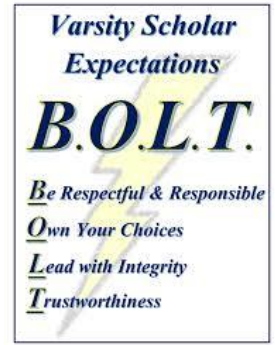


# Newsletter

Dr. Mederios - Principal  
Mr. Plucker - Assistant Principal  
Ms. Booker - Assistant Principal  
Ms. Thompson - Assistant Principal



Term: Summer | Issue 1 | Date: August 2019

**Vision:** Varsity Lakes Middle School is a learning institute that is dedicated to the creation of academic excellence through rigorous, engaging instruction and integrated curriculum.

**Mission:** Varsity Lakes Middle School will provide a nurturing environment that ensures the continued development of the whole student. Through challenging learning experiences, all students will mature academically, socially, physically, emotionally, and creatively.



## Message from the Principal

Dear Lightning Families,

Welcome back for the 2019-2020 school year. It was a busy summer at Varsity Lakes Middle School between hosting summer school and renovations around campus.

As the 2019-2020 school year kicks off, it's important to remember the tardy-to-school procedure. Students arriving after 9:45 A.M. will report directly to the front office to sign in and receive a tardy pass to class. It is essential that students arrive to school on time and are prepared for instruction when the tardy bell rings at 9:45 A.M. We want to ensure that students are maximizing instructional time and not falling behind. The tardy policy will be followed according to the school district's Code of Conduct. We take very seriously our responsibility to prepare students for the challenges they will face in the global workforce. Therefore, I assure you that we will focus on producing collaborative problem-solvers that are independent, critical thinkers. Our goal is to ensure that every student maximizes their individual academic potential.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to contact me, or one of our administrators, whenever an issue arises at the school. Your child and their well-being is our foremost concern, and we welcome parent contact to apprise us of all issues. We take any and all issues and/or concerns very seriously and work tirelessly to ensure that stakeholders are comfortable with the education that students at Varsity Lakes Middle School are receiving. More than anything, I want to ensure that we are doing what is in the best interest of our students. That can only occur when we are aware of any issues and/or concerns so we can address them immediately.

We encourage students to get involved in extracurricular activities and immerse themselves fully in the classroom. The greatest thing you can do for yourself is get a quality education and maximize your potential. With hard work, a positive attitude, and perseverance, anything is possible.

It is an honor and a pleasure to serve as the principal at Varsity Lakes Middle School where we are building success one student at a time.

Matthew Mederios, Ed.D.  
Principal

# CLUB ANNOUNCEMENT

Interest meeting on 8/30/19 @ 8:00 A.M. in the Media Center

## What is GEMS?

GEMS is a student group specifically designed for Varsity girls. The purpose of the group is to help young ladies Grow, Empower, Mature, and Shine together as they go through their years in middle school. Girls are mentored about self-image and self-respect, while other times we discuss drama, boys, academics, and goals. We start and end every meeting hand in hand, in hopes that we will transfer positive energy and thoughts through our girls, which will then turn into positive energy and thoughts into our world. This group is open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls.

*We will Grow, Empower, Mature, and Shine together as GEMS!*

## As a member of G.E.M.S., I understand that I must:

- ◆ Maintain a 2.5 GPA throughout the year
- ◆ attend all bi-weekly meetings; meetings will be held every other Friday from 8-9:20 A.M. in the media center
- ◆ be on time
- ◆ display exceptional behavior
- ◆ teachers will notify mentors of any misbehavior

You are representing yourself,  
your sisters, the G.E.M.S.  
program, & VLMS



**Growing  
Empowering  
Maturing  
Shining**

*Lead Mentors:  
Ms. Reyes / Ms. Weicht*

# TECHNOLOGY NEWS

## Have YOU downloaded the Focus Community App yet?!!

The *Focus Community App* provides parents, students, teachers, and administrators a streamlined way to access the information they want, when and where they want it.

From student grades, assignments, and attendance, to school events, social media streams, and MORE.....the *Focus Community App* helps keep you informed!

The School District of Lee County's *Focus Community App* is available for download on both the [Google Play](#) and [Apple App](#) stores. Download it today!



# OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS

Melendez, Glorybel – ESE Vary Exceptionalities

Gadus, Diana – ESOL

Kristie Dougherty – ELA

Rippel, Jessica – ESOL

Belmonte, John – ESOL

Mabrich, Alexander – ESOL

Reyes, Jillian – ESOL

Cunningham, Tamika – ESOL

Agostinelli, Nico – ESOL

Albright, Rachelle – ESOL

Borrows, Lisa – ESOL

Cabrera, Kim – ESOL

Colson, Candace – ESOL

Dunseath, Elaine – ESOL

Felice, Gabrielle – ESOL

Forbes, Sherie - ELA

Ford, Caroline – ESOL

Gallina, Patrick – ESOL

Howiszak, Kelly – ESOL

Hunter, Samantha – ESOL

Kumbat, Shawna – ESOL

Ledesma, Rosanel – ESOL

Martin, Justin – ESOL

Masiello, Nicholas – ESOL

Moran, Ellen – ESOL

Pittman, Earnest – ESOL

Pogue, Denise – ESOL

Scott, Alec – ESOL

St. Romain, Ruth – ESOL

Steinmann, Sarah – ESOL

Stevens, Angela – ESOL

Whitlow, Darla – ESOL

Windey, Bradley – ESOL

# WALK FOR WATER UPDATE



In the past 2 years Varsity lakes Middle School students have raised a total of **\$13,926** to bring clean water to 2 schools in Kenya and 2 in Tanzania. The clean water project for the Namarambi Primary school was completed over the summer.

The funds we raised came just in time! It saved the school from being closed by the government because of their water and sanitation crisis. The work done has allowed Namarambi to stay open for 455 students.

There is a new 50,000 liter rainwater catchment system that supplies safe clean water. Hand-washing stations were installed so that students can clean up after using their new latrines. In addition, students and staff have received training in sanitation and hygiene.

## CLASSROOM NEWS

Varsity Lakes Middle School students have been busy in their Language Arts and Reading classes building relationships and becoming familiar with Varsity's expectations and procedures. More specifically, Language Arts classes are using creative ways to do this by having students create One-Pagers of themselves, which will later serve as a great Language Arts project when studying characters or theme. Other students are writing and presenting two-voice poems for the same reason. Overall, the Language Arts and Reading departments are working diligently to prepare the first base-line essay for all students, which will be given in the first month of school.



# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

## WELCOME NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

Jillian Reyes  
Tamika Cunningham  
Wendell Warr  
Nicholas Maisiello  
Diana Gadus  
Patrick Gallina  
Patricia Carroll  
John Belmonte  
Samantha Hunter  
Barielle Felice  
Kristie Dougherty  
Lisa Borrows  
April Thompson  
Sherie Forbes  
Glorybel Mele

John Dulin  
Michael Kelly  
Caroline Ford  
Jessica Rippel  
Kimberly Boone  
Sabrina Boccaccio  
Angela Stevens  
Jennifer Sarzyniac  
Chandler Crosby  
Alexander Mabrich  
Steven Turner  
Raquel Garcia  
Alec Scott  
Carol Smith



## Varsity Lakes Middle School

You are invited to our first SAC Meeting  
~It's a Spaghetti and Meatballs Dinner~

When: August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Time: 5:45p.m.

Where: VLMS Media Center



Parents choosing to attend our quarterly School Advisory Council meetings  
will earn their child the opportunity to wear jeans on Friday.

## 2019-2020 SAC Meeting Dates

### VLMS Media Center:

August 26th @ 6:00 P.M.  
September 23rd @ 8:30 A.M.  
October 28th @ 6:00 P.M.  
November 18th @ 8:30 A.M.  
January 27th @ 6:00 P.M.

### VLMS Media Center:

February 24th @ 8:30 A.M.  
March 3/30 @ 6:00 P.M.  
April 27th @ 8:30 A.M.

### VLMS Media Center:

Annual Title I Meeting, August 26,  
2019 @ 6:30 P.M.

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

## Lightning Families:

It is our goal to ensure that every student has a safe, rigorous learning environment free from unnecessary disruptions that detract from instructional time. This past school year, our administrative team noticed an increase in the amount of instructional time lost due to student violations of the Code of Student Conduct as it relates to electronic devices.

This communication is an effort to ensure that our students understand the rules regarding electronic device possession and usage. For the 2019-2020 school year, we will strictly enforce the Student Code of Conduct regarding cell phones and personal electronic devices (see below). Working in partnership with you, we can effectively reduce major disciplinary infractions, as well as disruptions to the learning environment, and improve student safety on campus.

### 30. Electronics/Telecommunication Devices (ETD)

*Students may possess cell phones and other personal electronic devices while on school grounds during regular school hours, however they must be turned off at all times unless utilized for an approved activity.*

Any display or use of cell phones and/or personal electronic devices, including headphones and/or ear pods, without permission while the student is on campus will result in disciplinary consequences. The expectation is that once students arrive on campus at Varsity Lakes Middle, their cell phone, headphones, ear pods, and other electronic devices are turned off and stored. We ask that you please speak with your child about this policy and expectations for the upcoming school year at Varsity Lakes Middle.

We understand that there may be occasions when you need to contact your child during the school day. However, we ask that you please refrain from contacting your child via their cell phone. Rather, we ask that you call the school directly at (239)694-3464. Our front desk receptionist will take a message and immediately deliver the message to your child.

Your cooperation and partnership to create a safer and more secure learning environment free from disruptions and distractions at Varsity Lakes Middle for the 2019-2020 school year is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding this policy, do not hesitate to contact us.

### CELL PHONE/HEADPHONE/EAR PODS/ELECTRONIC DEVICE EXPECTATIONS

Cell phones, headphones, ear pods, and other electronic devices (personal electronic devices) are to be **turned off and stored at all times while on the campus of VLMS**. Cell phones, headphones, ear pods, and other electronic devices (personal electronic devices) may not be used while on campus without permission from a teacher.

**Display or use of personal electronic devices without permission will result in the following consequences:**

1st Offense = Device is confiscated. The student will receive a BOLT card citation in Castle and the parent will be contacted. The student may pick up the device at the end of the school day.

2nd Offense = Device is confiscated. The student will receive a discipline referral in Castle, and an after school detention will be assigned. The student may pick up the device at the end of the school day.

3rd Offense = Device is confiscated. The student will receive a discipline referral, and one day of Internal Suspension

and/or Saturday detention will be assigned. **The parent must pick up the device in the front office at the school.**

Continued Offenses will result in progressive discipline consequences.

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SCHOOL MESSENGER COMMUNICATE:

The School District of Lee County uses School Messenger Communicate to share important messages about your child's education. The system allows us to call, text and email you. To receive messages from your child's school, you need to create a free account. Just go to [www.leeschools.net/parent\\_portal](http://www.leeschools.net/parent_portal) to sign up. In order to receive text messages you must opt in by texting YES, OPTIN or SUBSCRIBE to 67587. The District is not allowed to send you texts unless you opt in.

## NEW DISTRICT APP:

WE HAVE AN APP FOR THAT! The School District of Lee County mobile app provides quick, easy access to valuable information and tools. Search "The School District of Lee County" in the app store and look for an icon with the District Seal on a blue background. Once you've downloaded the app you can subscribe to your child's school, pull events directly from the school calendar into your calendar, check bus schedules, lunch menus and more!

## FORTIFY FLORIDA:

FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. By accessing FortifyFL, students and parents can share tips and information, pictures and videos and optionally submit their contact information. Learn more at <https://getfortifyfl.com/>

## WHERE'S THE BUS:

The School District of Lee County has a secure app that can tell you how many minutes away your child's bus is from his or her stop. It is free and easy to sign up, just go to [www.leeschools.net/transportation](http://www.leeschools.net/transportation) and click Where's the Bus? We hope this tool helps make your mornings and afternoons run a bit more smoothly.

## LAUNCHPAD:

Access online learning tools with LAUNCHPAD. LAUNCHPAD provides easy access to applications that will help your child succeed in school, enable you to monitor their progress and enrich their learning experience. View your students' schedules, their grades, educational resources, school information, textbooks and library books, Accelerated Reader information, individual learning paths and more *all in one place* at [launchpad.leeschools.net](http://launchpad.leeschools.net).

## FOCUS:

Access your child's grades, attendance and assignment information through the FOCUS Parent Portal. Sign up for a free account at <https://lee.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus/> to stay connected to your student's education!

## BUS STOP SAFETY:

Bus stop safety is everyone's responsibility! Check out <https://www.leeschools.net/cms/One.aspx?portalId=676305&pageId=10746691> for safety videos broken down by grade level that you can watch with your child, tips on what they should do to be safe while walking and waiting at the bus stop, plus information on how to start a Walking School Bus in your neighborhood.

## PEACHJAR:

Our school uses a communication tool called "Peachjar" to send school-approved flyers to you electronically. We also post them on the school website (just click the Peachjar icon on our homepage to see them.) To ensure smooth delivery of this communication, we suggest you add [school@peachjar.com](mailto:school@peachjar.com) to your email contacts. When you receive your first digital flyer, be sure to click "always display images." This "green" initiative saves our school paper, reduces copy costs and removes a significant administrative burden from teachers, office staff, and volunteers!

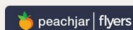
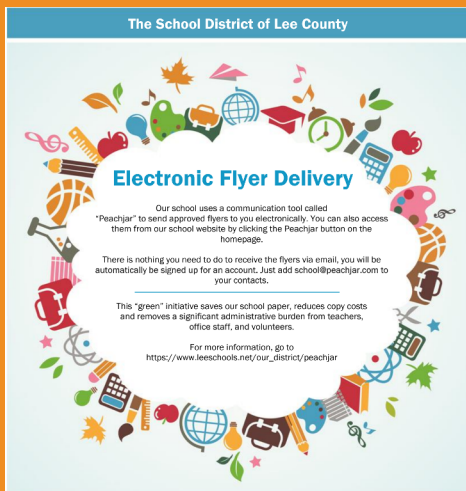




CONGRATULATIONS TO  
RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS  
FOR A SUCCESSFUL  
FUNDRAISER!



**The Electronic Flyer Delivery**  
Our school uses Peachjar to send approved flyers to you electronically. There is nothing you need to do to receive the flyers via email. You will be automatically signed up for an account. Just add [school@peachjar.com](mailto:school@peachjar.com) to your contacts.



This system is used exclusively for distribution of school-approved flyers. Your email address will not be shared or used for any other purpose. Thank you for supporting our efforts to ensure parents are well informed about school programs, activities, and events.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CLINIC

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We would like to see your child in school every day, learning, healthy, and excited to participate in all of our school activities; however, in the event your child is ill (temperature above 100, vomiting, uncontrollably coughing, has a runny nose, or red draining eyes), please keep him/her home and seek medical advice. In addition, in the event of an emergency, please have your child's emergency card, with all contact numbers where you can be reached, dropped off in the clinic.

Please check with your child's doctor to make sure their immunizations are current as well as any medical information, or need for medication while at school. Please submit the proper documentation and permission forms to our clinic.

6th Graders remember to get the needed immunizations for 7th grade.

You must have a TDAP given after August 2006, 3 Hepatitis vaccines, 2 MMR's and 2 Varicella. Please turn in the copy of the immunization record to the school before the open house on August 8, 2019.

The Lee County Health Department offers FREE immunizations (shots) to children under 18. They are located at 3920 Michigan Ave. Fort. Myers, Fl. 33916. It is by appointment only.

Remember, prevention is key to keeping your child healthy.

We are looking forward to a healthy and successful school year for all!

Thank you,

VLMS School Nurse

Read! It's Good for  
your  
Health

