

Village Green Environmental Studies School



**Student Handbook
2025 - 2026**



Village Green Environmental Studies School

1700 SE Lennard Road

Port St Lucie, Florida 34952

Phone (772) 337-6750 Fax (772) 337-6764

<https://schools.stlucie.k12.fl.us/vge/>



Welcome to the 2025 – 2026 school year!

As we embark on this new school year it is important to the review arrival/ dismissal policies and procedures set in place for the safety of students, parents, staff and visitors. We ask that you follow the student drop-off and pick-up route. Following this route will limit back-up traffic on Lennard Road, and ensure a safe dismissal environment for all.

Please do not depart from this path. Departures from this path, that include, parking in any area of the route, bypassing the route, or dropping your child at a location other than at the attended drop off location will slow traffic greatly, cause delays, and could endanger the safety of all.

To ensure a safe, smooth and timely arrival and dismissal, please abide by the following procedures for parent pick-up:

- Remain in your vehicle
- Ensure your child's pick-up card is clearly displayed until your child enters the car
- Once you reach the pick-up area, your child's name will be called and escorted to your vehicle in the pick-up zone
- Follow the path towards exit of the campus
- Be sure to adhere to the crossing guards and/or police department

Please do not park and walk up to the patio to pick up your child – teachers will not release students to walk-up parents. It is important to note that for safety concerns, student walkers and bike riders are dismissed first, before buses leave the bus ramp. Barring unforeseen delays, buses normally clear the bus ramp around 3:30 p.m.

Parents are requested not to park on the church lawn or block the entrance/exit to their driveways to wait for students designated as walkers. The church has invested in a sprinkler system and over the years has incurred the cost of replacement due to sprinkler heads damaged by cars. Parking on the lawn could lead to a ticket violation by the police department. Walking students will be escorted using the crosswalk.

During the first few weeks of school, there will be increased motor traffic, especially since some parents of bus riders elect to "pick up" and "drop off". Please be patient and considerate while these routines are being established.

We appreciate your cooperation in following our procedures designed to make this as safe a zone as possible for your child's safety.

In Safety,

Andrea Popwell, Principal

Mehgan Drost, Assistant Principal



Village Green
Environmental Studies School

The mission of the St. Lucie County School District is to ensure all students graduate from safe and caring schools, equipped with knowledge, skills and the desire to succeed.



What it Says	What it Means
The Mission	...The reason we exist, the purpose of all our efforts, the focus of our budget allocations, the standard against which we compare all activities.
Of the St. Lucie County School District	...One organization, all schools working in concert with and supportive of the district mission: local school efforts are to enhance both individual school priorities as well as system priorities.
Is to Ensure	...To do more than make available or just provide opportunities for students; to supply the capacity or means to be or do something, to make possible.
All Students	...Not just some students, not just students from stable, financially secure family environments, but all students.
Graduate From	...To do more than just attend, to move to a higher level, to receive a academic diploma, to advance to a new level of skill or achievement.
Safe and Caring Schools	...Beyond facilities; learning environments conducive to promoting academic success and high standards for students of all ethnic origins, genders and socioeconomic backgrounds.
Equipped	...Above providing or giving, to furnish students with the qualities necessary for performance.
With the Knowledge, Skills	...Knowledge and skills as currently best reflected in School Improvement goals, State Standards and in our statements of common beliefs.
And the Desire to Succeed	...To enter whatever doors a student wishes; to have those options available at the end of the educational experience rather than having limited options due to limited curriculum experiences.

We are proud to be a recipient of the Florida PBIS Model School status! Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a **systemic approach to proactive, school-wide behavior based on a Response to Intervention (RtI) model.**

PBIS provides a **positive and effective alternative to the traditional methods of discipline.** PBIS applied methods are research-based and evidenced-based programs, practices and strategies for **all students to increase academic performance, improve safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish a positive school culture.**

PBIS utilizes a Token Economy System whereas students at VGESS earn “Manatee Moolah” or Class Dojo points for showing their Manatee PRIDE (our school-wide behavioral expectations) of:

- P – politeness
- R – responsibility
- I – integrity
- D – discipline
- E - effort

Teachers and staff provide these “dollars” or Dojo points to students when they exhibit the model behaviors of our school wide expectations. In addition, each classroom can receive “Class Cash” when working together as a team to exemplify our schoolwide expectations. Our PBIS Committee, with the help of student surveys, designs a calendar of events and an end of the year carnival for student to participate in through using their earned “Manatee Moolah” or Dojo points. In addition, classrooms can earn prizes and rewards for earning “Class Cash.”

School Fun Facts:

School Colors: Hunter green and beige
 School Mascot: “Flash” the Manatee
 Official Emblem: The learning tree
 School Motto: We are World Changers!

School Mission:

Village Green Environmental Studies School is committed to our students graduating from a safe and caring school equipped with the knowledge, skills, and desire to succeed.

School Vision:

The staff of Village Green Environmental Studies School is committed to our vision that all students are provided with exemplary instruction and learning opportunities in order to prepare each child to advance to the next level in their pursuits of college studies and careers through an emphasis on high order thinking and problem-solving.

In setting our goals, we will continue to strive toward higher levels of student performance by offering a challenging elementary curriculum that is aligned with rigorous standards delivered through diversified instructional strategies.

Additionally, Village Green Environmental Studies School offers concentrated environmental studies that help students connect content with authentic opportunities to help reinforce their learning and tackle issues we face in our community and our world today.

Arrival and Dismissal for Students



Arrival:

- 8:15 a.m. Students may report to classroom hallways/breakfast
- 8:40 a.m. Morning bell rings
- 8:45 a.m. Pledge of Allegiance/Announcements
Instruction Begins – Students are tardy

Dismissal:

- 3:15–3:30 p.m. All students must be off campus by **3:45 p.m.**
- 1:15–1:30 p.m. Early release students must be off campus by **1:45 p.m.**

Students should arrive on campus no earlier than 8:15 a.m.; no adult supervision is available prior to that time and students should not be left unattended.

Arriving Late to School

Any student arriving to the school after 8:45 a.m. must report to and buzz the main office entrance accompanied by a parent or guardian to secure a late pass. Parents may write a note requesting an excused tardy in accordance with guidelines contained in the School Board of St. Lucie County Student Progression Plan and Attendance Procedures. **Parents may also email these notes to VGE.Office@stlucieschools.org.**

Drop-off/Pick-up

The safety of our students is of the utmost importance! We appreciate your cooperation in helping create a safe, effective drop-off/pick-up zone. Traffic area is for drop-off and pick-up only. Please abide by the posted traffic signs and rules.

- Student pick-up occurs between 3:15-3:30 p.m. for regular dismissal and between 1:15-1:30 p.m. on Early Release days. All students must be off campus by 3:45 p.m. (1:45 on early release days).
- **Any parent who must change regular transportation routines must send a signed note with their child to be delivered to the office with the date and clear instructions regarding the change in dismissal.**
- **No change in dismissals will be granted after 2:30 p.m. on Regular School Day or 12:30 p.m. on Early Release Days. Change in dismissals must be requested by a written note.**

Early "Sign outs"

Parents must buzz the Main Office before 2:45 p.m. (or 12:45 p.m. on early release days) in order to sign a student off campus.

- **No early "sign outs" will be permitted after 2:45 p.m.**
- Students are not released from class until the parent has arrived at the front door before 2:45 p.m.
- **Parents who arrive after the 2:45 p.m. must wait until regular dismissal 3:15 – 3:30 p.m.**
- A parent, guardian, or designee **must show proper identification when signing the student out.** Students will not be released to persons other than parents or legal guardians without notification from the parent or guardian in writing.

Early Release Days

Early release days provide the time necessary for professional development, collaborative planning, coordinating of school activities, record keeping, and development of curricula. Students will be dismissed 2 hours earlier on these days. It is important that parents are familiar with these dates and pick children up promptly to allow school personnel to engage in this important work. **Early Release dismissal time is 1:15 p.m.**

2025 - 2026 Early Release Schedule

August 27, 2025	Recordkeeping
October 29, 2025	FC Choice
December 19, 2025	FC Choice
February 11, 2026	PL Day
March 13, 2026	FC Choice
April 22, 2026	FC Choice
June 1, 2026	Recordkeeping
June 2, 2026	Recordkeeping

Attendance

Compulsory School Attendance & Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment (F.S. 1003.21) states that all children who are either six years of age by February 1, or who are older than six years of age but who have not attained the age of 18 years, must attend school regularly during the entire school term. Each parent and guardian of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's attendance as required by law (F.S. 1003.24)



Students are expected to attend school daily and to be on time.

Every effort should be made to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours, on days when students have no school or during summer vacation. Although family travel is enriching to students, every effort should be made to take vacations only during scheduled school breaks.

- When students are absent from school, **the parent or guardian is required to send a written explanation of the reason for the student's absence to the school within three days of the student's return to school. The written explanation must include the dates of the absence for which the excuse is sought, and the specific reason for the absence.**
- **Parents may also email these notes to VGE.Office@stlucieschools.org.**
- Excessive absences, tardiness and/or early "sign outs" may result in phone calls home, letters from the school, requests for parent conference, and/or visits from the school's social worker.



Student Progress Communication

It is important that parents and the schoolwork together in monitoring the progress of each student. Progress reports are made available to parents on a regular basis through the District's on-line **Skyward Family Access system**. Report cards are accessed this way as well. Parents are encouraged to sign up for Family Access to Skyward. Progress Reports will no longer be printed unless specifically requested. In addition, our school utilizes Class Dojo as a means of communicating with our families. This is a quick way to contact a teacher as well as a way for teachers to share classroom announcements, events and celebrations. Please contact the classroom teacher for more information.

Home/School Communication Folders

Communication folders will be sent home and may contain notices from the school, parent newsletters, sample student work, and other communications. Parents are encouraged to discuss the importance of communication with their child and develop a system to ensure that the contents of the folder are reviewed, emptied, and returned.

Lost and Found

Articles lost will be returned to the main office. Please label clothing, lunchboxes, and school supplies to ensure that items are returned. All unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each 9-week period.

Reading

Independent Reading is an important part of our curriculum and school culture. Students should read (independently or with someone) at least 20 minutes every day. Students may read books of their own choosing.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast is served from 8:15 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. Students choosing to have breakfast at school must report to class on time.



Lunch times are determined by a student's class.

Please complete the Free/Reduced Lunch online application under the Parents/Students tab on the St. Lucie Public Schools website.

[Online Meal Application \(stlucie.k12.fl.us\)](http://stlucie.k12.fl.us) or scan the QR code.



Meals will be served according to USDA guidelines so that both students and staff remain safe.

Healthy eating and daily exercise are part of the health curriculum set by the State of Florida. As such, we strive to set the example for students to adopt a healthy lifestyle for life.

Dress Code

Please see the updated Dress Code for the 25 - 26 school year. Students are expected to be in Dress Code while they are on the campus or on a school bus.

The administration/designees shall be the final judge of wearing apparel/accessories. They will determine whether such apparel is appropriate, disruptive, offensive, distracting or in violation of health and safety rules.



VGESS DRESS CODE POLICY 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR PRE-KINDERGARTEN - FIFTH GRADE

YOU ARE IN DRESS CODE WHEN YOU WEAR:

Any collared shirt or t-shirt with sleeves that cover the midriff area containing no graphics, images or words

or

VGESS Spirit Shirt that cover the midriff area.



Pants, jeans, shorts, skirts, or dresses that cover from waist to finger-tip length in any color or pattern. Leggings, basketball shorts and sweatpants with no graphics or images are permitted.

GRAPHICS, WORDS
OR IMAGES

Sneakers, tennis, athletic, or closed toe shoes with closed backs
(No Crocs, sandals, heels or wheels.)



Hoodies, sweaters, sweatshirts or jackets containing no graphics, images or words. School appropriate logos under two inches.

(Hoods must be off head while on campus.)



Violations of the Dress Code policy:

- 1st Violation: Verbal Warning/Slip Home
- 2nd Infraction: Parent Phone Call/Slip Home
- 3rd Infraction: Dress Code Contract
- 4th Infraction: Discipline Referral/School-Based Consequence/Parent Conference

YOU ARE OUT OF DRESS CODE WHEN YOU WEAR:

- Any shirt that is sleeveless or with graphics, images or words
- Midriff shirts. (Shirts that expose the stomach area.)
- Torn or ripped jeans or pants exposing skin above the knee.
- Shorts, leggings, sweatpants and basketball shorts with graphics or images
- Pajama pants unless on designated Spirit days.
- Sheer, fishnet or opaque tops, and leggings.
- Shoes such as Crocs, sandals, heels or wheels.
- Hats unless on designated Spirit days.
- Clothing/accessories that promote drugs, tobacco, alcohol, violence or is offensive or inappropriate.



Health Clinic

Students sent to the clinic are accompanied with a pass indicating their ailment(s). Clinic personnel will contact parents and will document the visit. Children who become ill during the day will be sent to the clinic for attention, rest, or to be sent home. We ask that family members promptly pick up students or within thirty (30) minutes of notification.

When deemed appropriate and acceptable by the school principal, medication (exclusive of injections) will be administered providing the following requirements are met:

- The parent(s) must provide the school with a doctor's statement on the proper form explaining the necessity of the medication.
- The parent(s) must also complete Form STS0011, to be signed by the physician and parent, which includes administration directions, frequency, amount, method and possible reactions. This statement includes authorization for the medication to be administered by school personnel.
- All medication must remain in its original container. Non-prescription medication will not be administered unless the Form STS0011 is signed. All medication will be kept in the clinic and administered by designated school personnel, providing the above procedure is followed.
- If a child is injured, first aid is administered promptly. The child usually will be cared for in the clinic and an attempt will be made to contact the parent by phone. If the injury is of a serious nature, an accident report is completed.

It is essential that an emergency number be provided for each child and that any changes in work or home phone numbers are provided to the office.

Medical Emergencies

The following are to be considered serious medical emergencies:

- Difficulty breathing or has stopped breathing
- Bleeding which appears difficult to control.
- State of shock because of excessive bleeding, severe pain, insulin reaction, or diabetic coma
- Unconsciousness (beyond fainting)
- Extensive burns
- Drug overdose of oral poison other than drugs

In the event of a serious emergency that requires medical attention above that which is available at the school site, the principal or her designee will call 911. Once the emergency medical service (EMS) personnel arrive at the scene, they will assume the responsibility for the care of the individual.

If a person associated with EMS is on campus for other than official business, such as a resource person in the classroom, and offers emergency assistance, it is the principal who decides, if they can care for the individual.



Conferences and School Visitation



Conferences can be an important form of communication between parents and teachers. Communication promotes student progress and helps to alleviate potential problems. We encourage you to maintain that communication throughout the year using Class Dojo, school email, and Teams. It is the responsibility of Administration to be very visible in the classrooms to ensure that academic achievement is taking place. Therefore, it is desirable that you schedule appointments to ensure availability.

You are very important to us, and we pride ourselves in being family friendly. We will work with parents to schedule conferences at a time that works best for all.

Volunteers

Effective with the 2025–2026 school year, in alignment with **Florida Senate Bill 676 (SB 676)**.

To further enhance student safety, **all school volunteers will now be required to complete a Level 2 background screening, which includes fingerprinting.**

Key Updates:

- **Fingerprinting Requirement (Valid for 5 Years):**
 - All volunteers must complete a Level 2 background screening every five years. The cost is **\$75**, and fingerprinting can be completed at the District Office during onboarding hours (8:00 AM–2:00 PM, no appointment necessary).
 - Volunteers who continue beyond five years will be required to **renew their fingerprinting and pay the associated fee** at that time.
- **Annual Volunteer Application:**
 - Volunteers must continue to submit a new application each school year to remain eligible.
- **Volunteer Badge Fee:**
 - A **\$6 annual fee** will be required for the issuance of a volunteer badge, which is mandatory for campus access.
 - **Please note:** Volunteer badges **expire at the end of each school year** and must be **renewed annually**. The renewal fee will be collected at the time of the application submission for the new school year.

Compliance Reminders:

- **No Badge, No Volunteering:**
 - Volunteers must have a current badge to be permitted on campus. No exceptions will be made.
- **Plan Ahead:**
 - Volunteers should be encouraged to complete their application and fingerprinting well in advance of their intended start date to allow time for processing and clearance.



Cell Phones and Electronic Devices



Cell Phone Use: Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, elementary and middle school students are not permitted to use a wireless communication device including cell phones during the school day.

In accordance with new legislation recently signed into law, students may not use their cell phones or wireless communication devices at school throughout the entire school day including during lunch or class changes.

Allowable Exceptions: Students may only use their cell phone or wireless communication device during the school day for the following reasons:

1. If authorized by a school administrator in the front office or clinic.
2. If a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459 has certified in writing that it is necessary based on clinical reasoning or evidence or,

In accordance with

3. The student's Individual Education Plan or,
4. The students 504 Plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Please see the student Code of Conduct for additional information related to violating this policy.

Violation	Description	Consequence	Additional Actions
First offense	WCD visible or used during the school day	WCD confiscated until the end of school day Parent notified	Returned to student at the end of the school day BIR
Second offense	WCD visible or used during the school day, repeated use	WCD confiscated Parent notified	Parent must pick up WCD at the end of the school day Parent meeting required Behavior contract signed
Third offense	WCD visible or used during the school day, repeated use or refusal to comply	WCD confiscated Parent notified	Parent must pick up WCD at the end of the school day In-school suspension (1 day) Mandatory digital citizenship course Loss of extracurricular privileges for 1 week
Fourth offense and beyond	WCD visible or used during the school day, repeated use or refusal to comply	WCD confiscated Parent notified	Admin-parent-student conference Out-of-school suspension (1–3 days) Behavioral contract PST referral





Kids At Hope

St. Lucie Public Schools is proud to be a Kids at Hope School District. We believe that all children are capable of success, No Exceptions! Village Green Environmental Studies School is committed to being a place where caring adults have high expectations for students, provide opportunities to succeed, celebrate success, and believe in children. As a Kids At Hope school, we hold these universal truths:

- Children succeed when they are surrounded by adults who believe they can succeed.
- Children succeed when they have meaningful and sustainable relationships with caring adults.
- Children succeed when they can visualize and articulate their future.

Students, teachers, and staff will begin their day by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the Kids at Hope and Treasure Hunter's pledges.

Kids at Hope Pledge:

I am a Kid at Hope.

I am talented, smart, and capable of success.

I have dreams for the future and will climb to reach those goals and dreams every day.

All children are capable of success. No exceptions!

Treasure Hunter's Pledge

As an adult and a Treasure Hunter,

I am committed to search for all the talents, skills, and intelligence that exists in all children and youth.

I believe all children are capable of success.

No exceptions!

ANONYMOUS REPORTING TOOLS



FORTIFYFL

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING APP

#FORTIFYFL

GETFORTIFYFL.COM



See Something,
Say Something



St. Lucie
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Search for "St. Lucie Public Schools" in your app store.



Now you can submit anonymous tips
from our free and secure mobile app.
Search your App Store for "P3 Tips."

Treasure Coast Crime Stoppers

800-273-8477
Hotline



Links to Important Information

[Public Notice of Non-Discrimination, Title IX](#)

[St. Lucie Public Schools Student/Parent Notification of Attendance Policies](#)

[Notice of Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](#)

[Notice of Rights Under FERPA](#)

[School Board Policy 5.71 – Equity Grievance Procedures for Students](#)

[Title IX Formal Complaint Form](#)

[Bullying/Harassment and Code of Conduct Statement](#)

[School Meal Application](#)

[Parents' Bill of Rights](#)

[Bullying Complaint Form](#)

[Student Progression Plan \(Elementary\)](#)

[St. Lucie Public Schools Code of Student Conduct](#)

[Fortify FL \(Report Suspicious Activity\)](#)

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)

[Elementary Curriculum Information](#)

[Skyward Family Access Information](#)

