

The Solidarity Report

Your weekly VUE Update

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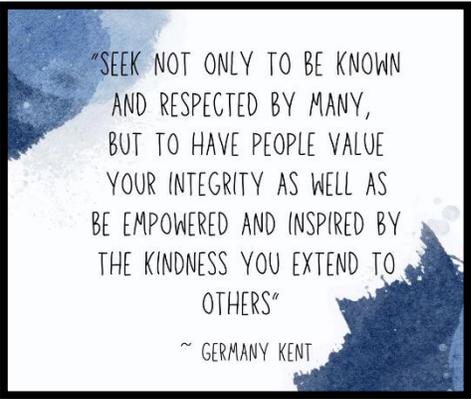
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In This Issue:

- Member Spotlight
- District Update
- Support Tentative Agreements & Ratification
- VAM Roster Verification
- ESE Concerns
- Upcoming VUE Professional Learning
- FEA Professional Learning Opportunities



"SEEK NOT ONLY TO BE KNOWN
AND RESPECTED BY MANY,
BUT TO HAVE PEOPLE VALUE
YOUR INTEGRITY AS WELL AS
BE EMPOWERED AND INSPIRED BY
THE KINDNESS YOU EXTEND TO
OTHERS"
~ GERMANY KENT

Spotlight: Mrs. Kelly Ambrose!



- * 8th year teaching in Volusia County!
- * Currently teaching 6th grade Science at Ormond Beach Middle
- * Avid runner
- * Teacher of the Year Nominee OBMS
- * Teacher of the Year - Georgia
- * Favorite Quote: "Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard." ~ Tim Notke

Ms. Kelly Ambrose is a veteran teacher with a vast array of experiences and talents. Kelly is starting her 27th year as a professional educator. She has taught in Georgia, Virginia, and now with VCS. She has experience teaching elementary and middle school. Kelly is a hard working dedicated teacher who sets the bar high for her students. She is highly organized and methodical about how she teaches and structures her lessons. Kelly believes, *"teaching boils down to relationships and management. Having structure and routine in your classroom provides a safe and kind place for students to trust you, and once you have that, you have set yourself up for a positive and productive school year."* Kelly is also an avid runner, and she supports local organizations through running for a cause. She shared, *"it gives me great joy to fill my passion of running while supporting organizations in our community."* Thank you, Ms. Kelly Ambrose for your dedication to your students, our community, and our union. Your hard work and talent are evident in all that you do and all that you share with your OBMS and VUE family. Solidarity!

District Update

ERPL this week: Wednesday, November 1st is the 3rd ERPL of the school year. This learning time is scheduled as a “district based” ERPL. This training will provide information on ESE Accommodations requirements for instructional personnel.

Mandatory Required ESE Training: We have been contacted by Ms. Wiles and informed that due to a Systemic State Complaint that was received by the district, several corrective actions are now required for all employees (administrative, instructional, and support) who worked with specifically identified students. Ms. Wiles has scheduled this training to occur during the aforementioned ERPL time. If you have been identified as someone who needs this training, you received an email that provides the time and a link to join a TEAMs meeting during your ERPL window. If you did not receive an email from Ms. Wiles, this does not apply to you. The content that was scheduled to be provided to identified personnel during the ERPL will be made up during the contractual workday. You will not need to work outside of your contractual day or forfeit your planning period to complete the training. If you have any questions about these trainings, please contact your VUE member representative.

Mark Your Calendar: As we approach the holiday season, there are a few dates that should be marked on your calendar. Due to the district ERPL on Wednesday, only one (1) meeting before/after school is allowed this month. If you are scheduled for team meetings or faculty meetings more than once in November, please contact your steward or VUE member representative. You cannot be mandated or pressured to attend a “voluntary” meeting and you must be provided the information shared if you choose not to attend.

- November 10th – Veteran’s Day Holiday observed – Schools Closed
- Week of November 13th – NO MEETING WEEK due to interims (PLCs may occur on Thursday of this week only!)
- Week of November 20th – Thanksgiving Holiday – Schools Closed

Instructional Retention Supplement: The negotiated Retention Supplement for instructional staff will be paid in Tuesday’s paycheck for eligible personnel. As a reminder, the negotiated amounts are as follows:

VCS years of service:

Years	Amount (for each year of VCS Service)
7 - 14	\$60
15 - 19	\$80
20 - 24	\$100
25 +	\$160

Support Tentative Agreements & Ratification

On Thursday, VUE and VCS reached a tentative agreement for support personnel. The agreement includes the following changes:

Article 4 Section C.1: Union Assessments and Deductions- language was inserted in this article to preserve the ability to revert back to payroll dues deductions should FEA and

other unions prevail in the legal challenges currently taking place in Federal and State courts.

Article 13 Section 1.C: Work Scheduling – the language that previously afforded an additional hour of pay for paraprofessionals working at Plus One schools was amended now that the Plus One program is no longer offered. The new language ensures that extended work opportunities will be provided for paraprofessionals who work in schools that offer extended learning opportunities for students. This was done to provide paras the opportunity to earn additional income by supporting students who participate in tutoring programs.

Article 16: Compensation – the salary schedule for support personnel will be increased by 2.5%. Support personnel will receive a step on the salary schedule which will provide the 2.5% increase. The salary increase will be retroactive to July 1, 2023. The longevity compensation was expanded to include support professionals with 5 years of VCS experience, and the values for the longevity payments were increased as identified in the chart below.

Years of VCS Service	Longevity Supplement
5-10	\$150
11-14	\$300
15-19	\$600
20-24	\$800
25 -29	\$1,000
30+	\$1,200

The Tentative Agreements can be viewed in their entirety on the VUE website under Contracts and Salary Schedules. You can access the information here, <https://www.ourvue.net/contract-salary-scheduled/index?&ztv1=12&zsid=25> .

Ratification: The final date for the ratification vote will be shared on Monday afternoon, but the vote will occur the week of November 6th. If ratified, the agreement will be presented to the members of the school board for approval on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

If the board approves the agreement, the projected payment dates will be as follows:

- Longevity (to those who are eligible) – Friday, December 8, 2023
- Salary Increase – Friday, December 15, 2023
- Salary Retro – Friday, January 12, 2023

If the agreement is not ratified, the impasse status will remain, and we will continue to work toward an agreement. However, it is important to acknowledge that the impasse process will continue to move forward and if an agreement is not reached prior to the impasse hearing, the members of the school board will ultimately have the authority to impose a settlement for the period of one year. If this occurs, we will work to expedite the return to the table to reopen negotiations for the 24-25 contractual year.

If you have any questions about the Tentative Agreements, please contact your VUE member representative.

VAM Roster Verification

Due to the extreme circumstances surrounding the VAM scores for the 22-23 academic year, we are suggesting that all instructional personnel make it a priority to verify their rosters for the 2023-24 academic year.

We have reached out to the REA Department and searched the DOE website to verify the dates that the DOE Roster Verification Tool will be available to local school districts, but we are currently unable to find the official timeline. We will continue to request this information and guidance on how to correctly use the tool.

In prior years, DOE has provided a first semester and second semester window for roster verification. We expect the same for this year. Please know that it is critical that you verify your roster. Your VAM score will be calculated based upon the students reported on your roster. The DOE supplied the following information about the students used to calculate the VAM score.

Which students are used in the VAM? Districts submit data to the staff and student longitudinal data systems several times throughout the year during what are referred to as survey periods. Teacher and student data used for VAM come from the data submitted by districts during Survey 2 (Fall) and Survey 3 (Spring). These submissions contain student demographic information and class assignment data as well as teacher class data that are used to identify those students whose test scores will be used to calculate a teacher's VAM measure. Teachers are entitled by law to have an opportunity to review and correct their rosters for VAM calculation purposes. Districts can choose to conduct this process internally or use the Roster Verification Tool (RVT) provided by the FLDOE. RVT allows districts, schools, and teachers to verify their roster information and make necessary corrections in order to capture the most accurate and up-to-date data available. The RVT is open for District/School/Teacher verification shortly after the State Survey 2/3 processing period for Fall and Spring. Questions about how your district provides teachers with the opportunity to review and correct their rosters should be directed to your district's primary accountability contact.

Please be advised that as we are able to obtain additional information on the verification process and windows, we will share this information with you.

ESE Concerns

We continue to receive emails and phone calls about the working conditions for our ESE personnel and changes to reporting requirements for general education teachers who have students with IEPs on their rosters. We have always worked tirelessly to meet the needs of all learners, but due to recent allegations and scrutiny from agencies and individuals outside of VCS, the district has abruptly changed the methods used to monitor and collect data (academic, behavioral, and IEP data) and the transition has been difficult to say the least.

Your VUE staff is in constant communication with the district and often directly with Ms. Wiles to work to find solutions. We are trying to collaborate to create streamlined and efficient ways to meet the requirements and to minimize the amount of time spent completing paperwork that could otherwise be used to plan and prepare for instructing our students. We have scheduled a meeting with Ms. Wiles for Thursday, November 2nd. Our agenda for this meeting will include the following topics:

- DPS – job roles need to be clearly defined, roles related to compliance folders and the timeline to complete the work
- IEPF – goal monitoring logs (daily)
- SF – update on logs, leaving blanks when the teacher does not meet with students, timeline to complete IEPs, goal tracking expectations, lesson planning expectations
- Co-teachers – lesson planning expectations, data tracking and monitoring
- Separate Class- changes to the lesson planning requirements
- Gen Ed – accommodation tracking and intervals for reporting (may be addressed in the ERPL on 11-1), expectations for SF and Co-teach support
- Misc- over servicing of students beyond the required IEP minutes, the restoration of the planning day for paperwork, workload

We believe that Ms. Wiles is committed to finding solutions that will meet the requirements being imposed upon VCS by the DOJ while at the same time providing efficient and streamlined procedures for our instructional personnel. We must continue to communicate and collaborate on the process until we find solutions to these issues. This is not expected to be an easy fix, but if we continue to work together, we believe that we will get there. We will also set dates for an eastside and westside townhall meeting to allow for the open exchange of dialogue and to provide teachers and staff an opportunity to directly work with the District ESE leadership to find solutions to these issues.

Upcoming VUE Professional Learning

Your union continues to provide top notch professional development led by our members. These courses are free to VUE members.

ESE: Module #2 Building Relationships: Adults

Course # 72061
Section #107123
Time:

Dates:

November 6, 2023
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Module #3 Building Relationships: Stdnts

Course # 72229
Section #107126
Time:

Dates:

November 13, 2023
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Module #4 Classroom Strategies

Course # 72059
Section #107159
Time:

Dates:

November 27, 2023
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Module #5 Student Behaviors

Course # 72060
Section #107160
Time:

Dates:

December 4, 2023
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

FEA Professional Learning Opportunities

FEA'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
 NOVEMBER 2023

Wellness Wednesday
 November 1st
 5:30–6:30 pm EST

Wellness Wednesday is an informal virtual gathering one Wednesday a month. The main goal of these sessions are to remind you to take care of yourself and the importance of positivity, well-being, and mental health! Join us as we create a healing space together.

[Register here!](#)

Educators of Color
 November 28th
 5:30–7:00 pm EST

Weaving Our Wisdom
 Celebrating American Indian Heritage with Kathryn Fairbanks of Education Minnesota.

[Register here](#)

Elevating Successful Practices for Education Staff Professionals
 November 9th
 5:30–7:00 pm EST

Session Focus: Grief Sensitive Educator

Social-emotional supports are more important than ever. While bereavement is a common childhood experience, few educators have been trained to support grieving students. Yet we have an important role to play in supporting learning through grief. Join FEA for a 90-minute session via Zoom to learn five strategies of a Grief-Sensitive Educator, grounded in content AFT developed as part of the national Coalition to Support Grieving Students.

[Register Here via Email!](#)

K-12 Reading Exam Review Course
 October 28 & November 4th, 2023
 10:00 am–4:00 pm EST

Until June 2024, Florida legislation allows teachers to take and pass the K12 Reading exam to earn their reading endorsement (in lieu of the five reading competencies). This course offers a basic overview of the knowledge and skills for Reading instruction and application in all subject area classrooms while also reviewing the competencies covered in the FTCE K-12 Reading Exam. Sign up today!

[Registration Link—Click Here](#)
 Deadline: October 24th

The FEA PD Department is here to support our local unions and members!
 Director: Dr. Primrose Cameron, **North:** Blanca Sotelo, **Central/South:** Dr. Sarah Falk
 Email: fea@prdev.org

[Sign up here for the PD Newsletter!](#)

National Affiliate PD

NEA Micro-credentials

Additional Resources

Share My Lesson FEA Page

American Educator: A Journal of Educational Equity, Research, and Ideas

Reading Opens the World—AFT

Save the Date

Elevating Successful Practices for Education Staff Professionals

December 14th at 5:30 pm EST

Wellness Wednesday

December 6th at 5:30 pm EST

Human Trafficking Awareness Webinar

January 25th at 5:30 pm EST

In Solidarity,

Elizabeth Albert
President



SOLIDARITY, UNITY, AND STRENGTH!

As a member of the **Volusia United Educators** you will join with your colleagues to share your voice and expertise to shape the future of our profession.

Through **Solidarity, Unity, and Strength** of our membership, **VUE**:

- Is a leader in our schools and community on Public Education issues
- Fights to improve working conditions and pay for teachers and educational support professionals in Volusia County
- Provides top notch professional development and training for members
- Communicates weekly with our membership
- Stands for high quality Public Schools

Additionally, when you join **VUE**, you will receive many benefits from our **VUE** office and our state and national affiliates such as:

- Discount auto insurance
- Discounts on credit cards, cell phone service, car rentals, etc.
- Discount legal services
- And much, much more

In Florida you have a choice to make; you can unite with your colleagues as we make our Public Schools the best they can be, or you can stand alone.

The Volusia United Educators; Teaching Today's Children for Tomorrow's Future!

To join VUE, click the QR code below and complete the VUE Fastrack form to become a member today!

