

Salina South Middle School



7th & 8th Grade Course Options & Descriptions



Several of our classes are electives. This means the student may choose one course over another one also available.

Some electives carry with them the expectation the student will participate in out-of-school activities. These activities are designed to enhance the student's learning and add to the success of the class activities. Failure to participate in course-related, out-of-school activities could result in a grade reduction for the student. Courses that require an additional outlay of funds are noted in the course descriptions.

ART - Students will learn about famous artists and their styles and techniques. The students will experience a wide range of mediums, including drawing, painting, pottery throwing, and more. This class is an elective choice for students in both **7th & 8th grades**.

8TH GRADE BAND - Students in this performance activity may march in a parade in Salina on a weekday or weekend, march at one of the South High School home football games, and participate in evening performances at South Middle School during the fall, winter, and spring. Students may also participate in a music festival, with the possibility of performing a solo or in a small ensemble. Renting or purchasing an instrument may be a sizable financial investment for the family.

7TH GRADE BAND - Students in this full year course will play a brass instrument, wind instrument, or drums. Students in this course participate in evening performances at South Middle School during the fall, winter, and spring. Students may also participate in a music festival, with the possibility of performing a solo or in a small ensemble. Renting or purchasing an instrument may be a sizable financial investment for the family.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE - The students will learn skills that empower individuals and strengthen families. Subject areas emphasized include: Human Relations, Consumerism, Employability, Interior Design, Goal Setting, as well as Cooking and Nutrition & Wellness. A unit on careers will help students prepare for the future. Students will practice refusal skills to help avoid risky behavior. Additional units include Bullying & Self-Esteem. Students are required to buy materials and complete a sewing project, while learning positive work habits. This class is an elective choice for students in both **7th & 8th grades**.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE II - The students will learn skills that empower individuals and strengthen families. Subject areas emphasized include: Child Development, Consumerism, Employability, as well as Cooking and Nutrition & Wellness. Additional units include a Business Model centered on a food truck and "Things We Wish 8th Graders Would Know." Students will practice refusal skills to help avoid risky behavior. Students are required to buy materials and complete a sewing project, while learning positive work habits. This class is an elective choice for students in the **8th grade who have successfully completed FACS**.

GENERAL MUSIC - The General Music class will explore the many aspects of music including drumming, guitar, and piano. Students will learn the basics of reading and writing music, and will also explore music history and the music of today. This class is an elective choice for students in both 7th & 8th grades.

GUITAR - The Guitar class is designed for students who would like to take their guitar playing skills to the next level. Students will learn all chords in first positions, notes in first position, improvisation skills, new right hand techniques, and also many different popular songs on the guitar. The class will play on guitars furnished by the school, but it is encouraged that students have their own guitar at home to practice. Students may use a guitar that belongs to the school on a first come first serve basis as they are available. It will be expected that students practice a minimum of 1 hour on their own outside of school each week and will be tested on their progress. The class will give a performance at the conclusion of the semester. Student in the class will be required to purchase a music book. This class is an elective choice for students in both 7th & 8th grade.

ADVANCED GUITAR - The Advanced Guitar class is designed for students who have mastered the techniques taught in the first-year Guitar class. It will be expected that students practice a minimum of 1 hour on their own outside of school each week and will be tested on their progress. The class will give a performance at the conclusion of the semester, as well as a number of additional outside performances. Student in the class will be required to purchase a music book. This class is an elective choice for students in the 8th grade and have completed the first-year Guitar class. Due to limited enrollment, selection will be based on those students who are ready to take their skills to the next level.

7TH AND 8TH GRADE ORCHESTRA - The orchestra classes are divided between a 7th and an 8th grade group for experienced string players, which meets each day. Orchestra performs evening concerts in the winter and spring. The orchestra also participates in the Western Kansas Orchestra Festival, which is an out-of-town, overnight trip and the Hays City Music Festival where students have the opportunity to perform solos and small ensembles. Students should have purchased and instrument by this time, unless they play cello or bass players.

SELECT CHOIR (SENSATIONS) - Students must audition to be in this full-year class. The 8th grade select choir performs throughout the city, and state for many organizations. Performances occur during the day and evening. Concerts are given at South Middle School during the fall, winter, and spring. Special performance apparel is required at an additional cost to the student.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION - Students will learn to work with basic hand tools and some power tools in a safe and productive manner. Students will construct several small projects using different materials and processes. The projects constructed will go home with the students. Measuring skills will be taught, along with Basic Drafting. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) are a part of the curriculum, providing students exposure to real world problems and finding solutions to those problems. Student accountability and responsibility are stressed in the curriculum. This class is an elective choice for students in both 7th & 8th grades.

VOCAL MUSIC - The vocal music class will provide the opportunity to develop vocal skills and discover musical potential. Students will learn part singing and sing different styles of music. Students will also learn basic piano techniques. Each semester students will present an evening vocal concert at South Middle School. This class is an elective choice for students in both 7th & 8th grades.

STUDENT SERVICE ~ Some **8th grade** students are selected to assist staff in providing special services within our school. These positions call for the ability to work with students and adults. When considering students for these positions the students previous attendance, academic, and behavior records are taken into consideration. Students who are chosen to be student aides are expected to be a help to the teachers and students. Some positions are for a semester while others are for the entire year. Interviews with staff may determine final selection. Opportunities are available in the following areas: Office, Library, Counseling Center, Special Education – academic classroom, physical education, art, and music, and ELL (English Language Learners).

ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE BASED OPTIONS:

The following courses may be required or recommended for students because of test scores, performance in previous academic courses, and/or teacher recommendation. Counselors will contact parents for students recommended for these courses. If you or your parents feel you would like to be considered for enrollment in any of these courses please have your parent contact your counselor.

Reading: Literacy 1st ~ This course offers additional skill instruction in reading. Teachers have received specific training on methods for building and strengthening weak or missing reading skills. Since reading is a foundational skill for all academic areas and is a critical lifetime need, this course is provides extra reading so that future career opportunities are attainable for all our students. This course is available to **both 7th & 8th grade** students.

Reading 8 ~ This course is a full year course offered to **8th grade** students and is designed for students who need continued support in learning and applying reading skills. This class continues to build vocabulary, teach comprehension strategies, and build reading fluency. Students who take this reading class will be better prepared for high school reading demands. This course is usually recommended for students who didn't meet standard on the seventh grade reading state assessment but may not have room in their schedule for an intensive reading class. Students may request this class but most students are placed in this class as a result of previous year's reading performance.

Advanced English ~ Advanced English is a course offered to **8th grade** students who have well developed reading and writing skills. Students who take advanced English will be well positioned to move into Advanced English at the high school. The pace and work load of Advanced English will be faster and more sophisticated than the eighth grade English class. To be successful in Advanced English, students will need to be willing to work independently at times, revise and edit numerous times, and be responsible for work completion and asking when they need assistance. Teacher recommendations from 7th grade English, reading state assessment scores, seventh grade reading scores, and work habits are considered for placement in this class.

Advanced Reading 7 ~ This course is a one-semester class for **7th grade** students who are advanced readers and who have a strong work ethic. Students will read and analyze four novels during the semester as well as numerous primary documents related to each novel. There is more outside reading and homework required than in a general reading class. Several outside-the-classroom projects will also be completed during the semester. Students will also participate in Socratic discussion circles, which require higher-level thinking skills. This is an exciting course for advanced readers and it prepares them well for Advanced English 8.