

The Solidarity Report

Your weekly VUE Update

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Trust is built on telling the truth, not
telling people what they want to
hear.

— *Simon Sinek* —

SPECIAL EDITION: This Is Our Moment!

"Cold silence has a tendency to atrophy any sense of compassion."

~Tool

It has been just about a month since the truth about the machinations of the superintendent and the members of the school board were revealed during the final moments of the board meeting on February 13, 2024. If you have forgotten what occurred, please click this link for a brief summary, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BFEOUQfDac>.

Since that meeting, I have reached out to the board members on several occasions. At first, I reached out to offer them a solution and a pathway to rebuild the trust that has been broken with the employees of VCS. I spoke with four of the five, and none of them agreed to take action to stop the intervention with our PERC recertification. **Silence** from the board members.

Next, members of VUE, other local union leaders, and retirees attended the school board meeting on February 27th to urge the members of the board to stop the attacks on teachers, paras, and office specialists and to focus on the real problems within VCS, such as student behaviors, violence on our campuses, over testing, unreasonable timelines, ESE paperwork, and more. However, the **silence** from the board continued.

Then, out of nowhere, PERC sent an Order to Respond to the school board giving them until March 7th to decide if they were going to officially challenge our recertification. Again, I called each member of the board, yet only one, Ms. Anita Burnette, took my call. **Silence** from the other board members.

In response to the order from PERC, the board attorney, Ms. Dyson, requested an extension until Friday, March 15th to respond. We saw this as a good sign and an opportunity to speak to the board at the upcoming meeting on Tuesday, yet in true form, the board quickly scheduled an Executive Session on Friday, March 8th, essentially cutting off any opportunity for teachers, paras, office specialists, or any other stakeholder to engage with the board. They are attempting to **silence** us.

While we don't know for certain that the Order to Respond was discussed, we do know that there are no agenda items listed to discuss the response on the agendas for Tuesday's workshop or regular meeting, therefore, we can only assume based upon the board's history of making decisions outside of the public view, that the decision has already been made. This raises the question, is the board making decisions outside of the sunshine? Therefore, it is time to put an end to this nonsense once and for all. We cannot be **silent** about their inaction and their failure to communicate.

We have sent almost 1,200 emails to the members of the board urging them to end their meddling in our recertification, yet they continue to remain **silent**.

There are moments in life that change everything. This is one of them! We know that the board is refusing to engage, refusing to collaborate, refusing to listen, and refusing to work with us to make things better. The fraudulence of showing up at a school or worksite for a photo op, smiling and waving, and then walking out the door to leave us to handle the difficult tasks of meeting their demands is downright disturbing. In just one week, the number of vacancies for instructional personal has shrunk from 115 to only 68, and support personnel from well over 120 to 87. We know that this is yet another manipulation of the data to satisfy the narrative that VCS leadership wants us and the public to believe. How many of you have witnessed a colleague walk away from VCS within the last month or even the last week? We know that there will be more resignations and retirements at Spring Break. Our district is crumbling, and **WE** must save it.

We are asking members attend the school board meeting on Tuesday, March 12th. We need to show up in **red** to let this board know that we are done with the games, and we want action. We want them to stop the foolishness with PERC, we want them to stop over testing our students, we want them to provide relief from the unrealistic workload and timelines, we want them to do something about student behaviors and the violence in our schools, and we want them to stop taking pictures and start working with us to find solutions to our problems!

We are counting on you to take advantage of this moment, to attend the board meeting, and work to make a positive change for teachers, paras, and office specialists. If you are interested in speaking to the board on Tuesday, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org. We must show the superintendent and board members the power of unity and solidarity by being present on Tuesday. They are attempting to take away our voice, our rights, and our contract. We will not let them succeed.

"If we want to fight and win like never before, we need to energize, inform, and organize our members like never before." ~ Shawn Fain, UAW President

VUE- ACTION ALERT

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Please click the link below and send an email to the members of the board **NOW!** Please be sure to include your PERSONAL EMAIL in the contact information section. We are using the *fastaction* system from FEA. This system will allow all of the board members to receive your email with one click.

Also, we are asking that you *customize the message*. It is more powerful if you write your own message, but we have included a template to help with talking points.

Email link: <https://secure.ngpvan.com/EqC57KE4REeY0-ozPsoLIA2>

Please share this action request with your colleagues. We began this work just one week ago, and so far, we have sent 1,199 emails to the board. Let's hit the 1,500 mark by Tuesday's board meeting!

Also, we need to continue to recruit. You can use the QR code to help a colleague join. Please remember that it is now a two-step process and completing the online application (portal) is just the first step.

This is an exciting time of our union. We are being tested and whether we win or lose is up to us. As for me, I plan to fight with all I've got to save our rights, our protections, our contract, and OUR UNION!



Who is ready to stand with me and FIGHT for the things that we care about?
SOLIDARITY!

NEA RA & AFT Biennial Delegate Elections

NEA RA & AFT Biennial Delegate Elections Nominations are being accepted for the NEA Representative Assembly and the AFT Convention. The NEA-RA will be held in Philadelphia, PA., on July 3 – 7, and the AFT Convention will be held in Houston, Tx on July 22 -25. The VUE Executive Board has allocated funds to cover costs associated with the NEA-RA and AFT Convention for the automatic delegates only (President & Executive VPs).

Candidates for delegate positions must be members in good standing for a year prior to the conference, but all costs of travel, food, and lodging must be paid by the individual. Nomination forms can be obtained from the VUE office by emailing beth.friedl@floridaea.org or by calling 386-238-1605. **Nomination forms must be completed and returned to the VUE office no later than 4:00 pm, Friday, March 15, 2024 (faxes or emails will not be accepted).** An election will be held, if necessary, Wednesday, March 20, 2024. If you have any questions regarding the conventions or the delegate nomination process, please contact the office.

VUE Elections

The VUE Elections Committee is announcing the timeline and offices that will be elected for a three (3) year term beginning on July 1, 2024. The deadline to submit Nomination Petitions for officer positions is Wednesday, March 20, 2024.

This year, we will elect the following officers:

- President
- Executive Vice President for Instructional Staff
- Executive Vice President for Support Staff
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Vice President
- At-large Vice President for Support Staff
- 10 Constituent Vice Presidents

Any member in good standing for at least two full years may run for an officer position. To qualify as a candidate for one of the officer positions, interested members must obtain a nomination form from the VUE office and return the completed form, with at least 20 signatures of VUE members, representing at least 3 different schools, to the VUE office **no later than 5:00 pm on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. Faxes or emails are not accepted.**

Should elections be necessary, elections for the officers will take place on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. If you have any questions, or if you would like to obtain a nomination form(s), please contact beth.friedl@floridaea.org or call the VUE office at 386.238.1605.

Upcoming VUE Professional Learning

REGISTER TODAY!

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

There is still time to register for tonight's courses! Contact Dr. Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org

Managing Behaviors in the School Community

Course # 71630
Section #108379
Time:

Dates:

Monday, Mar. 11, 18, 2024
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Building Relationships w/ Students

Course # 72229
Section #108374
Time:

Dates:

Monday, March 11, 2024
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Classroom Strategies

Course # 72059
Section #108375
Time:

Dates:

Monday, March 18, 2024
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

ESE: Student Behavior

Course # 72060
Section #108376
Time:

Dates:

Monday, April 1, 2024
VUE Office
5:00 pm –8:00 pm

VUE Visits

The VUE staff visited Indian River Elementary School last week to provide lunch to our members and potential members. We had a wonderful time and fantastic conversations with the outstanding folks who work at IRE.



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!

