



Solidarity Report

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.” ~ John Wesley

Settlement Agreements

In an unprecedented turn of events, the Collective Bargaining Agreements for the Support and Instructional bargaining units were settled last week. We cannot recall a time during the last decade when both contracts have been settled before Labor Day. These settlements were made possible due to the hard work and dedication of the members of the VUE and VCS bargaining teams. We would like to extend our most sincere gratitude to the VUE members who volunteered their time and contributed their expertise to negotiating the new language and compensation packages for support and instructional personnel.

While the agreements are not perfect, they have created improvements that will benefit our members. A FAQ document and compensation calculation sheet have been created and sent to our stewards to be distributed. Please share this information with your colleagues who have not yet joined VUE to help them recognize the power of our union.

Although the FAQ documents provide answers to many questions, there seems to be the need to provide additional clarifications.

One of the questions that has been asked is, “why did VUE settle so quickly?” It has always been our preference to work efficiently and effectively so that the language improvements and compensation can be provided to personnel as soon as possible. However, we are living in a very different moment in time, and this must be a consideration during negotiations.

With the passing of SB 256 (anti-union legislation which removed payroll dues deductions, and set the required membership density at 60%), we are working to overcome the external threats that are being waged against public sector unions. Additionally, we are also pushing back against internal challenges that continue to be alleged against our union.

Until VUE membership in both units exceeds the required 60% density, we will need to be strategic in our approach to negotiations. When our membership grows, our power and ability to influence better outcomes at the bargaining table increases.

Moreover, bargaining for the instructional unit has also been impacted by actions of the State Board of Education.

The State Board has usurped local control by mandating that districts have an plan to distribute the TSIA funds in place by October 1st. This is an example of governmental overreach and the meddling of appointed individuals into the business of local school districts. The penalty for not reaching an agreement by October 1st is that the School Board Chair and Superintendent are required to stand in front of the members of the State Board and explain why an agreement has not been reached. We know that the potential consequence for not meeting the October 1st deadline has impacted the members of our school board.

We believe that if we had not reached an agreement, that the potential for the board to declare impasse was very real. We also know that when an impasse is declared, we can continue to bargain, but the board has the ability to “impose” what they want us to have, and there is no obligation to honor any of the tentative agreements that have been reached. Having control and the ability to negotiate how to distribute funding is advantageous and enables us to achieve our goal of reducing salary compression for our mid-career and veteran teachers, while also doing the most good for the most people.

The ratification for both contracts will take place during the week of September 16th. Details for the vote will be shared later this week.

If you have questions about the settlement agreements, please contact our office at (386) 238-1605. You can access the Tentative Agreements on the VUE homepage (www.ourvue.net). Solidarity.



Support Staff PERC Election

The outcome of the PERC Support Staff Election will be determined on Thursday, September 5th. The ballots will be counted in the office of the Public Employees Relations Commission at 10:00 am. VUE president, Elizabeth Albert and Tracy Butler, FEA Regional Resource Specialist, will travel to Tallahassee to be present during the counting of the ballots.

Upon the conclusion of the vote tally, the election results will be shared.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the process to retain VUE as the official bargaining agent/union for office specialists and paraprofessionals within VCS.

The election for instructional personnel will be scheduled next. We do not have a date yet, as the process is facilitated by PERC. We will be sure to inform you when the election begins.



Class Size Survey

Article IX, s. 1(a) of the Florida Constitution establishes a limit of 18 students in prekindergarten through grade 3 classrooms, 22 students in grades 4 through 8 classrooms, and 25 students in grades 9 through 12 classrooms. The Class Size Amendment was passed to ensure that our classrooms are environments that are conducive to teaching and learning.

The Florida Legislature has reduced the effectiveness of the Class Size Amendment through the years, and most recently removed any financial penalty for districts who violate the limitations. Additionally, we know that class size is now determined using a "school-wide average" and only applies to classes considered to be core classes.

The district met on Friday, August 30th to review master schedules and class sizes. We know that they have completed the initial review of elementary and will move to secondary this week. Any changes in allocations will be communicated within the next two weeks. VUE will work with VCS to navigate and displacements/reassignment of personnel if necessary.

We believe that the district needs to prioritize following the Class Size Amendment requirements. We must ensure that our students are able to receive the high quality instruction that our VCS teachers are known to provide. VCS must also ensure that our classrooms are safe. Overcrowding of classrooms impacts more than just academics. We are hearing that some classes have students sitting on the floor, and that secondary PE and elective classes have upwards of 40 or more students.

We are hopeful that the district will be able to balance the classes as they have promised. We will continue to monitor this situation and if relief is not provided, we will escalate the issue.

FEA RETIREES INNOVATION GRANT!



COMING SOON!!

**Florida Education Association-Retired
\$150 INNOVATIVE GRANTS**

Are you an FEA member? Do you have an idea that would benefit your students? Is there a project you would like to do in your classroom that you otherwise cannot afford?

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE AUGUST 1

See your Building Rep or contact your FEA-Retired District Director for a quick and simple application!



Do you have an innovative and creative idea to enhance student learning?

Need a few dollars to make it a reality?

Applications are now available for the FEA Retired Innovation Grant.

Contact the VUE office today.



Student Loan Debt Relief

REGISTER NOW for the NEA webinar to help VUE members create a strategic plan to tackle student loan debt. Empower yourself with knowledge and take control of your financial future!

Scan the QR Code to register. The webinar will be held on Wednesday, September 18th beginning at 5:00 pm.



NEA Student Debt Navigator powered by Savi

Find Student Loan Debt Relief.

Find information about any forgiveness or cancellation programs you may qualify for, along with how much you can save.

[Get Started](#)



September 18th
5:00 PM

**SCAN OR
CLICK HERE
TO
REGISTER**



Labor/Management - Update

On Wednesday, VUE and VCS met for our second labor/management meeting of the year. The updates are included in red.

- Support/additional training for Ed. Modified - **Gen Ed teachers tracking accommodations – principals will schedule a training time during the workday. Special area & elective teachers are tracking accommodations for all ESE students on their roster. Special area and elective teachers should only have a few accommodations that must be tracked. The template can be prepopulated to only identify the appropriate accommodations. A suggestion to make the tracking more manageable is to create templates on a rotating basis (follow the special area or bell schedules). Teachers can check N/A if the accommodation is not applicable.**
- **Monitoring & Tracking for 504 plans in Ed Modified -Ed Modified is not set up to track 504 plans. Teachers should continue to use the current method for tracking/monitoring.**
- **Class Sizes - See Above**
- **Coverage when 1:1 paraprofessionals are out - The attempt is made to obtain a para sub. Coverage should be provided by Admin for special area and lunches. Teachers should not be expected to forfeit their planning and lunch. If planning and lunch are impacted, please call see your steward on contact the VUE office.**
- **FOCUS attendance - expectations & process - waiting for follow up from VCS**
- **HB 1473 - door coverage in secondary - This is a continued work in progress. We sent an email to the district asking for an inclement weather plan during thunderstorms. We are waiting on a response.**

If there are issues and concerns that you need resolved, please contact the VUE office (386-238-1605). We will add them to an upcoming labor/management agenda.



VUE Professional Learning



ESE IEP/IDEA Professional Learning

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

Monday September 9, 2024 * 5:00 – 8:00pm



Course# 72058 Session# 110868 Format: Face2Face

This course will be an overview of federal, state and district requirements as participants will understand the federal law governing educational requirements for students with disabilities such as:

- Understand the parameters of IDEA educational requirements for students with disabilities
- Understand the purpose and criteria for quality inclusion practices in public schools
- Recognize the consequences of non-compliance
- Foster the teachers consistent use of the IEP and involvement with the IEP Team
- Broaden the teacher's knowledge and skills in making accommodations and meeting the needs of ESE students

In-Service Points: 4

Note: Please register through Volusia County Schools MyPGS. If there are any questions, contact Dr. Lekita Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org or call the VUE Office at 386-238-1605 for registration. Non-VUE members will be required to pay a registration fee prior to the start date.

Fall 2020/LRH

