

TO: Sarasota County School Board

FROM: Kathie Ebaugh, AICP, Planning Director  
Dr. Karin Schmidt, Venice Middle Principal

RE: Venice Middle Community Engagement, October 21, 2014

DATE: October 17, 2014

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On October 21, 2014 the Sarasota County School Board will learn about the Venice Middle Community Engagement Effort known as, Venice Middle: Our Future. Venice Middle: Your School Community Engagement Plan is designed to engage the entire Venice community in a discussion about Venice Middle's future. The ultimate goal of this plan is to make Venice Middle School the community's middle school of choice by enhancing its programs, updating its facilities, and improving parental buy-in and community support.

We are initiating this effort for three reasons:

- 1) We want to hear and better understand what parents, businesses, and community members expect from our middle schools;
- 2) We are about to commence on an approximately \$11 million dollar campus upgrade; and
- 3) We need to continue to ensure that the programs and facilities at Venice Middle provide an excellent foundation for learning and meet the educational needs of our Venice community.

Additionally, this effort seeks to help increase awareness of the existing programs and opportunities available at Venice Middle in order to recruit new students to Venice Middle at the same times as the community engagement and plan development effort is taking place. As a result of this effort we aim to enhance the quality of the learning environment, proactively assure that our children have the educational foundation they need to succeed in the workplace or college, and enable Venice elementary age children and their parents to learn about the exceptional educational offerings currently available at Venice Middle School.

The project will include two primary components: 1) community engagement and plan development and 2) student recruitment and school awareness.

- **Community Engagement and Plan Development** focus on learning what the community's vision of a middle school is; what they would like to see for Venice Middle school; and what facilities they would like to see at Venice Middle School. As a result of this effort, the Sarasota County School Board will adopt a strategic plan that directs program and facility development at Venice Middle School in the future.
- **Student Recruitment and School Awareness** component will focus on informing elementary age students about the current programs, educational facilities, and extracurricular opportunities currently available to students at Venice Middle School. As a result of this effort, Venice Middle will provide an array of opportunities for future students to learn about and connect with the programs offered at Venice Middle School with the aim of providing students the information they need to choose Venice Middle School for their education.