

Solidarity Report

“Do whatever you can to make the world a better place in every action that you take!”

~ Patrick Mahomes

The More You Know: Referrals & the Student Code of Conduct

We have received several calls recently about student violence and the lack of support from administrators and district leaders. We need to correct a few misunderstandings.

First, there is no limit on the number of referrals that can be written, this includes students with disabilities, who are not exempt from receiving referrals.

Pursuant to Florida Statute 1003.32 and our Collective Bargaining Agreement, teachers are tasked with keeping good order in the classroom and other places in which they are assigned to be in charge of students. As such, teachers can have disobedient, disrespectful, violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students removed from the classroom for behavior management intervention. A referral should be written to document the occurrence.

Next, Article 18 of our contract states, *“Prior to readmission to the classroom, the principal or designee will communicate, preferably in writing, with the classroom teacher who referred the student.”* This means that the outcome of the referral (discipline or other actions) must be shared with you. It is a violation of the contract to return the student to the classroom without this communication. If this is happening, we need to know.

Additionally, the district Student Code of Conduct is available on Board Docs/ VCS Policies, for elementary and secondary students (208 E & S). Within each document, there are expectations, responsibilities, and requirements regarding student discipline. The documents define disciplinary offenses and responses, and classifies each into levels of offense and response. If you have not yet saved a copy of the Student Code of Conduct as a reference, we encourage you to do so. This document will assist you when determining if students are receiving the correct consequence when disrupting the learning environment or acting inappropriately.

Finally, we have received several complaints that SROs and Deputies are no longer assisting teachers and staff with pressing charges when they have received an injury as a result of student violence if the student has an IEP. We are working with FEA legal on a response to this issue. We believe that your safety is the primary responsibility of the district. We have spoken with Captain Smith and Mrs. Copeland and will continue to work with them. There is a belief by the district that the DOJ

settlement agreement supersedes the contract language that states the Superintendent shall assist an employee in filing charges against an individual who assaults/batters or inflicts bodily harm causing injury to a teacher. As we work to ensure that all students are safe, district leaders must also ensure that teachers and staff are protected from student violence. There is much more to come on this issue!



VUE Black History Month Contest

VUE’s Black History Month Contest is designed to encourage students to research the various and profound ways that labor of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, involuntary and voluntary – impact the lives of all people.

The contest is open to all Volusia County students. Students are eligible to win a \$50 gift card. Two (2) winners will be awarded at each level. The categories are Essay and Visual Arts. Each submission shall include the following criteria:

- All work must be an original essay (typed) or original art work by the student
- Typed entries are limited to 500 words
- All submissions must be received by Friday February 28, 2025
- Theme: “African Americans and Labor”
- Winners will be announced March 3, 2025
- Please include grade, school and teachers name

Submit entries to: **Lekita Howard at VUE**

1381 Educators Road, Daytona Beach, FL 32124 or lekita.howard@floridaea.org



VUE Action Alert

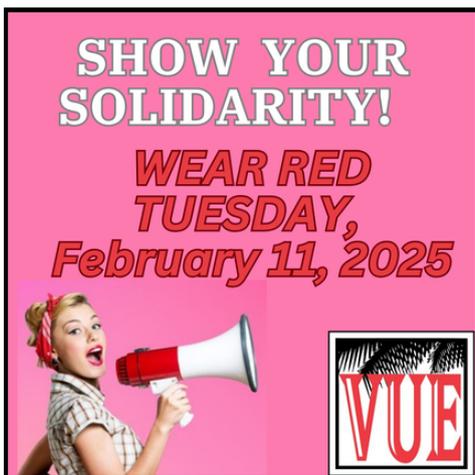
We are asking teachers and staff to **WEAR RED** on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. These are the days when the members of the school board meet. It is time that teachers and staff unify around the issues that are important to us. By **WEARING RED**, we are advocating for better working conditions, increased and improved student learning environments. When members **WEAR RED** in a collective action, it puts pressure on the board and district leadership to address our issues. It is also a way for teachers and staff to show solidarity and united action.

We are also asking individuals to email the board members about the negative impacts of over testing on the students and our ability to teach. The individual email addresses for each board member are listed below. Please remember to use your personal email, be professional and tell the truth. Talking points may include:

- *negative impacts to instructional learning time*
- *rigid testing schedules (no flexibility in testing dates)*
- *extended time allowed for testing- some students test for more than 3 hours*
- *anxiety and test stress on students*
- *redundant process - data from teacher formative/summative assessments, PM 1 & 2 should be sufficient indicators of student progress*
- *retests & test prep cause students to lose academic instructional time in current classes*

Ms. Jamie Haynes – jmhaynes@volusia.k12.fl.us
Mr. Ruben Colon - rcolon@volusia.k12.fl.us
Mrs. Donna Brosemer - dbroseme@volusia.k12.fl.us
Mrs. Krista Goodrich - kngoodri@volusia.k12.fl.us
Mrs. Jessie Thompson - jjthomps@volusia.k12.fl.us

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your steward or member representative. Solidarity!



Calendar Reminders

Week of February 10th - No Meeting Week- Midterm grades due Wednesday 2/12 (PLCs can occur on Thurs. or Fri. only)
February 17, 2025 - President's Day, no school
February 19, 2025 - **ERPL CANCELLED**

FEA Membership Cards!

Membership in your union has benefits. In order to access benefits from our state and national unions, you will need your membership card. FEA Membership (Access) cards have been sent to VUE members and have already started arriving in mailboxes (see the example below). **THIS NOT JUNK MAIL.**

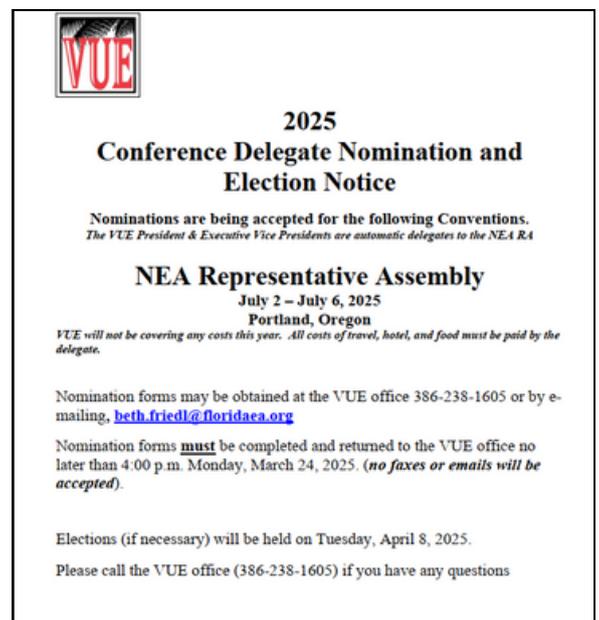
The membership cards include your member ID number which is needed for access to FEA, NEA and AFT member benefits and registration portals. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Pam Williams (Pam.williams@floridaea.org).



NEA Representative Assembly Nomination & Election Notice

The VUE Elections Committee is announcing the opening of nominations for Delegates to the 2025 NEA Representative Assembly. The NEA RA will be held in Portland, Oregon this year beginning on July 2 and ending on July 6, 2025.

VUE will not be covering any costs. All travel, hotel, and food must be paid by the delegate. For more information or to request a nomination form, please contact Beth at beth.friedl@floridaea.org.



Employee Extended Hour/Wrap Care

Last week an email was sent to employees who participate in the VPK extended hour wrap around care program. This program provides child care before and after school for the children of VCS employees. This program has been an affordable benefit offered to employees for many years. The removal of the wrap around care will result in additional costs to teachers and staff in addition to creating a hardship when attending faculty meetings, ERPLs, and participating in after school programs like tutoring and collaborative planning.

While this may only affect a portion of employees, it is yet another example of how the district is making decisions without considering the impact to those who work tirelessly to make VCS a success.

We have reached out to members of the school board to ask that they look into this decision and work to reinstate the program. We have also reached out to the VPK Department to obtain additional information on how/why the decision to end the program was made.

We will continue to keep you updated on this situation.

VUE is On The Go

Your union is on the move. We've been busy hosting site meetings, lunches, honoring our support staff, and attending school board meetings.

Engaging in the work of our union is essential for ensuring fair treatment and improving working conditions for both you and your colleagues. When we all actively participate, we amplify our collective voice.

By attending meetings at your school/worksites and at the school board, and by standing together to advocate for workplace improvements, we can influence the decisions that impact our daily lives.

If we choose not to get involved, there is a 100% chance that nothing will change. Your participation also builds a sense of solidarity, helping us face challenges together and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Ultimately, when you engage in the work of your union, you're not only advocating for your own rights but also for the well-being of your colleagues.

Thank you to the members who were able to join us at the January 28th school board meeting. Please plan to be a part of the work of OUR UNION and join us at DAC this Tuesday at 5:30 pm. We will save you a seat!

Union Benefits: Taxes

Navigating the complexities of tax season can be daunting, but FEA members benefit partners have access to a suite of benefits designed to simplify the process. members can utilize specialized tax software discounts, receive expert guidance on deductions, and credits. FEA members can efficiently manage their taxes, ensuring they maximize their refunds and comply with the latest regulations.

To take advantage of these deals, you simply need to create an account using the links below.

Check out these savings from [Turbo Tax](#), [H&R Block](#), and [TaxAct](#).

