32 Lunch	11:04-11:33 Class	11:04-12:04 Class
11:34-12:34 Class	11:33-12:03 Lunch	12:04-12:34 Lunch
	12:04-12:34 Class	
Period 6	12:37-1:26	49 minutes
Period 7	1:29-2:18	49 minutes
FT	2:21-2:51	30 minutes

*Pledge and announcements



TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

2023-2024 Meal Information

Information about menus, free & reduced breakfast and lunch, meal pricing, etc. will be available in the Food and Nutrition section of the District mailing or checking the [ECASD Food and Nutrition page](#) as it becomes available.

The Eau Claire Area School District Food and Nutrition Program uses a prepayment system. For convenience, ease, and speed through the meal service line, we encourage parents to pre-pay for meals by:

- ✓ Using www.myschoolbucks.com and paying by credit or with debit card
- ✓ Sending a check to school with your student
- ✓ Sending cash to school with your student (no change will be given to students-any excess funds will be put on their account)

If you send cash or a check, please place it in an envelope and include your student's name, grade, and PIN number on the envelope. We are not able to accept credit or debit card payments over the phone or at the point-of-service. Students may also pay cash at the point-of-service.

All money remaining in student accounts at the end of the school year will remain in that account over the summer unless a parent requests a transfer of the money to another student (sibling) within the ECASD or a refund of the money. Parents requesting transfers or refunds may contact: 715-852-3061 or email pcampbell1@ecasd.us

Breakfast is served from 7:10 – 7:25 each morning. One of the best tools to help students succeed is to make sure they eat a healthy breakfast. We encourage all students to eat a nutritious breakfast whether at school or home.

Lunch options: Students can choose to bring lunch from home, eat from our school lunch program and/or purchase items from our ala carte line.

Weekend Meal Program

The Eau Claire Area School District offers Weekend Kid's Meals to all students. The program's purpose is to provide food for your child for the weekend when school meals are unavailable, and it is offered through Feed My People Food Bank. The food is at no cost to you or your child and there are no income guidelines or requirements. Any student can participate and withdraw from the program at any time. ***Please be aware that meals are not screened for students with food allergies.*** If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact SMS's Partnership Coordinator at 715-852-5207.

[Click here](#) to sign up or check the ECASD [Weekend Kids Meals webpage](#) for more information.

We Care Eau Claire



This year's, We Care Eau Claire, event is scheduled for Monday, August 21, from 4:30-7:30 pm, at Phoenix Park.

This event is for ECASD families needing assistance with back-to-school supplies. Learn more about We Care Eau Claire by visiting their website at www.wecareeauclaire.com or find the event on Facebook.

Health Information

ECASD nurses welcome you and your child to middle school! The nurse's office is across from Student Services. Hours vary and students can check with the Student Services secretary for availability. School nurse information can be found on the [Student Services page](#) under the Departments' tab of the district website. SMS school nurse can be reached at (715)852-5270 or contact SMS.

State Law requires that all immunizations be up to date within 30 days of entering the school system. New students will be asked to complete the immunization card at registration; all others are requested to notify the school when your child receives additional immunizations. Please take the opportunity to take care of this prior to the start of school.

Immunization Requirements for incoming 6th graders - Tdap & Varicella, dose 2

Waivers for personal, religious or health reasons remain an option for parents. If you have any questions, please contact your school nurse or family physician.

Medications - Allergies, Asthma, ADHD, Cardiac Conditions, Diabetes, and Seizure Conditions.

All medical forms and health plans must be updated at the start of each school year as they do not carry over from year to year. Diet modifications are good for the duration of the student's enrollment in the ECASD.



ECASD Medication Procedures:

When medications are needed during the school day, [ECASD policy and guidelines](#) must be followed. These guidelines are in place for the protection of all students.

For ANY medication (prescription or over the counter, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen) to be allowed in school, a completed [Medication Management form](#) with authorization by physician/licensed prescriber and parent/guardian must be on file with the school nurse.

There are two options of medications at school:

- 1) Parents can request that the medication be administered by a school staff member. The completed form must be returned to the school nurse before administering the medication.
- 2) Students can carry their own medication. This is not the encouraged practice, but it is allowed if these guidelines are followed:
 - a) ECASD Medication management form-written authorization by a physician/licensed prescriber and parent/guardian must be on file with the school nurse. The physician must indicate on the form that the student can carry and self-administer the medication. The completed form must be returned to the school nurse before the student carries the medication.
 - b) Each prescribed medication must be in its own pharmacy labeled package which includes the student's name, current date, the correct dosage, time to be taken and physician/licensed prescriber's name. Nonprescription medications are to be supplied in the original manufacturer's container that lists the ingredients and recommended dose.

Skyward Family Access



Skyward Family Access is a real-time, secure internet-based website that will allow you to view your student's information. Family Access will help you stay informed about your students' progress with grades, calendars, messages, schedules, and other valuable information. Only one account is needed even if you have multiple students in the district.

To obtain your username and password, you can click on the SKYWARD link at the top of all pages on our website and choose the "Forgot login/password". If your account has an email associated with it, you will receive an email with your login information. If you do not have an email address associated with your account, you will need to contact SMS at 715-852-5200. You can also contact the District Enrollment Office for assistance at 715-852-3063.

Family and Emergency Information

It is essential SMS has up-to-date contact and emergency information in Skyward for students. Skyward Family Access gives parents/guardians the ability to make on-line changes to information such as phone numbers, emails, and emergency contacts. If you prefer, or do not have computer access, call SMS at 715-852-5200. If you need to change your address, DPI and ECASD policy requires you to email proof of residency (such as a lease, mortgage statement, utility bill, or other documentation showing guardian name and address) to enrollment@ecasd.us. If the address changes to where your child will attend school, you may need to complete additional documentation. Please contact the ECASD Enrollment Office at (715) 852-3063 for more information.

School Supply List for 2023 – 2024

The supply list can be found on the SMS website. Click on the Back-to-School Information tab—[School Supply List](#).

Student Planners

Student planners will be issued to students during the first week of school. This is a powerful tool for students and for communication between school and home. We also include the Parent/Student Handbook in the front section of the student planner and on the SMS web site.

After School Study Help

SMS holds an After School Study Club in the library on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 3:00-3:45. Students can work on homework or quietly in groups. Staff will be available to assist students. Study Club usually begins the 3rd week of September.

Locker Know How



Each student is assigned a locker for use during the school day. Students keep school materials and personal items in their lockers. It is important to shut lockers tight and keep locker combinations private. Unfortunately, sometimes personal items are stolen because they are not locked up. This can occur in the PE locker rooms and in the hall lockers. We strongly urge students not to have phones, electronic games, etc. at school at all. However, if they are at school, they must be off and stored in their backpack or locker during the school day.

Dress Code (Board Policy 443.1)

The District recognizes that each student's mode of dress is an expression of personal style and individual preference. Therefore, responsibility for making student dress decisions will generally rest with the students themselves and their families, except when their choices cause a health or safety concern or interfere with the educational program or school operations.

To assure a healthy and safe school environment for students, the following student dress code guidelines will be enforced:

- ✓ No student shall be permitted to wear any clothing or jewelry that contains pictures and/or writing referring to alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, sexual references, profanity, promotion of gambling, illegal drugs and/or gangs. Clothing items that cause intimidation or disrupt the learning of others are prohibited. Students will not wear clothing that defames, insults, threatens, harasses, or injures any racial or cultural groups or individuals.
- ✓ Specific requirements may be necessary to assure safety in certain areas such as PE, art, band, science labs, kitchens, and technology education work areas, i.e., safety glasses, hair nets, etc.

This policy applies during the school day, in school vehicles, and at school sponsored activities. The building principal will inform staff, students, and families of this policy annually and provide for the fair and consistent enforcement of the policy.

If there is a disagreement between staff and students and/or their families regarding the appropriateness of a student's attire, the principal has the authority to make this decision and determine the actions that will be taken to deal with the matter.

Visitor access to the building

Our facility will be secured during the school day. Before school, Doors 1 and 6 are open for entrance into the building. After the start of the school day, all visitors entering the building will do so through Door 1. Those wishing to enter the school will ring the bell, be admitted and report directly to the attendance office to sign in. Our staff will be happy to assist you at that time. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe and secure facility by following these procedures.

Student Fees

ALL students wear a SMS PE T-shirt during physical education classes. Sports participants will wear their PE T-shirts for sports competitions as well. As a 6th grader you will receive one free SMS Athletics T-shirt. Additional shirts can be purchased for \$8.00.

Band, Orchestra and Choir students will receive one free T-shirt worn for performances. Fees are charged for instrument rental. Please contact your teacher for further information on prices.

Athletics participation requires that the student have a physical and emergency transportation card on file and up-to-date fees paid before they can practice. To learn more about Athletics, go to the SMS website and click Athletics. Fees may be paid online at myschoolbucks.com or may be turned in to the Board Office at 500 Main Street. All other forms go directly to the school or are submitted through RSchoolToday registration program.

Extra-curricular activities such as Forensics and Odyssey of the Mind also require the emergency transportation form to be completed and fees paid before they compete in any competition. To learn more about these and other student activities, click Activities on the SMS website.

Athletics

SMS offers a variety of team and individual sports throughout the year. All 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students are welcome to participate in our middle school athletic program. 6th grade students can participate in the programs marked with an asterisk (*).

Sports Seasons

QUARTER 1: Boys Soccer*, Cross Country*, Football, Girls Tennis, Volleyball

QUARTER 2: Boys Basketball, Dance*, Girls Swimming*

QUARTER 3: Boys Swimming*, Girls Basketball, Wrestling*

QUARTER 4: Boys Tennis, Girls Soccer*, Girls Softball, Track and Field

For information and directions on registering for a sport, please click on the following link [Intro to Middle School Athletics and Registration](#)

Essential information for all Sports! If your child is planning to participate in a SMS sport in the 2023-24 school year, please follow the steps below carefully:

- ✓ Step 1-Watch the 2023-24 Athletics Information Video
- ✓ Step 2-Visit the "Intro to Middle School Athletics and Registration" page on your school's website to register and pay for your athlete.
- ✓ Step 3-Save the date for the athletics meetings for your school in August (listed below). If your child plans to participate in an athletic offering, please plan to attend this meeting.

SMS Athletics Information Meeting- Wednesday, August 16th at 6:00PM

First quarter sports practice:

- ✓ First practice for grades 7 & 8, Monday, August 29, 2023, at 3:00 pm.
- ✓ First practice for grade 6, Friday, September 1, 2023, at 3:00 pm.
- ✓ Practices run from 3:00 – 4:30 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.
- ✓ Some sports (volleyball and basketball) require early/late practice due to the number of athletes and our facilities. These practices will run from 3:00-4:30 pm (early) and 4:30 – 6:00 pm (late).

Philosophy

All students have the right to participate in athletics regardless of their experience and ability level. SMS athletics is a “no cut” program and our coaches are expected to play everyone as equally as possible. Playing time could be adjusted if there are issues regarding attendance, attitude, effort, and cooperation.

Academic Eligibility

Each sport takes place during one academic quarter. Students involved in middle school athletics will be expected to follow the Middle School Athletic Code on our website. Students must maintain good behavior in school and must have passing grades in the academic quarter preceding participation (for example, a failing grade in 1st quarter will impact eligibility for 2nd quarter sport).

Questions regarding sports contact Justin Jablonske, Athletic Director jjablonske@ecasd.us

Policies and Procedures

Messages to your Student

We do our best to limit interruptions to classrooms during the school day, but we understand that unique situations do arise. We will work with you to deliver urgent or emergency communication. Please help us with this by ensuring your children are aware of special circumstances like appointments and/or pick-up arrangements that are out of the ordinary. If you need to leave a message, please contact our attendance office. Also, please encourage your child to finalize after school rides and/or activities with friends before coming to school.

Dropping Off/Picking Up Students - Safety is our number one priority!

The following procedures have been put in place to promote efficient and safe drop-off procedures both during school and after school hours. Please help us keep our parking lots and entrances safe!

Before School Drop Off

Parents who drop off/pick up students are to use the south entrance (lower parking lot by the flagpole and track).

The upper parking lot off Mitscher Ave. is reserved for Bus drop-off and pick-up and staff parking.

Students being dropped off before school (7:00-7:30am), can be dropped off at the front entrance (Door #1), on the south side of the building. Note: Students who are not involved in a supervised activity should not arrive at school before 7:10 am. When dropping off or picking up, please adhere to the following.

- ✓ Students should exit the vehicle as soon as the car arrives in the assigned student drop-off/pick –up area. This will allow 10-12 student vehicles to exit at once. Waiting for a car to get to a specific door causes issue in the line.
- ✓ Stay in your lane. Do not pull out and go around other vehicles.
- ✓ Do not use the parking rows to drop-off or pick-up students. This causes students to enter the traffic lane which is unsafe.
- ✓ When exiting the parking lot, please turn right.
- ✓ Please follow the No drop-off or pick up signs on Hester. If you would like to drop off your student outside of the parking lot, please drop off on Fairfax where your student can safely walk down the sidewalk.

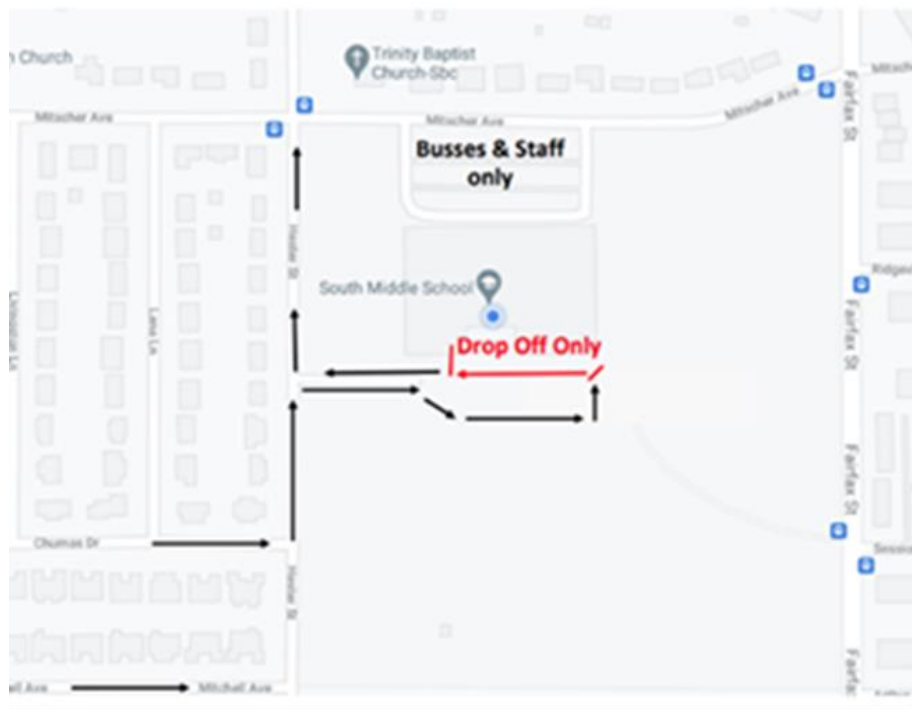
During School Drop Off

- ✓ During the school day (7:30 am-2:51 pm), students can be dropped off at the front entrance (Door #1)

After School Pick up

- ✓ Students picked up after school (between 2:51-3:05 pm) should be picked up in the front of the building (Door #1). Note: Students not involved in a supervised activity should be picked up by 3:05 pm.

No curbside parking in either lot: These are fire lanes that must be kept open for emergencies that may occur at school. Please park your vehicle in the stall if it is unattended. Applicable fines may be applied for parking in a fire lane. Please follow the traffic pattern as shown in the diagram below. Thank you for helping us ensure the safety of all!



Student Discrimination Complaints

If any person believes that the Eau Claire Area School District or any part of the school organization has failed to follow the law and rules of §118.13, Wis. Stats., the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title IX, Title VI, or Section 504 or in some way discriminates against students on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability he/she can bring or send a complaint to Kay Marks, Executive Director of Human Resources, 500 Main Street, Eau Claire, WI 54701. Ms. Marks can be contacted at 715-852-3051.

Complaints relating to the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of a free appropriate education of a child with a disability shall be resolved by procedures authorized in state and federal law. Also, complaints under federal law commonly referred to as EDGAR complaints (i.e., that the state or a subgrantee is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program) shall be referred directly to the State Superintendent of Schools.

To access any of the links in this publication, a copy of this newsletter is posted on the SMS website.

<http://www.ecasd.us/South-Middle-School/Home>