



Solidarity Report

“Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. The means used are not important; to alienate human beings from their own decision making is to change them into objects.”
 ~ Paulo Freire

District Update

Mark Your Calendar:

- Next week is a NO MEETING WEEK. No meetings are allowed to occur before, during, or after school due to the TDD scheduled for January 6, 2025. IEP, MTSS (PST) and 504 meetings are the only exceptions. These meetings should be limited.
- THERE IS NO EARLY RELEASE THE WEEK OF 12/16. The hour will be used to make up instructional time lost during Hurricane Milton
- VSET REMINDER: DPP #1 (for instructional personnel working toward a Distinguished rating) is due on Friday, December 20, 2024 at 5:00 pm.

VAM Roster Verification:

The window for teachers to verify student course enrollment (rosters) for the purpose of school scores and individual State VAM calculations is now open. The deadline to complete the Roster Verification is DECEMBER 23, 2024. Each school has a Roster Verification Coordinator who will support teachers with this process.

Rosters are to be verified based upon the enrollment of students in your class/course on **October 11, 2024**, not their attendance.

We strongly recommend that ALL TEACHERS verify their roster. It is extremely important that you take the roster verification opportunity seriously, as this process has the potential to impact school scores, an individual’s State VAM or Student Growth Measure, and your Final Summative Evaluation score, which impacts the salary earnings for annual contract teachers.

Mid-Year Self-Assessment:

The Mid-Year Self-Assessment is due Friday, January 10, 2025.

If you are a considered a Category 2 teacher for the purpose of your VSET evaluation, we are recommending that you consider completing the **Mid-Year Self-Assessment**.

The mid-year self-assessment will provide the opportunity to submit evidence in Domains 1 and 4, which are considered the “off-stage” components of the evaluation.

Completing the Mid-Year Self-Assessment, allows you to reflect on successful strategies and to identify achievements within your professional practice. It also allows you to provide evidence in Domains 1 & 4 that evaluators may not regularly observe. Finally, your evaluator will be able to review your contributions and align their observations with your documented efforts. If discrepancies arise between your self-assessment and evaluator observations, there’s time to address them, align expectations, and improve before year-end evaluations

If you have any questions about the mid-year self-evaluation or any VSET related issue, please contact Dr. Lekita Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org.

January 6, 2025:

Teacher Duty Day and final duty day for paraprofessionals. Grades are due for the second quarter at the end of the day.



VCS Health Insurance

Now more than ever, it is important to make informed choices when it comes to spending your money. Decisions about your health insurance are included in this area.

If you participate in the district health insurance, you have probably noticed a significant increase in the cost of your premiums, copays, and out-of-pocket expenses over the last few years.

During contract negotiations this year, your union was successful in negotiating an increase of \$40 to the district contribution to the health insurance premiums (\$605 per month) and the continuance of the free plan for the employee only HMO 2 plan, yet the costs of health insurance continue to be an area of great concern.



VCS Health Insurance cont.

As the members of the Insurance Committee continue the work of advocating for you, we have been told by Brown & Brown (VCS contracted Insurance Broker) that our current Loss Ratio (LR) is approximately 107%. The target LR is about 82%.

Loss ratio is a financial metric used in the insurance industry to measure an insurance company's profitability. It's the ratio of total losses incurred to the total premiums earned over a specific period of time. At this point, the plan is currently losing money, according to the data provided by Brown & Brown, and this could result in higher renewal rates for next year.

What can I do to help lower the LR?

Of course no one at VUE or VCS is suggesting that you or your dependents forego medical care when you need it. However, there are options that can save you and the plan money.

- **Doctor On Demand** - Connect with a medical provider in minutes, anytime of the day or night. Get a diagnosis and treatment plan in minutes, not hours or days. Have your prescriptions sent to your preferred FHCP pharmacy. **\$0 copay for general medicine.**
- **Extended Hours Care Centers** - The Extended Hours Clinics (there are clinics throughout the county, Palm Coast, and St. Augustine) offer same day- walk in appointments at a cost of just \$8. Using the clinics will save you time and money!
- **Pharmacy Benefits**- FHCP pharmacy and Walgreens are considered in network for prescription drug coverage. The Triple Option Plan also recognizes Publix. When filling prescriptions, you can also use apps like GoodRx and Single Care to compare prices, search for coupons and discounts. Additionally, FHCP offers many free medications for cholesterol, diabetes, heart and blood pressure when you fill your prescription at an FHCP pharmacy or through FHCP prescriptions by mail.

For more information on how to better understand your VCS health insurance, please click [here](#)

Know Your Contract



It is important to know your contract in order to ensure that the rights and privileges that have been negotiated are provided to you. Listed below are a few contractual provisions that you should know.

- Support and Instructional personnel are to be provided 24 hours notice prior to meeting with administration. The written notification of the meeting should also contain the purpose of the meeting.

- Support professionals are to be compensated for any work that is required beyond their contractual workday. That means that if you are waiting at the bus loop supervising students beyond your contractual day, you must be compensated for that time or relieved from supervising the students.
- Support Professionals should not have the total responsibility for the control or direction of students unless they have received the district's substitute teacher training. Office Specialists should not be asked to work as substitutes or supervise students.
- If a discipline referral is written, the teacher may make recommendations for student discipline, however, administration has the authority to make the final decision on the disciplinary outcome.
- Prior to the readmission to the classroom, the principal or designee will communicate, preferably in writing, with the teacher who referred the student. If the teacher disagrees with the principal's decision to readmit the student, the teacher shall make is so known in writing. If you are not receiving communication about the dispensation of discipline after you have written a referral, please let us know. We believe that this contractual obligation is not occurring and we need specific examples to take to the district.

VUE Professional Learning

Your union continues to provide you with top notch professional learning that is designed to meet your needs. VUE PL is facilitated by members for members. The following face-to-face course will be offered when we return from winter break.

Make sure that you register today using MyPGS. There are only a limited number of seats and they will fill up quickly!

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Lekita Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org.

ESOL Language & Literacy
Course #24241
Section#112390

Beginning on Monday, January 13, 2025

(This is a 10 week course)

Concluding on Monday, March 24, 2025

5:00-8:00 at the VUE Office



VUE Cares!

VUE is proud to partner with our national affiliates to offer our members the resources that matter. One of the benefits that you have as a member of VUE is access to NEA's no cost mental health support.

Times are tough and the world around us is moving at a frantic pace. Take advantage of the ability to manage your mental health needs through evidence-backed tools to manage stress, anxiety, depression, or whatever you are going through. Reach out today by scanning the QR code below or click [here](#) for more information.



Explore no-cost virtual mental health services through the NEA Mental Health Program

- Access AbleTo's Self Care+ program through an easy-to-use mobile app
- On-demand evidence-based tools, guided meditations and breathing exercises
- Personalized and curated content based on your unique needs
- Weekly wellness check-ins, habit tracking, mood tracking and more!

Learn More
neamb.com/mentalhealth



Exclusive to NEA members, the NEA Members Insurance Trust offers NO-COST ACCESS to the NEA Mental Health Program.

nea Member Benefits

IMPORTANT REMINDER!

Volusia County School Board's
December Meeting
Tuesday, 12/10/24
200 N. Clara Ave., Deland

The meeting begins at 4:30pm, but we suggest you arrive by 5:30pm for the 6:00pm public participation.

At the meeting you will be able to:

- Be present and engage in the work of your union
- Share your story
- Provide suggestions for improvements
- Learn how your elected officials conduct the business of VCS

If you are interested in speaking to the board or for more information, email elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org



Jeff Bezos made \$10,000
in the time it took you to read this

unionize



Ask a colleague to join your union today. Let's end the calendar year by increasing our membership. To access the online application, click [here](#) or scan the QR code below.

