



# Solidarity Report

**“A skilled worker, regardless of the job description, remains a treasure.”  
~ Madeleine Kunin**

## Focus Issues Continue

We were informed this week by the district that there is another concern with Focus. This time it has to do with the end of the year adjustments for supplemental insurance reporting.

We were prepared to meet with the district to discuss this on Friday, but the district refused to meet with us due to an individual we included on our team. That individual is Andrew Spar. Andrew is a dues paying member of VUE, and he has historical knowledge of how the district and VUE (VTO) have collaborated in the past to address issues, yet for some reason, the district “declined” to participate in the Teams meeting if Andrew was on the call. The district would not state the reason they didn’t want Andrew to participate, they just declined. VCS does not have the right to tell us which VUE members we include on our committees or teams. This is extreme overreach and it will not be tolerated.

We still have a few questions for VCS, but in order to obtain guidance from a trusted and knowledgeable source, we contacted the Amber Swords, the CPA at FEA and here is what we know.

End of the year adjustments for tax purposes is a common practice for businesses every year. FEA also makes these adjustments. The information that we did receive from VCS is aligned with the expectations of the IRS.

The situation effects about 67 individuals (we do not know who) who have been identified as having a higher than expected end-of-year tax adjustment. Each of the 67 individuals will receive a communication from VCS. Based upon the data we have received at this point, we do not believe that there will be any noticeable impact for most individuals.

We wish that we could provide additional details to you, but since the district refused to collaborate with our VUE member team, we cannot. This is another example of VCS building the plane while flying it, and it is not acceptable. VCS is attempting to run the district using a system that has not been fully vetted and they are ill-prepared to navigate the issues. They have missed critical flaws in the system during this implementation and our members are bearing the brunt of the failures.

On this issue, there is no identifiable legal or contractual recourse as the impact of the correction is not likely to have a negative impact. However, we have filed a grievance on the Focus leave contract violation and we will continue to file grievances when we can.

We need you to know that YOUR UNION is fighting for you every day. We find it troubling that the district refuses to collaborate, believes that they control the narrative, and that they continue to attempt to change the rules of the game as they go along.

YOUR UNION will never waiver from our mission to represent your interests and we will be unapologetically relentless in our defense of your rights. Solidarity!

## Trades and Service Longevity Payments

We have received numerous emails and phone calls about the TSP Longevity payments. When we reached out to the Executive Director of HR we were told that TSPs do not have a longevity schedule. However, upon reviewing the former AFSCME contract, we know that prior to the decertification and up through last year, longevity payments were made to eligible individuals.

We will reach out to the district this week to advocate for the longevity payments. However, since AFSCME was decertified, the former contract is no longer valid, which includes all prior rights, privileges, and benefits. Nonetheless, we have been told several times by district leaders, that they have “upheld the terms of the former contract just the same.” It seems that they forgot this one very important item. We will push for the longevity payments to be made especially since they were provided last year.

Additionally, we will work to obtain a timeline for payments of the Attendance Incentive and the Uniform/Shoe Allowance. We will provide updated information after our conversation with the district.

It is very important that we continue to recruit members into the TSP unit. The more members we have, the more power and leverage we have to get the things we need. This includes the payments mentioned above.

Ask a colleague to join today. If you have questions about how to help a friend join your union, contact the VUE office at (386) 238-1605.



## Important December Dates:

- **Week of Dec. 15 - 19 -NO MEETING WEEK**
- **Dec. 17 - NO EARLY RELEASE**
- **Dec. 19 - Early Release - DPP #1 DUE - Winter Break Begins!**



## December Pay dates

- **Dec. 17** - Retention Supplement -eligible instructional, 1% Stipend TSPs and Support Staff - no dues assessed
- **Dec. 19** - Regular paychecks - dues assessed
- College Degree Program Payments - eligible support professionals - payments will be provided no later than December 19<sup>th</sup>, but more than likely will be included in the December 17<sup>th</sup> payments. - no dues assessed

## Schools of Hope (NOPE)

On September 24, 2025, [Rule 6A-1.0998271](#) (click the Rule for additional information) was adopted by the Florida Legislature.

This rule allows Florida's "Schools of Hope" -charter management organizations, called Hope Operators, to dramatically expand the program's reach. It gives these private operators sweeping access to district-owned buildings, student data, and local education resources, while sharply limiting the authority of locally elected school boards.

Essentially, it allows Schools of Hope to petition to use space deemed underused, vacant, or surplus within a public school or district. A Hope Operator, can now co-locate, or move into, an existing public school. The students enrolled in the school are not relocated or transferred. Instead, Schools of Hope are co-located alongside the teachers, students, and administrators currently at the public school, and they often take over classrooms, gyms, or shared spaces. They are not required to pay for the space and district schools may be required to consolidate or move within the building to make room for the charter. They are allowed to use the cafeteria, transportation, and all other services provided by the public school free of charge.

Additionally, Hope Operators can move into functioning schools, set up shop, and then recruit new students from the district school itself.

We believe that our public schools belong to our communities and should not be forced to "host" charter schools and their students. We believe that co-location is a silent takeover strategy that is designed to weaken neighborhood schools, and erode local control.

*What Can We Do?*

Call your legislators and urge them to REPEAL Section 1002.333 to restore local control. Share the facts: Co-location is not "choice" — it's costly, disruptive, and undemocratic.

To learn more about the Schools of Hope, please visit, here [www.schoolsofnope.org](http://www.schoolsofnope.org)

## Curative Support

If you are having problem accessing care, please contact Kim Adkins, VCS Benefits Liaison, at extension 20195 or email her at [kmadkins@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:kmadkins@volusia.k12.fl.us). Kim works directly with Curative and she is able to intervene on behalf of VCS employees. Please don't try to go this alone, Kim is a resource and a colleague. She has solved many issues and she is ready, willing, and eager to help. Call today if you need assistance.

## Union Benefits for the Holidays

As we head into the holiday season, don't forget to take advantage of your union member benefits. They are designed to support you and your family when it matters most.

Whether you're shopping for gifts, planning travel, looking for affordable entertainment, or simply trying to stretch your budget, your membership gives you access to exclusive discounts, savings programs, and resources that can make the season a little brighter.

This is a great time to explore what's available, save where you can, and enjoy the benefits that come with standing together as a strong union community.

Don't forget to explore our newest MEMBER ONLY benefit, MemberAssist. If you just don't have the time to get something done, let the good folks at MemberAssist do it for you. Click [HERE](#) to register for this no cost benefit.

To learn more about the benefits that your membership provides, click [HERE](#) (scroll to the middle of the page for union discount programs)!

## VUE Holiday Office Hours

The VUE office will close on Friday, December 19, 2025 at 4:30 pm and will reopen on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 8:30 am.

We wish each and every member of VUE a happy and safe holiday!

