



Solidarity Report

“Talk is cheap. It is the way we organize and use our lives everyday that tells what we believe in.”
~ Cesar Chavez

Message from Elizabeth

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, power is defined in the following ways:

- *noun: possession of control, authority, or influence over others*
- *verb: to give impetus to*
- *adjective: of, relating to, or utilizing strength*

Marshall Ganz, Senior Lecturer in Leadership, Organizing, and Civil Society at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, defines power as, “turning what you have into what you need to get what you want.” The word, YOU, is the most critical part of this statement.

Any significant change that has occurred in our society has been won when ordinary people like you and me decide that they have had enough, and that the time has come to take action to get what we want.

What we want is simple. The ability to earn enough money to live a comfortable life. To not worry about how to pay for our basic needs like rent, food, or our health insurance. To not have to choose if we pay a bill or fill a prescription. To be treated as professionals, and to be able to retire with dignity and respect.

We also believe that teachers, paraprofessionals, office specialists and students should have the tools and resources necessary to achieve at the highest levels. Teachers should have the autonomy and time necessary to make professional decisions to meet the academic needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. We believe that paraprofessionals should be focused on supporting student learning; not fending off physical aggression from students. We believe that office specialists should concentrate on running our schools; not providing student supervision or doing the work of two people. One job should be enough.

This is why it is disappointing to see that some district leaders continue to micromanage every action that occurs during the instructional day and refuse to acknowledge the needs of the professionals working in our schools.

Enough is enough. It is time to shift the power within our district back to those who work with our students and make our schools run.

You and I must engage in the work of taking back our schools and our district. We need to stop trying to meet the unreasonable demands that have been placed upon you and start taking back your power. It is time to prioritize yourself, your family, your mental wellness, and begin to exercise your contractual rights. Your right to duty free planning, your right to limitations on meetings, your right to guaranteed work hours, clear and differentiated responsibilities, workplace protections, and the many other rights that have been won through your activism and advocacy.

You and I must ask ourselves this question, “*what am I willing to do to make things better?*”

When we stand together as colleagues and push back against unjust demands that infringe upon our contractual rights, we get results. We will only win what we are willing to fight for.

Our power to create the change you and I need is within our hands. Are you ready to stand up and prioritize doing the work to make your life better, or are you comfortable with the status quo? Only you can decide.

If you are ready to take the first step to taking back our power and creating the VCS we need and deserve, please join me and your colleagues at Tuesday night’s school board meeting.

The meeting begins at 4:30 pm and public participation starts at 6:00 pm. If you are interested in speaking to the board, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org.

If you just want to be present during the meeting, that is a good first step. Please plan to arrive before 5:30 pm. VUE is your union; it must be your voice and your actions that drive this work. Solidarity!



Collaborative Planning

As we travel from school to school, we are hearing a reoccurring statement about collaborative planning. We are learning that teachers are being told that they must participate in collaborative planning. **This is not correct.**

Collaborative planning is voluntary. You cannot be forced to do this. If your administration wants to offer payment for collaborative planning after school it is your choice to participate, but you cannot be mandated to do so.

Administrators are allowed to use one planning period per week for PLCs with the exception of the weeks when grades are due. If you are being mandated to meet for the purpose of collaborative planning, please contact the office at (386) 238-1605.

Calendar Update

As a result of contract negotiations, changes have been made to the meeting calendar for the 24-25 year. The changes included the following:

- Midterm weeks can now convene a PLC meeting on Thursday or Friday.
- ERPLs were reduced from 8 to 6. The dates for ERPLs are:
 - ~~August 28th - School ERPL~~
 - Oct. 16th - District ERPL
 - Nov. 6th - School ERPL
 - **Dec. 11th - now eliminated**
 - Jan. 15th - District ERPL
 - Feb. 19th - District ERPL but **now School ERPL**
 - **March 5th - now eliminated**
 - March 26th - District ERPL

As a reminder, there are limitations on the number of meetings allowed to occur before or after school. No teacher shall be required to attend more than two (2) meetings before/after school each month. Additionally, for months with less than fourteen (14) days, only one (1) meeting is allowed.

If you have questions or would like to discuss the meeting schedule at your school, please reach out.

Ed Modified

VUE stewards are scheduled to meet with Ms. Copeland, Director of ESE, today. Your site-leaders will bring forward issues and concerns that you are facing so that we can obtain solutions. If you have specific issues that you would like to be discussed, please contact your steward, TODAY.

Next, if you feel that you have a solid understanding (level of fluency) with Ed Modified and you are willing to help your VUE brothers and sisters, please complete this short survey, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5BC3232>.

Labor/Management Update

VUE and VCS met recently to discuss concerns brought forward from our members. Please see the update from our most recent labor/management meeting.

- There is a disproportionate number of students with disabilities in gen ed classrooms - **ESE district staff have audited master schedules. Some sites will receive additional ESE personnel. This is a work in progress**
- Who is responsible for providing counseling as a related service (CARS)?- **CARS belong to school social workers and school counselors, assignments are not standardized, both can provide the service. The IEP determines if CARS is provided in a group or individual setting. Mr. Micallef will be contacted to provide further information.**
- The amount of paperwork for teachers is overwhelming (Ed Mod., BIP tracking, 504 & MTSS interventions, Seizure logs, attendance, etc.) - **Ms. Copeland will be contacted to provide a response to this concern.**
- What is the timeline for teacher lead money? - **dates for the window to accept the money will be provided**
- Is there a hiring freeze for substitutes? - **No, there were 660 individuals who applied to be substitutes in July. The HR department is working to process them, but it takes time. HR is also processing teachers, paras, and other job roles within the district. There are 1,200 approved subs ready to work in VCS as of our meeting.**

The next labor/management meeting will occur soon. We will continue to keep you updated on the topics and responses we receive from the district.

Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month


Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The day of September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for several Latin American countries.




VUE Professional Learning

If you need ESE points for recertification, register today using MyPGS for the following courses. VUE courses are developed by members for members. Take advantage of these no cost, high quality workshops that are sure to help improve your practice. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org.



ESE Building Relationships with Students Professional Learning

Presented by Volusia United Educators
1381 Educators Rd. Daytona Beach, FL 32124
Facilitator: Paulette McKibbins-Shed & Jeffrey Turner




Course# 72229 Session# 110936 Format: Face 2 Face

Monday September 23, 2024 - 5:00pm – 8:00pm


Note: This course is designed to deepen the general education teachers' understanding of students with disabilities and their exceptional needs. It will broaden their knowledge and skills while exploring how to make accommodations as well as addressing the learning needs of ESE students. It will encourage positive interactions and supportive relationships among teachers, students, parents, and other adults who support student learning.

In-Service Points: 4



ESE Classroom Strategies Professional Learning

Presented by Volusia United Educators
Facilitator: Paulette McKibbins-Shed & Jeffrey Turner



Course# 72059 Session# 111058 Format: Face2Face

Monday September 30th, 2024 5:00pm – 8:00pm

The participants in this course will learn the requirements of establishing a quality learning environment essential for all students more especially ESE. Components include classroom structure, consistent procedures and environmental accommodations to promote learning along with other ways the environment can be tailored for ESE students.

4 Inservice Points



Talk to a colleague today about why you are a member of your union. Share your story and encourage them to join. Share the QR code or link below.

If they complete their application process and join our VUE family, we will send you an appreciation gift.



www.ourvue.net/membership/index

