



The Solidarity Report

Your weekly VUE Update

1381 Educators Rd.

Daytona Beach, FL 32174

(386)238-1605

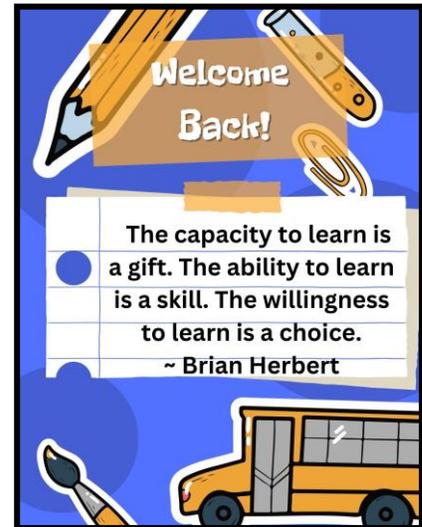
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Special Preplanning Edition **Welcome Back!**

On behalf of the VUE leadership and staff, welcome to the 2023-24 school year!

They say that time flies when you're having fun. This summer must have been a fun filled adventure for everyone because it certainly has flown by. It is hard to believe that in just a few short days, we will welcome our students back on our campuses and into our classrooms.

As teachers and support professionals, we have an immense responsibility, as we hold the future of the next generation in our hands. According to Article IX of the Florida Constitution, "The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida." Additionally, it is a paramount duty of the state to provide by law a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools.

It is a new day in Volusia County, and we have a new opportunity to create positive change. We are excited, encouraged, and eager to begin the work of the 2023- 24 academic year. We wish you the best and remember that we are VUE STRONG!



The State of OUR UNION

Over the summer the VUE staff, Executive board members, and several stewards have been relentless in the work to keep OUR UNION. We have focused on enrolling members in eDues and recruiting new members during the summer orientation meetings hosted by VCS. We have held phone banking events, used text messaging outreach, and member-to-member contact to complete this work.

Now that SB 256 is in full effect, it is illegal for your dues to be collected using payroll deductions. Additionally, we are now required to maintain 60% membership density for each bargaining unit. As we continue to close the gap to meet the density requirement, your stewards have been trained on how to execute our strategic plan to remain the exclusive bargaining agent for instructional personnel, office specialists, and paraprofessionals working in VCS.

Over the next two weeks, your steward(s) and/or member representative will host a 10-minute meeting at your site to share what YOU can do to make sure that OUR UNION and our contracts remain in place. This meeting is open to all teachers and support professionals, regardless of membership status. Ask a colleague to join you as you learn how to guarantee that the rights and privileges that have been hard-won over the years are not lost.

We are in the home stretch, this race is a marathon, not a sprint, and you have shown that you have the endurance and perseverance it takes to win. When we stand together, we can overcome any crisis we face. We are proving to those who desire to see us fail that we will not be bullied and that we will not relent.

Our agenda is not the agenda of a political party, it is the agenda of educating children and providing for the needs of those who do this work. We cannot rest until we overcome this current challenge. We believe in the power of us. We see you, VUE members, and we hear you. Together we will continue to rise. Together we will not be broken, and together we will be victorious. **SOLIDARITY!**

VSET Committee Update

The VSET Steering committee is made up of instructional personnel appointed by VUE and administrators appointed by VCS. The committee is responsible for the annual review of the VSET process and for providing recommendations for improvement to the Superintendent.

The committee recognized that the process for conducting evaluations has become cumbersome for teachers and administrators alike. The committee spent the majority of the 2022-23 year working to find a solution that would benefit all stakeholders. The following outcomes resulted from the work of the committee:

Category 1

- 1 walkthrough required in Domain 2 or 3 – first quarter
- 1 announced observation cycle – second quarter

- 1 mid-year evaluation (required by the state) – second quarter
- 1 walkthrough required, any Domain – third quarter
- 1 unannounced observation cycle – third quarter
- 1 final evaluation (required by the state) – third quarter

Category 1a

- 1 walkthrough required in Domain 2 or 3 – first quarter
- 1 announced observation cycle – second quarter
- 1 walkthrough, any Domain – third quarter
- 1 final evaluation (required by the state) – third quarter

Category 2 (3+ years of continuous service, with proficient or better IPS evaluations)

- 2 informal observations – minimum of 15 minutes in length – must show evidence for all components in Domains 2 and 3 – can occur in first, second or third quarter
- Teacher reflection Domains 1 and 4 (year-end) – third quarter
- 1 final evaluation (required by the state) third quarter

The majority of teachers working in VCS are identified as category 2 teachers. The changes to the evaluation process are to provide flexibility and relief to the individuals who have demonstrated proficiency in their instructional practice for a period of 3 or more years. Individuals can opt into a full observation cycle if preferred. The new process will allow for greater evidence of authentic and genuine teaching while providing greater opportunities for feedback and coaching, if required.

There are no changes to the DPP process. The changes to the VSET process will be discussed in detail during preplanning. Administrators have been trained on the changes and we are here to answer questions if you would like additional information.

We would like to thank the members of the VSET Steering committee for their hard work and vision to make the changes that will provide improvements for teachers and administrators within VCS.

Information on Open Enrollment

Open enrollment is available now. You must complete the open enrollment process by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, August 18, 2023.

You must participate in open enrollment, even if you are not making any changes. Failure to confirm your benefits, could result in the loss of your VCS benefits. You must have your employee ID number to complete the enrollment process.

Open enrollment is the only time you may make changes to your insurance and benefits for the plan year. This year, all benefit-eligible employees can enroll using:

- **Online via primeBENEFITS self-service** make your elections from your computer at: <https://vcs.primebenefits.io/>

- **ONE-TO-ONE PHONE Call:** Schedule an appointment with a Benefits Counselor to learn about your benefit options and enroll over the phone at a time that's convenient for you below (Please have your employee ID number ready when enrolling): Volusia Employee Benefits Enrollments https://book.appointment-plus.com/d66zx4b4/?service_id=5857
- **VPORTAL:** Click on the *primeBENEFITS* tile in your VCS Vportal account.

To decide what is best for you and your family, please take a moment to review the information that is available on the district's annual enrollment website:

<https://www.vcsedu.org/directory/departments/human-resources/risk-benefits-management-department/annual-enrollment> .

Be On The Lookout During Preplanning

There are a few things that you need to know as we begin the work of preparing for the academic year. We have tried to summarize them into the following points:

- **Pre-Planning Schedules** – We would like to remind you that during preplanning, at least ½ of the work time is to be used for completing tasks that you deem appropriate. You should have 13 hours during this week to work on the items that you feel are important and 1 hour each day for a duty-free lunch. You cannot be asked to participate in a “working lunch.” PLEASE look at your schedules for training and let us know immediately if you are not receiving the correct amount of contractual time for yourself during preplanning. We know that many of the trainings are “self-paced” Canvas modules and that meetings are shifting to a virtual platform. Regardless, you are still contractually bound to receive half of the time for yourself.
- **Master Schedules** – Article 9 of the Instructional Contract sets forth the working conditions that must be followed. The contracts can be found at <https://www.ourvue.net/contract-salary-scheduled/index>. If you believe that there are concerns with the master schedule at your school, please contact your steward or your member representative immediately.
- **Supplements** – Last year there was confusion about supplements. Here are a few key details on supplements.
 - All supplements listed in Class A, Athletics, Music, and Sponsors which the principal intends to fill but does not have an agreement in principle with an individual to perform shall be posted in each school site during pre-planning. Posting shall be by email, agenda or other written form and shall contain the available positions and the amount of the supplement.
 - Supplements are not automatic; they must be agreed upon by the recipient and the principal **during preplanning** or as soon as practicable. *This language was intended to provide flexibility for supplements offered after*

the beginning of the year. It was not intended to delay the signing of the Supplement Performance Order.

- A supplement may not be split unless there is agreement from the teachers involved.
- Supplements are paid for the performance of duties beyond the contractual workday and normal job responsibilities.
- Supplements at the election of the teacher, will be paid in either one lump sum after the completion of the duty or over two paychecks one at the end of each semester. The payouts will occur at the end of the first semester, prior to Spring Break or at the end of the year, depending on the date of the completion of the duty.

For a complete review of the contract language related to supplements, please visit, <https://www.ourvue.net/contract-salary-scheduled/index> .



0% Interest Loan from LAUNCH Credit Union

Once again, our friends at Launch Credit Union are offering the 0% Interest Loan to VUE members. This loan is so very helpful for those last-minute items that you need for yourself or your classroom.

This exclusive interest free loan is for VUE members only. You can borrow up to \$600 and take up to 6 months to pay it back. Credit qualifications are required. Call Launch today, at 800-662-5257, option 3, or apply online at www.launchcu.com .

Do not delay, act now in order to take advantage of this offer. If you need proof of your VUE membership, you can take a screenshot of a pay stub showing your dues deduction or ask the loan professional to contact our office, (386) 238-1605.

We wish you the very best for the coming school year and want to remind you that we are here to help. If you are in need of assistance this week, please do not hesitate to contact the VUE office. **SOLIDARITY!**

In Solidarity,

Elizabeth Albert
President

