

The Solidarity Report

Your weekly VUE Update

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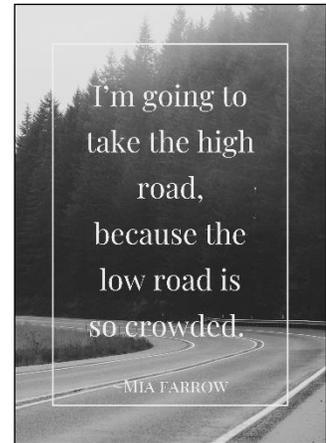
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Spotlight: Ms. Ebony Berry!



- * 10th year working as a professional educator with VCS!
- * Currently working as a Support Facilitation Teacher at Timbercrest Elementary
- * VUE Steward
- * Ambassador for the United Negro College Fund
- * Favorite Quote: “When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something. You must be bold, brave, and courageous and find a way... to get in the way.” ~ Representative John Lewis

Ms. Ebony Berry is an advocate. She is a tenacious individual who cares deeply for others. Ebony has the spunk and tenacity needed to speak up when things are not right. She is a shining light, and she brings hope and encouragement to those around her. Ebony has a master’s degree in social work and has demonstrated for over 20 years her expertise in working with children/at risk youth, and families in child welfare and therapeutic services. Ebony shared that she uses, “*her personal knowledge, family background, and elite skills to help better the lives of those she serves.*” Ebony pours her energy into educating her students and advocating for positive change. When she is not teaching, you can find her helping others, relaxing, enjoying seafood, or watching intense true-crime stories! Thank you, Ms. Ebony Berry, for your dedication to making our little corner of the world a better place. We are grateful for your brave and courageous spirit and your commitment to being on the right side of history. Your optimism is infectious, and we are so appreciative of all that you do for your students and VUE. Solidarity!

District Update

High School Open House Week: This is a no meeting week for high schools due to Open House.

Insurance Renewal: The insurance department has reached out to approximately 190 employees who did not re-enroll in the employee benefits options during Open Enrollment. This year was a mandatory enrollment year. That means that if you did not take action, your benefits could be in jeopardy. However, to avoid an interruption of coverage, the district has automatically rolled the benefits over to provide one last chance for employees who did not re-enroll. An email was sent to identified individuals on Friday which included directions to verify if coverage is desired. A response is required by Tuesday, September 26th. If you have questions, please contact the district insurance/benefits department TODAY at insurance@volusia.k12.fl.us.

ESE Expectations: Last week ESE personnel received an email that gave directives on changes to the process for the documentation of services, curriculum alignment, and goal data collection. The directives were overwhelming and arguably not able to be fully accomplished within the 7.5 hour workday. We know that the lack of clarity on the expected changes has created confusion and anxiety among our ESE professionals. We are scheduled to meet with Ms. Wiles on Monday afternoon to discuss our concerns with these directives. We will provide an update after our meeting.

VAM Scores & Summative Ratings

Florida Statute (1012.34) states that school districts are required to implement instructional personnel evaluations that include student performance. For those of you who are mid-career and veteran teachers, you will remember that this is the law that created performance pay and was implemented at or about the same time that steps were lost, advanced degree payments were tied to certification exams, and the ability to earn tenure was taken away.

As a result of the change in the law, VCS developed a multi-metric evaluation system that was system designed to support effective instruction and student learning. The evaluation is broken into two sections: the Instructional Practice Score (IPS) which includes the evaluation & DPP scores, and the VAM score. The IPS is 65% of the overall summative rating and the VAM score is the remaining 35%.

When the VAM subcommittee met last year we were advised that the VCS student growth model was outdated and used references to assessments no longer given within the county. Additionally, we were told that due to the change of assessment by the state, FSA to FAST, it was an ideal time to update the process for calculating the Volusia VAM. According to research conducted by the REA department of state approved student growth measures from the Central Florida Coalition of school districts, three models were presented for review: effect size, growth, and summative scores (for students).

After an extensive review of the models and predictive analytic calculations were run to determine which model would be most likely to provide the best outcome for instructional personnel, it was determined that the effect size model would be used to determine student

growth. The committee was told that the analysis of data generated results calculated using the effect size model that were compared to the VAM scores calculated from the 2021-2022 School Year. ~95% of teachers received the same VAM or had their VAM score increase. The effect size model had a slightly larger increase in teachers receiving a higher VAM score than the other models, which is why the committee decided to use this model.

Last week, summative scores were released and as a result of the revised system used to calculate the Volusia VAM, many teachers across the district were negatively impacted in their overall summative score. This was not the anticipated outcome based upon the research and predictive models shared with the VAM subcommittee. The summative score is used to determine the TSIA salary increase for annual contract teachers. Approximately 66% of the instructional personnel working within VCS are classified as annual contract teachers, therefore, many teachers across the district could potentially realize a reduced salary increase due to the impact of the Volusia VAM calculation. Additionally, teachers who have worked to achieve a rating of highly effective have been negatively impacted due to the use of effect size scores that have no direct correlation to the work of the individual.

Due to the significant issues with the Volusia VAM scores released last week, we have reached out to the district to intervene. We are working collaboratively with VCS to determine what has occurred and why the outcome is so different from the predictions shared during the committee review. Conversations between VUE and VCS are ongoing and we are meeting on Monday to discuss how to make corrections. We will share updated information as it is made available. We understand that this is a big problem and that we need to fix it quickly. Please understand that this situation is fluid and that VUE and VCS are working to find a resolution. There will be much more to share on this topic after Monday's meeting.

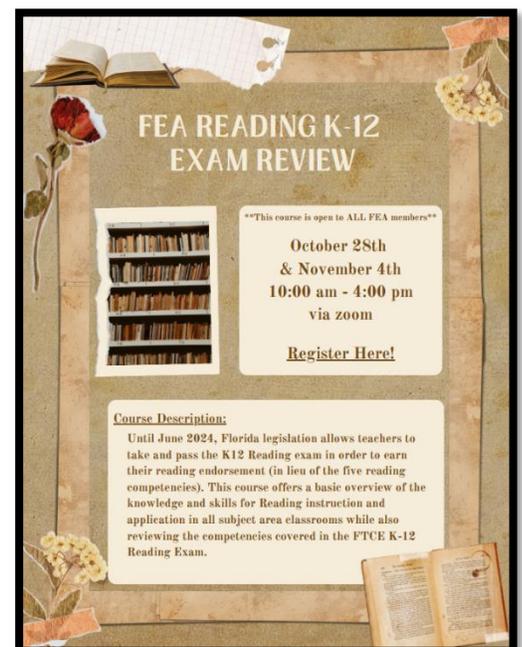
FEA Reading Exam Review

Attention!!! Attention!!! Are you looking to pass the Reading K-12 Exam?? Need a little refresher/support to prep for the test?

If so, register below to join us on October 28th, and November 4, 2023, for the Reading K-12 Exam Review. This course will provide an overview of the knowledge and skills you needed to pass this exam.

Don't delay, register today!

<https://tinyurl.com/5n8vdwed>



The poster is designed to look like a bulletin board with a light brown background and a dark border. It features several decorative elements: a red rose on the left, a stack of books in the top left, and a small basket of yellow flowers in the top right. The main title "FEA READING K-12 EXAM REVIEW" is centered at the top in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the title, there is a small image of a bookshelf. To the right of the bookshelf, a white box contains the text: "**This course is open to ALL FEA members**", "October 28th & November 4th", "10:00 am - 4:00 pm", "via zoom", and a "Register Here!" link. Below this, another white box titled "Course Description:" provides details about the course, mentioning that it is for teachers until June 2024 and covers reading competencies. At the bottom right, there is an image of an open book.

Volunteers Needed: Book Giveaway w/ FEA

READING OPENS THE WORLD

VUE Volusia United Educators

FEA

FIRST BOOK

JOE HEARN events

John H. Dickerson Community Center
308 Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114
Saturday, October 7th 10am-2pm

FREE BOOKS FOR ALL
See you Saturday, Oct. 7!

Reading Opens the World Family Literacy and Book Fair
20,000+ Free Books for Families and Educators!

- Books are available on a first-come, first served basis, so arrive early!
- Parents and guardians are welcome to choose up to 10 FREE books per child for home libraries, with a 30 books maximum limit per family.
- Educators and school staff may choose up to 50 FREE books for their classrooms.
- Pick up literacy information for parents in English and Spanish, professional development information for educators and how to help make books more accessible on banned bookmobile.
- Enjoy fun family-friendly activities: DJ, facepainting, hot dogs, Italian ices, a bouncy house and more!

For more information, please contact Dr. Primrose Cameron at primrose.cameron@floridaea.org

To volunteer, please go to:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8MBeSoZ885kvDTAgrhEFjCXI0YCmeWrpA-5MHM5ba4TTOg/viewform>

School and community program staff must be registered with First Book to receive free books. Registration is free and on-site registration will be available. To register in advance, please go to www.firstbook.org/IT

The Florida Education Association and the Volusia United Educators have an opportunity to bring 40,000 books to Volusia county to share with our children and families.

This large scale book giveaway/community-family festival for students, families, community members and educators is taking place in Volusia County on Oct 7, 2023. This event is part of the AFTs' *Reading Opens the World* initiative. The corporate partners include FEA, VUE, and Mayor Derrick Henry's Literacy Initiative. The location of the event is John H. Dickerson Community Center, 308 Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114

If you are able to volunteer to assist with the distribution of books, please respond using the link below. All volunteers will be gifted up to 30 books. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Primrose Cameron at primrose.cameron@floridaea.org.

To volunteer:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8MBeSoZ885kvDTAgrhEFjCXI0YCmeWrpA-5MHM5ba4TTOg/viewform> .

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!

