



Solidarity Report

“You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have.” ~ Bob Marley

FAST Assessment Reminders!

As mentioned in last week’s Solidarity Report, the PM2 window has opened. The window for PM2 of the FAST Assessments will continue this week and through January 24, 2025 (to allow for makeup assessments).

If you are a test administrator, please make sure that you fully understand the expectations of administering these assessments.

If you have not be officially trained and understand the expectations for administering an assessment, **YOU SHOULD NOT BE ADMINISTERING THE TEST.** I know that this sounds like common sense, but we are hearing about situations that have occurred due to the lack of trained certificated educators on campuses and the last minute responses to cover the need. **Testing without being fully trained can put your certificate in jeopardy. DON’T DO IT!**

Also, we have received numerous complaints related to issues with computers during last week’s assessments. Please remember that you are prohibited from providing any assistance to students that can be perceived as “helping” them with the test. We strongly urge you to contact your Testing Coordinator if any student experiences issues during the assessment.

Additionally, we continue to hear about students who take an extended amount of time to complete the assessments. We understand that when you have students who are testing for 2 or more hours, it impacts your ability to continue teaching the other students. Our recommendation is to use your professional judgement on how to use the academic time with those students who have completed the assessment. Perhaps remediation of low performing standards, a fun activity that is aligned to a standard, or use the time to provide enrichment on a grade level standard. You know your students the best and what they need to be successful.

Additionally, please remember that testing accommodations are determined by a student’s IEP. There seems to be a misunderstanding about small group testing. Small group testing is a district best practice with students in Kindergarten due to the need for additional supervision. If you are considering using small group testing for any student in grades 1 and above who does not have this accommodation on an IEP, we need to speak with you before you administer the assessment.

Allegations of testing irregularities/violations are very serious and can lead to district and state level investigations and possible impacts to your teaching certificate.



VUE Member Survey!

As we work to develop a plan of action for the second semester, we need to determine the issues that are important to you and the actions that you are willing to take to make the changes you need.

Last week, VUE Stewards were sent a link to a survey that should have been forwarded to you.

If you have not yet completed the survey or if you did not receive the link, we ask that you take a few minutes to complete the survey now.

SURVEY LINK: <https://forms.gle/WG49CRhjiBjvcWfcA>

Our union is a collective of teachers, paras, and office specialists who believe that things can be better. We are driven by your voice and your actions. If you want things to change for the better, and you have solutions to make these changes, please complete this survey today. We have more than 2,600 members in our union, and we need to hear from everyone!



SOLIDARITY!



It's Better In a Union!

It is no secret that we believe that everyone deserves the right to belong to a union.

A union is you and your co-workers coming together as a team to make improvements at your workplace.

Union members work together to negotiate and enforce a contract with management that guarantees the things you care about like decent raises, affordable health care, safer workplaces, job security and a stable schedule.

There is a place for everyone in our union, and no matter what job role they hold, we believe our colleagues deserve to be able to make ends meet, have a good life and plan for the future.

Because we care, we have taken the necessary steps to petition the Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) in Tallahassee to hold an election to bring the former AFSCME eligible workers into VUE. PERC has approved our petition and has sent a Notification of Sufficiency and a Notice to Employees that an election will be forthcoming.

The notification below should be posted in conspicuous locations where the former AFSCME eligible employees will be reasonably apprised of the notice.

If you are interested in helping spread the word about the pending election to custodians, bus drivers/attendants, school way cafe workers, delivery personnel, campus advisors, guardians, and other former AFSCME eligible friends, please do so. It has taken us longer than expected to reach this goal, but we are getting closer. We still do not have a date for the election, but we can work to make sure that our friends know how much we want them in our union family! Solidarity.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

**FROM THE
STATE OF FLORIDA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RELATIONS COMMISSION**

The attached petition has been filed seeking an election to determine whether certain employees desire to be represented by an employee organization for the purpose of collective bargaining. If an election is held, a Notice of Election will be posted giving complete details for voting.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT UNDER FLORIDA LAW:

- To self-organization
- To form, join or assist employee organizations
- To bargain collectively through a chosen representative
- To act together for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection
- To refrain from any or all such activities

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RELATIONS COMMISSION
4708 Capital Circle Northwest, Suite 300
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
850-488-8641

**THIS IS AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT NOTICE
AND MUST NOT BE DEFACED.**

PERC Form 5
(Rev. 02/2021)

Office Specialists - We Hear YOU!

As we travel from school to school we continue to hear common concerns. One of the most frequent issues continues to be the negative impact of HB 1743 on certain Office Specialists.

What know that due to a variety of reasons, OS personnel are unable to complete their work because they are continuously having to stop what they are doing to open doors for students and adults. Some OS have also shared that due to the proximity of their office to the door, the lack of cameras, buzzers, and enough staff to share this new responsibility, they are walking back and forth down the hallway more than they are able to be at their desk to complete their work.

We know that HB 1473 was an unfunded mandate that came down from elected officials who have little to no experience working in a public school, but it is the duty of district leaders to create a working environment that actually allows for the work to get done.

If you are an OS who is unable to complete your work due to the constant interruption of "door duty", we ask that you begin to keep a daily tally chart each time you have to stop what your work to answer the door. We need data on the number of times each day that you have to answer the door in order to show district leaders the severity of this impact. We ask that you track the interruptions for a period of one week. We will send out a survey on Monday, February 3rd to ask for your data. We cannot make this change without your help. The solution to this problem must come from the OS who are being impacted! If you have any questions, please call the office (386-238-1605).



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 ESE courses are currently being offered.

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

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

ESE: IEP/IDEA

Course #72058

Section#112607

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
5:00-8:00 pm at the VUE Office



ESE: Building Relationships w/ Adults

Course #72061

Section #112608

Tuesday, February 18, 2025
5:00 - 8:00 pm at the VUE Office



Know Your Rights!

Most educators will go through their entire career without facing disciplinary action. However, it is still important to know and be familiar with your rights should you or your coworkers need to exercise them.

Being called into a meeting with your supervisor or administrator can seem frightening. It is important to stay calm and remember that you have the RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION, also known as the “Weingarten Rights”.

1. Remember: If a reasonable person would believe that discipline could result from the meeting, you have the right to representation.
2. Ask: “What is the purpose of the meeting?” Could discipline result from the meeting? If so.....
3. State: “I want union representation.” You can ask for representation at any time during the meeting.

IF YOU ARE DENIED REPRESENTATION:

DO NOT be insubordinate if denied representation.

- Attend the meeting.
 - Keep asking for union representation.
 - Take good notes AND continue to ask for representation.
- Note the time of request and the time of denial of request.

DO NOT sign or agree to anything. DO NOT make or write statements. CALL the VUE office immediately for assistance, 386-238-1605. Do not attempt to navigate this on your own. Remember, as a member of your union, you are never alone!!



Sick Leave Bank

It's the season when unexpected illnesses arise. Don't wait until it's too late, join the Sick Leave Bank now.

It's simple!

All you need is a minimum of one year of employment, 5 sick days accrued, and one-day sick leave donation. Let the sick bank be the silver lining in the cloud of a catastrophic illness.



Please contact Dr. Lekita Howard at 386-238-1605 or lekita.howard@floridaea.org if you have questions.

JOIN NOW!

VUE Office Hours

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the VUE office will be closed on Monday, January 20, 2025.

The office will reopen on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 8:30 am.

