Newsletter

Dr. Mederios - Principal

Mr. Plucker - Assistant Principal

Ms. Booker - Assistant Principal

Ms. Thompson - Assistant Principal

Varsity Scholar Expectations

B.O.L.T.

Be Respectful & Responsible

Own Your Choices

Lead with Integrity

Trustworthiness

Term: Summer | Issue 1 | Date: September 6, 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

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

Varsity Lakes G.E.M.S.

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!

GET IT ON Google play

Available on the iPhone App Store

OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS

Melendez, Glorybel – ESE Vary Exceptionalities
Gadus, Diana – ESOL
Rippel, Jessica – ESOL
Belmonte, John – ESOL
Mabrich, Alexander – ESOL
Reyes, Jillian – ESOL
Cunningham, Tamika – ESOL
Agostinelli, Nico – ESOL
Albright, Rachelle – ESOL
Bird, Sara - ESOL
Borrows, Lisa – ESOL
Cabrera, Kim – ESOL
Carlsen, Lewis - ESOL
Colson, Candace – ESOL
Dougherty, Kristie - ESOL
Dunseath, Elaine – ESOL
Felice, Gabrielle – ESOL
Forbes, Sherie - ESOL
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

OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS

Ms. Bird -	ELA and Reading
Mr. Carlsen -	ELA
Ms. Cunningham -	Reading
Ms. Dougherty -	ELA
Ms. Forbes -	Reading
Ms. Moran -	Reading
Ms. J. Reyes -	Reading
Ms. Smith -	Reading
Ms. St. Romain -	Reading

ONLINE DIGITAL EMERGENCY CONTACT

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS GONE PAPERLESS

You may have noticed that your child did not bring home the paper versions of the Student Emergency Information Form and the Permission to Release Information. Lee County Schools rolled out a paperless system this school year and those forms are now available to complete in your Parent Portal in Focus. It is vital that parents/guardians complete this information. If an emergency arises with your child, our school needs the most up to date information available. Also, if you have designated someone else to pick up your child from school, their name must be listed. If not, your child will not be released to that individual. If you have not already done so, please create your Parent Focus Account by going to:
https://lee.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus/auth/

You will need an email address, your child's student ID number, and date of birth. If you have any issues with this process, please stop by the school and one of our staff will guide you through the process.

Once you have created your account and added your child(ren), You will click on the Green Links to complete the forms needed in case of an emergency.

If you have moved, changed your phone number or email address, please let us know.

Thank you!

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

Ms. Barrero will host an informational meeting on Monday, September 9th in room 3306 from 4:15 to 5:15. Math team "tryouts" will be held, Monday, September 16, 2019 from 4:15 P.M. to 5:15 P.M. Subsequent meetings will be held on Mondays, in room 3306 @ 4:15 P.M. between September 16th until the end of November 2019.

Hope to see you there!

Ms. Barrero, Algebra Honors
Varsity Lakes Middle School

Happy Birthday Team Members
September

8th- Kanisha Rogers
12th- Sheila Shaw
13th- Yusimy Serrat
17th- Brenda Rosado Perez
17th-Celeste Marrero
18th- Glorybel Melendez
18th- Kim Cabrera
24th- Rachelle Albright
25th- Edith Ospina

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 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 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.

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!

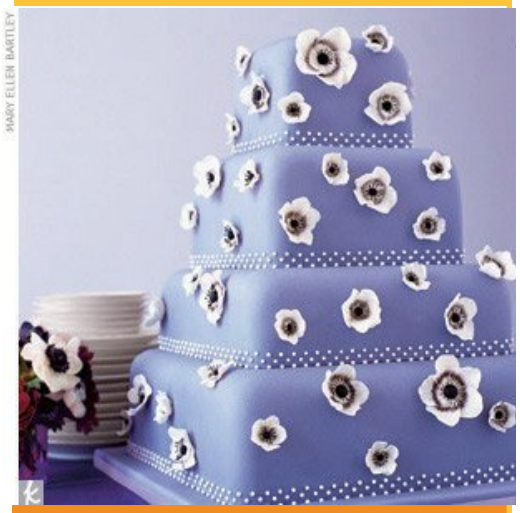
BUS STOP SAFETY:

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 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 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 be signed up for an account. Just add school@peachjar.com to your contacts.

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

G.E.M.S. Meeting Dates

September 13th and 27th
October 11th and 25th
November 15th
December 13th
January 10th and 24th
February 7th and 21st
March 6th
April 24th

Annual Lockup: December 13th, from 4:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Students will be expectd to bring a signed permission slip to attend.