



# Solidarity Report

**“Treat your employees like an investment, not a cost.” ~ Dan Sullivan**

## Allocations & Class Sizes

As mentioned in last week’s report, the HR department is working to level out class size across the district. Under normal circumstances we would not continue to report on this issue but would instead work with the individuals who will be impacted, however, there were some interesting developments last week that need to be shared.

During the District Advisory Council (DAC) meeting that was held with teachers, staff, parents, and community members last week, the Superintendent, Board Chair, and Chief of Staff made a comment to the group that blamed the instructional contract for the large class sizes in kindergarten. The district’s claim that large kindergarten class sizes are the result of contract language is simply false. Fortunately, a veteran member of the VUE Executive Board was present and told the truth about the contract language, thus refuting the false narrative that was being communicated about our union.

The reality is this: class size is determined by how many teachers and paras the district chooses to hire, how resources are allocated, and how priorities are set. Our contract language was negotiated to protect students and educators by putting reasonable timelines in place that allow for a respectful, organized, and planned transition for both teachers and students. If class sizes are ballooning, it is not because of these protections, it is because the district has failed to staff schools appropriately and plan effectively.

Blaming the contract shifts responsibility away from the district’s decisions and misleads parents, teachers, staff, and the community. We will not allow the district to use educators’ efforts to safeguard learning conditions as a scapegoat for their own staffing and budgeting choices and their continued lack of proactive planning.

Finally, the conversations that have occurred between your union and the HR department do not lead us to believe that sufficient relief will be provided across the district. However, until we receive the final list, we will not have all of the facts.

If you are contacted by your administrator about your assignment, we need you to contact your steward or VUE member representative. We are here to support you through this process.

## Focus Leave Grievance Update

On August 22<sup>nd</sup> your union filed a Level 1 Grievance against the district due to their unilateral decision to require teachers and staff to enter their own leave in Focus.

While this might not seem like a big deal to some individuals, the directive by the district violates the instructional contract in multiple ways, and that cannot be ignored.

The grievance meeting was held last Friday, and after almost an hour of discussion and a review of the violations of the contract, the district declined to amend their decision.

It is unfortunate that our employer has made the decision to violate the terms of the agreement that was ratified and board approved as the expectations of our work. Upholding the contract is not just about a legal obligation, it’s about ethical leadership.

Our contract is more than just a suggestion, it is a binding agreement. When VCS violates the contract, they break trust and create unnecessary conflict. You deserve an employer who respects and values you.

We are looking at our options at this time which could include moving to arbitration. For now, please continue to follow the directive as we cannot be insubordinate. We will keep you updated on this situation.

## Our Next Steps

When the district creates unreasonable workloads, expectations, and dishonors our contract, it forces employees to make a choice: bend to the demands of the employer and give up our rights, or take a stand and demand fair treatment and respect.

Unreasonable workloads are those that demand more time, energy, and responsibilities than can possibly be completed within the contractual workday. When the district blatantly violates clearly written contract language because it is easier for them to demand compliance rather than work to create solutions, we cannot sit quietly. This is the moment to stand up. Not tomorrow. Not someday. **Now!**



## Our Next Steps, cont.

**The question is: are you ready to cross the line?**

Are you ready to move from frustration to action, from having a membership *in* your union, to being a member *of* your union?

Crossing the line means becoming fully engaged in the work of our union by showing up, speaking out, talking with your colleagues, and making it clear that we will not accept less than respect.

**We are VUE, and when we stand together, we win.**

**Taking action comes in many forms.**

The first step is to engage in the process of bargaining. You can:

- Stay informed by reading updates and asking questions
- Watch the recorded bargaining sessions
- Speak up in your worksites and talk with coworkers about the importance of our contractual rights
- Attend the bargaining sessions
- Stand united when the district tries to divide or dismiss us.

Bargaining is not something that happens to us, it is something that we do together. Please plan to engage in any or all of the upcoming bargaining sessions (see below). This is YOUR UNION and we need you to be involved!

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## Bargaining Update

Your union continues the process of bargaining for instructional and support staff. Please mark the following bargaining meeting dates on your calendar.

It is perfectly fine if you arrive after the start of the meeting, what is important is that we have members and friends in the room when we are negotiating the improvements and compensation you need to live a better life. The dates, times, and locations are listed below:

- Thurs., 9/11 at 4:45 pm - Instructional @ the VUE office
- Tues., 9/16 at 5:00 pm - Support @ the Olson Dr. facility
- Wed., 9/17 at 4:45 pm - Instructional @ the VUE office
- Wed., 9/24 at 5:00 pm - Support @ the Olson Dr. Facility
- Tues., 9/30 at 4:45 pm - Instructional @ the VUE office

If you have any questions please contact your steward or you VUE member representative.



## Upcoming VUE Professional Learning

Your union continues to provide top notch professional development. Courses are free to VUE members. Register today in MyPGS.

### ESOL - Curriculum & Materials: 60 points

Course #: 23226 Section #: 115508

Dates: Every Tuesday beginning 9/16/25 through 12/2/25 - (exception- Thanksgiving Break)

Location: VUE Office (this is a face-to-face course)

Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm



### ESE IEP/IDEA: 4 points

Course #: 72058 Section #: 115235

Dates: Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Location: VUE Office (this is a face-to-face course)

Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

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## FEA - Retired Innovation Grants

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

Do you need a few dollars to make it a reality?

Applications are now available for the FEA Retired Innovation Grant. Contact the VUE office today.



**AVAILABLE NOW!!**

**Florida Education Association - Retired  
\$250 INNOVATIVE GRANTS**

Are you an FEA/VUE 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?

Here is help for you!

**EASY APPLICATION PROCESS!**

See your Building Rep or contact your FEA-Retired District Director

All information and details on the VUE-Retired site:

<https://www.vueretired.org/grant-apply-2025-26.html>

