

South Lake Middle School

A Parent Guide
to our

Eighth Grade



Mission Statement

Every student learns.
Every student achieves.

Student Responsibility Program

South Lake Middle School's discipline plan focuses on a proactive, positive approach to misbehavior. The Responsibility Program process is one that teaches students to take responsibility for themselves by learning to think on their own, to respect the rights of others, to make effective plans, and to build self-confidence.



Cavaliers Caught Caring

Cavaliers Caught Caring – C³ - serves as a reward program for those students who exhibit a positive attitude, kindness toward others, and/or responsible behavior. The goal is to acknowledge those students who help maintain a friendly school atmosphere and promote good deeds amongst the student body. Staff members will pass out C³ tickets to those students who exhibit these exemplary behaviors. The student will place the ticket into her/his Team's C³ container for a drawing at the end of each month. Two names will be drawn and these students will receive prizes.

General Information

Report Cards/Progress Reports:

Report cards are mailed home after the end of each trimester. Progress reports are handed out at the Fall, Winter, and Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences; those not picked up will be mailed home.

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

School wide Parent/Teacher Conferences are held three times a year. The dates are listed in the annual school calendar. Individual teacher contacts can be made at anytime by calling the main office to get the team's schedule and make an appointment.

MEAP

Eighth grade students receive the English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science MEAP in October. The ELA assessment is in Reading and Writing.

Focus On The Middle:

FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE is the school's newsletter published each month. This newsletter includes a message from the Principal, school activities, and important dates to remember.

Parent Koffee Klatch:

Koffee Klatch is an informal gathering where parents are updated on the latest information about school, have the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, discuss concerns, and get to know one another. The Parent Koffee Klatches are held once each month on Thursday, one at 9:00 A.M. and the other at 6:30 P.M. on the same day in the Media Center.

Core Courses

English

- **Writing**

In 8th grade Language Arts, students will explore various aspects of writing in a Writer's Workshop format. Students will choose their own writing topics, as well as have topics assigned. There is also a focus on the conventions of writing, with the Daily Skills program, which addresses spelling rules, grammar and word studies.

- **Reading**

Students will read novels and short stories that connect with their Social Studies classes in order to provide a coordinated learning experience. The selections include science fiction, historical fiction, and realistic fiction. Informational reading will center on comparative essays, newspaper writing and technical writing.

- **Genre**

The genre study is historical fiction, science fiction, and realistic fiction

MARS - Reading

The MARS reading class is designed to assist students needing additional support with their reading skills. The class focuses on developing strong independent reading skills, improving oral reading fluency and building vocabulary. Students are recommended for this class by their 7th grade teachers, who base their decision on classroom performance, as well as MEAP scores. MARS Reading is a trimester long class.

Algebra

Students will learn to recognize algebraic patterns, apply, connect and extend their learning in real world problem situations in the following topics:

- Linear Functions
- Pythagorean Theorem and Square Roots
- Exponential Growth and Exponential Decay
- Quadratic Functions
- Systems of Equations and Inequalities
- Volume & Surface Area (Core)

- Transformations (Core)

MARS - Math

This program targets students who could benefit from further exploration of essential mathematical content. In eighth grade, the program focuses on alternative methods and approaches to help improve students' understanding of solving algebraic equations. Likewise, this course is intended to help ensure that students have the necessary basic algebraic skills necessary to be successful in future math courses.

Science

The goal for students is to:

- Conduct and Interpret Scientific Experiments
- Increase Awareness about the Natural World through Investigations
- Utilize Technology
- Generate Scientific Questions about the world based on observations

The following topics will be covered during the school year:

- Scientific Method – Question, Hypothesis, Procedure, Data, Conclusion
- Metric Measurement - Tools/Equipment
- Constructing Knowledge – Justification and Explanations of Knowledge
- Reflecting – Asking, Designing, and Analyzing Scientific Investigations
- Geosphere – Processes, Pollution, and Composition
- Hydrosphere – Identifying Watersheds, Human Activities, Identifying Maps
- Changes In Matter – Forms of Energy and their uses
- Atmosphere and Weather – Interactions between Atmosphere, Hydrosphere and Geosphere
- Solar System – Observing Star Systems and the Universe, Process of Formations and Inquiry

Social Studies

The eighth grade social studies program focuses on United States history from the post-Revolutionary era through 1900. Throughout the year, students study the following topics.

- The Core Democratic Values of Life, Liberty, Pursuit of Happiness, Justice, Common Good, Equality, Truth, Diversity, Popular Sovereignty, and Patriotism
- Review of the American Revolution
- The United States Constitution
- Civics in Action
- Expansion and Reform
- The Civil War
- Reconstruction through 1900

Foreign Languages

Mandarin

Mandarin- \ddot{s}

This class focuses on the pronunciation of Chinese, called Pinyin (\ddot{u} ó), and familiarizes students with the use of the four basic tones. They use æChengo Chinese \square (ØÎÉí), which is a multi-media E-language software program. With this software, students learn the most frequently used Chinese in daily life, as well as explore the rich and colorful Chinese culture. Mandarin is offered as part of the Global Studies program. The following are among the areas covered in Mandarin:

- Pinyin and four tones system in the Chinese language;
- How to read and write Chinese characters;
- How to use a Chinese dictionary;
- Vocabulary including colors, numbers, days, months and years among others;

- Conversational dialogues in daily life;
- Exploring Chinese culture, painting and other activities.

Students can earn credit toward their high school foreign language requirement with Mandarin 7 and 8.

Spanish

The following topics will be covered during the full school year course. Students can earn credit toward their high school foreign language requirement with Spanish 8.

- Basic vocabulary, including, but not limited to -
 1. Colors
 2. Numbers
 3. Classroom Objects
 4. House Words/Phrases
 5. Days and Months
- Alphabet
- Conversation Vocabulary
- Culture and geography are also incorporated when students learn about the different countries that speak the language and their customs/traditions.
- Music and projects, as well as many hands-on activities are used to enrich the lessons and vocabulary.

Fine Arts

Art

As eighth graders, students will continue their art education with more depth and focus than in previous years with the advantage of two different sections of Art being offered. With this, students have the ability to take Art for two of the three trimesters.

2-Dimensional Art

For this course, students will have the opportunity to focus their study of art to “flat” 2-dimensional techniques and media. Units for this class may focus on figure drawing, reductive charcoal techniques, various painting techniques, and printmaking.

3-Dimensional Art

Students enrolled in the 3-dimensional art course will work hands-on to construct sculptural pieces. Found object collage, papier mache, and ceramics may be areas of study.

Band

Students must have successfully participated in 7th grade Band in order to sign up for 8th grade Band.

Students will:

- Learn music that will be performed at a concert;
- Work on Marching Band Techniques in the Spring and participate in the Saint Clair Shores Memorial Day Parade;
- Work on skills and techniques required for the High School Band Classes;
- Practice at home for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week;
- Participate in Band Festival;
- Have the opportunity to participate in Solo and Ensemble.

Choir

Students must have successfully completed 7th grade Choir or have the consent of the choir teacher, to sign up for the 8th grade Choir. (An audition may be required.)

Students will:

- Participate in class everyday;
- Participate in two evening performances;
- Sing different styles of music including secular, sacred, classical and show;
- Learn how to evaluate and analyze the groups performances;
- Have an understanding of how to read music and sight-sing basic melodies.

Exploratories

Career Economics

This class is an online course where students complete and submit their assignments via the Michigan Virtual University Black Board Site. The course was developed through a partnership between the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Virtual University, with major funding provided by Microsoft Corporation's.

Students taking this course complete four modules that each focus on a different question regarding that students future. The four questions that are:

- What am I going to do with my life?
- What is the world of work like?
- What will I need to succeed?
- How do I match my interests with work?

To answer these questions students access two online career planning tools, CareerForward™ and MyDreamExplorer.

Overall, the nature of the work done in class provides students a chance to asses their personal future goals, evaluate their resources, get exposed to various careers, and learn how people get started down a path towards their careers.

Life Skills

Three units of study are presented during each trimester:

- Health, with specific information about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs;
- Foods, focusing on cooking that includes five projects: Cookies, Tacos, Pizza, Chicken Quesadillas and Baked Alaska;
- Sewing - Students learn how to sew either using the sewing machine or by hand. A project, chosen by the student, will be completed in school. Students should be fine tuning the skills that were taught in the 7th Grade Sewing Unit.

Math Tech

This 13 week course is designed to teach experimentation and analysis of numbers in a variety of ways using various technological methods with an emphasis on Microsoft Excel. Students will collect, analyze, display and report data findings in the form of written and oral presentations. Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher will be used to display data including a statistics project and a stock portfolio project.

Multi Media

This course is designed to give students the experience of creating the yearbook for the school, as well as exploring current events in the building and around the world. In creating the yearbook, students will:

- Develop better communication skills;
- Be able to better research and gather information;
- Be introduced to photojournalism and layout design;
- Learn advertising techniques for the sale of the yearbook;
- Learn how interpersonal work relationships comprise an important part of the learning experience.

In addition to focusing on journalism by publishing the school's yearbook, this class also studies video production through the VPN morning broadcast. Because of the nature of this class, there will be times that after school coverage will need to take place. It is also a deadline based class.

Physical Education

Physical Education

The curriculum emphasizes physical fitness, team and individual sports, and positive personal/social skills. Classes meet daily for one trimester. Students are expected to participate to the best of their ability in all class activities.

Students learn basic sport concepts and controlled games are used to reinforce the learned skills. In addition to sports activities, each week time is spent on physical fitness activities, such as cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, muscular strength, and muscular endurance.

Positive sportsmanship, teamwork, fair play, and respect for others are expected of all students.

Core Extensions

Core Extension classes provide an extension of the academic and exploratory classes. This enables students to review, enrich, and receive additional assistance in their subject

areas, as well as learn more in depth about units requiring more time and coverage. Core Extension is graded and based upon uniform expectations.

Student Support Services

Support Services are available to certified students, who are scheduled in a variety of classes:

- Self-Contained, which is a small class where students are instructed at their achievement level
- Collaborative, which is a regular education class with two teachers
- Teacher Consultant, which is a regular education class with a consultant checking weekly on the student

Guidance and Counseling

The following services are provided by the Guidance and Counseling Department:

- Individual Counseling - Social/Emotional/Behavioral Issues;
- Groups offered throughout the year-topics determined yearly;
- Referrals made to outside agencies;
- Mediation between students;
- Educational Development Plans for 8th grade students;
- Substance Abuse Awareness/Prevention;
- Skill Building;
- Academic Counseling/Planning;
- Scheduling;
- Weekly Progress Report Coordination;

- Assembly Coordination;
- Summer School Requirement and Attendance Coordination.

Media Center

The Media Center has an open door policy. Students may come to the Center at almost any time if they have a pass from their teacher. Computers are available for student use in the Center proper. There is also a computer lab adjacent to the Center, which is for classroom use only. Classes come to the Center for book selection during Learning Center, Core Extension, and after school. Classes are also scheduled into the Center for research.

The Center uses the student's ID card for checkout on its automated system. Books may be checked out for two weeks and may be renewed. Magazines and some reference books can go out overnight.

Mentoring After School Help

The Mentoring After School Help/Homework (M.A.S.H.) is available to all students who wish to receive additional help with class assignments or homework. A tutor and additional staff are present to assist students as needed.

M.A.S.H. meets Mondays through Thursdays, from 3:00 p.m. until 3:50 p.m., with the exception of scheduled half days. Students must sign in upon arrival and prior to 3:10 p.m.; they are to sign out upon dismissal. A pass is required for the student to be admitted after 3:10 p.m. Students must have homework or assignments to work on in order to attend.

Homework Help Night

Homework Help Night is designed to assist not only students who are at risk with their grades, but also those who are having difficulty completing their homework

assignments during the week. Using this program provides an additional tool for students who need extra time and guidance to learn and find success in their work.

Students who are asked to attend Homework Help Night participate in a written agreement between the teacher, student, and parent. A student may be asked to attend Homework Help Night by initiation of an individual teacher, counselor, or parent.

It is scheduled for two Wednesdays each month, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Parents must escort and sign in their child. Upon completion of Homework Help Night, a parent or guardian must personally check the student out with the supervising teacher.

Extra Curricular Activities

Sports

SLMS is a member of the Macomb Metro League Conference and offers the following competitive sports for 8th grade:

- Basketball - Boys and Girls
- Football – Coeducational
- Track
- Volleyball - Girls

A physical is required before any student can participate in any of the sports.

Student Council

The Student Council works throughout the school year to serve the school and community. Council members organize such activities as charity initiatives, pep rallies, and school dances. Representatives are elected by their peers in their Core Extension classes at the beginning of the school year.

Youth Center

The Youth Center is an after school program that provides students with the opportunity to participate in enrichment, study, and extra curricular activities. Examples of these activities are Science Olympiad, The Melting Pot, National Junior Honor Society, South Lake Misses (Dance Group), Homework Help Night and M.A.S.H. Activities such as Art Studio Workshop, Intramural Soccer, Board Games, Chess Club, Puppet Theatre and Jazz Band are contingent upon parent and staff volunteers.