



# Solidarity Report

“Your future is created by what you do today, not tomorrow.”

~ Robert Kiyosaki

## Our Union

The world around us is rapidly changing. With the loss of payroll dues deductions, the constant attack on our rights, and the all-out attempt to destroy public education, we need to take a hard look at who we are, what we do, and how we grow into the most powerful force for good.

Our mission has always been to make life better for our members. It is just that simple. We give our all to our students and our work, but it sometimes feels like no one notices our sacrifice. However, it does not go unnoticed by us. We see you, we hear you, and we believe in YOU. YOU are the reason VUE exists and YOU are the reason that we will continue to be relentless in our work to make improvements to your pay, benefits, and working conditions.

The journey to create improvements and positive change also includes growing our membership. The success of our union depends upon our ability to organize and recruit teachers and support staff who care about our students and each other. Growing our membership is a sign of power and influence. It shows that individuals trust us and the values we stand for. It shows that our message is aligned with the people and that they believe in the work that our union is doing.

Every new member you recruit represents an opportunity to add a new perspective, voice, and level of expertise to our union family. Recruitment is an ongoing, 365 day process. You and your colleagues have recruited 259 new members this year! That is an average of 37 per month! This is excellent work. However, we cannot rest on this success and we cannot stop. Here are a few data points to consider:

- From August 5, 2024 through February 1, 2025 :
  - 92 instructional personnel have taken a LOA
  - 29 support personnel have taken a LOA
  - 180 instructional personnel have separated from VCS
  - 107 support personnel have separated from VCS

It would be unfair to not acknowledge a few important details. First, LOAs can be taken for a variety of reasons, and some of the separations are due to retirement. However, when our colleagues decide to leave VCS or take a leave of absence, it makes our work more difficult. It impacts our students and our school/work community.

## So what are we going to do?

We are going to continue to recruit our new colleagues. We must build relationships with the new employees and early career educators on our campus and help them to understand our mission, values, and our desire to help. We must be intentional about reaching out and showing our new friends that we care. We must continue our practice of building a community of advocates who are willing to stand together and be the voice of those doing the work of educating the children of Volusia County.

Talk with a colleague today and share your reason for being a part of your union. Then ask them to visit the membership tab on the VUE website at [www.ourvue.net/membership](http://www.ourvue.net/membership).

SOLIDARITY!



## Mid-Year Survey Results

We are continuing the process of reviewing the data obtained from the member mid-year survey. Listed below are a few interesting facts and highlights that we have noticed.

- 60% of respondents reported that overwhelming paperwork is a serious issue that is resulting in job dissatisfaction
- 57% of respondents reported that feedback and additional training is needed to meet the expectations of their job
- 83% of respondents stated that pay and benefits are the most concerning issues. Many citing that veteran personnel continue to be disadvantaged due to salary compression and the lack of competitive wages compared to other Central Florida school districts
- 56% of respondents shared that student behavior is an ongoing concern

These responses are not surprising, however, when asked about what is important, there was an overwhelming number of individuals who responded that professional autonomy, unmanaged planning time, and being acknowledged for the work being done would help them to have greater satisfaction in their work. Providing these things costs nothing.



## Mid-Year Survey Results, cont.

The information obtained in the survey will guide us in our initial planning for the next round of contract negotiations. The survey data will also help determine the actions steps that individuals are willing to take in order to create the changes we need.

As we continue to build our power and amplify the voices of teachers and support staff, we must realize that we cannot sit on the sidelines and hope that things will improve. Change only takes place through action, and in the words of Ruth Bader Ginsberg, “we must fight for the things we care about.” We care about our students, our colleagues, our schools, and our community. We must be committed to creating the working and learning environments we all deserve.

## Target Tallahassee

It’s been said by many, “If you aren’t at the table, you are probably on the menu.” When it comes to decisions that affect our public schools, student learning conditions, your working conditions, and ultimately our ability to provide for our families, nothing could be more accurate.

In order to “not be on the menu,” FEA is continuing their Target Tallahassee lobbying program. The FEA Legislative Advocacy Team is still accepting registrations, but they are filling up quickly. Target Tallahassee slots are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, so if you are interested in advocating, you must register before they are full.

With a pro-active agenda this session, its crucial to have leaders and members in Tallahassee sharing their real-life experiences and advocating for their students, their schools, and their profession.

Individuals will need to use their own leave time, as we are unable to cover this cost. FEA is asking for participation Monday through Thursday. Monday will begin with an in-person briefing and dinner at FEA HQ starting at 6:30 pm. FEA Public Policy Advocacy and Communications staff will provide the training. Members will learn more about the bills calendared for the week and how to stay on message with lawmakers when discussing our legislative agenda. Members will spend Tuesday through Thursday meeting with lawmakers and legislative staff. The AFL-CIO will have morning briefings Tuesday to Thursday starting at 7:30 am. Additionally, members are welcome to join the AFL-CIO Reception on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.

FEA will cover the cost of the hotel (double occupancy), lunch (up to \$15) and dinner (up to \$35) reimbursement (with itemized receipts), parking vouchers for Kleman Plaza, and mileage to and from Tallahassee for members approved by the local president.

Please contact Elizabeth at [elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org](mailto:elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org) for more detailed information. Please note that we cannot reimburse for any hotel rooms outside the block of rooms booked by FEA.

Approved members who want to participate in the Target Tallahassee program can register at [www.FEAWeb.org/TargetTallahassee](http://www.FEAWeb.org/TargetTallahassee). Members will need to indicate the week of travel and the arrival and departure dates so we can book hotels. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Alexis Montalvo at [Alexis.Montalvo@floridaea.org](mailto:Alexis.Montalvo@floridaea.org).



Tallahassee Rally 2020

## Calendar Updates: March

March is definitely coming in like a lion this year! We have listed the important calendar dates for the month below. Be sure to mark your calendars and note the VSET due dates. If you have any questions or if you need support with your DPP or self-evaluation, please contact the office at 386-238-1605.

- March 4th - National Day of Action - **March 4 Our Students!** We are asking all teachers, staff, and administrators to **WEAR RED** to stand up for our students.
- March 5th **ERPL Cancelled** - regular early release day
- March 7th (Friday) - DPP DUE - Instructional personnel must submit their completed DPP by 5:00 pm
- Week of March 10th - No Meeting Week - end of the quarter
- March 12th - no early release (hurricane makeup day)
- March 14th - Teacher Duty Day (**non workday for Paras**) grades are due by the end of the day.
- Week of March 17th - 21st - **SPRING BREAK!**
- March 26th - ERPL
- March 28th - Final VSET Self-evaluation due for instructional personnel



# VUE Black History Month Contest

# VCS 2025 Home Run 5K



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](mailto:lekita.howard@floridaea.org)

## VCS Retirement Workshop

The Employee Benefits Department cordially invite all employees who are planning to retire within the next five years or wish to enter DROP within the next year to attend the 2025 VCS Annual In-Person Retirement Workshop on Friday, March 14, 2025 (Teacher Duty Day) from 12:00pm-3:30pm at The Deltona Center.

Principals have been advised to provide Temporary Duty to ensure that eligible employees can attend

To register, please [CLICK HERE](#) **Registration will close at 5:00pm on Monday, March 10, 2025 or will close earlier if we have reached maximum capacity of 400.** Unfortunately, no guests are allowed.



VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOLS  
2025 HOME RUN 5K  
SATURDAY, APRIL 12TH, 8 AM  
JACKIE ROBINSON BALLPARK  
DAYTONA BEACH, FL



REGISTRATION AND DETAILS AT:

[WWW.RUNSIGNUP.COM](http://WWW.RUNSIGNUP.COM)

EMAIL: [LJMEINEL@VOLUSIA.K12.FL.US](mailto:LJMEINEL@VOLUSIA.K12.FL.US)

