



welcome to my class

Greetings Parents and Students!

My name is Mrs. Vanessa Ellis and I am a **proud** social studies teacher and department chair here at Veterans Memorial Middle School! I can't begin to express the excitement I have to be able to teach your wonderful son or daughter this school year. Teaching has always been a passion of mine and I fully intend to share my love and enthusiasm for social studies every single day with your child. I graduated *Magna Cum Laude* from Columbus State University with my bachelor's and master's degrees. During my time at CSU, I earned many awards for outstanding scholarship as an undergraduate as well as my education service after I graduated. This is my 12th year in education and 6th year at Veterans Memorial Middle School. In 2017, I was named a 2017 Georgia Economics Teacher of the Year for the state. In 2018, I was named a Harvard Fellow and studied researched-based practices for a week at Project Zero Classroom. In 2021, I won a competition for having the best Canvas course for students in Muscogee County. And this year, I was named the 2022 Muscogee County Teacher of the Year for the entire district!

I teach 7th grade World Studies and 8th grade Georgia Studies. 7th grade includes geography, history, economics, and government of Africa and Asia. 8th grade includes geography, history, economics, and government of the state of Georgia. The goal of these courses is to acquaint middle school students with the world in which they live. Additionally, 8th graders are required to take the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) for social studies. Towards the end of the school year, students will complete a unit on personal money management choices in terms of income, spending, credit, saving, and investing. This is a great way to introduce students to future financial responsibility. During "Huddle House" time, we will focus on social-emotional learning and character development. We use Canvas, our district's learning management system, for assignments, tests, and communication. Please download the Canvas Parent App so that you can contact teachers and monitor your child's academic progress. Also, you can follow me on Instagram (@heymrsellis) and subscribe on YouTube (revilo sille) to see all of the cool things we're doing in class!

Parents, I believe that I teach the BEST students in Muscogee County. And because they are the best, I want them to have the very best. You may be familiar with Donors Choose. With your contributions, I can provide my students with a learning environment and experiences that suit the needs of the whole child. I am also in need of donations for my costume box to have students dress up while assuming historical roles. So if there are any old hats, clothing, or props that you have in the back of the closet that you would like to donate or LOAN, please do! Right now I need "tourist" props for our intro to Georgia. I need fanny packs, ball caps, visors, etc. Come on parents of the '90s! I know y'all got this stuff! Other classroom donations such as coloring utensils, glue, additional plastic-covered, spiral-bound notebooks, tissue, hand sanitizer and cleaning/disinfecting supplies are always welcome and appreciated.

On a personal note, I was born in Kingston, Jamaica, raised in Sarasota, Florida as well as Columbus, Georgia, and now reside in Midland, Georgia. I am a product of Muscogee County schools and was salutatorian of my graduating class at Jordan Vocational High School. I come from a very big family! I am the oldest and only sister of SIX younger brothers. My own family is not so big—I have three children: Xavier (17), Maverick (7), and Phoenix (2) with my husband who is also a teacher. I aim to have fun both inside and outside of the classroom. I love to travel, eat good food, and I strive to be a life-long learner.

I look forward to a great school year with a great group of students! It is my honor and pleasure to teach your son or daughter. I hope they leave my class with a deep understanding of history and a desire to be an active citizen. Sincerely,

Mrs. Vanessa I. Ellis

**For a more detailed explanation of class information and policies, please review the syllabus located in Canvas

Scan the QR code below
for a sneak peek inside
my classroom! →

