



Solidarity Report

**“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make”
~ Jane Goodall**

Support Staff Agreement Ratifies!

The tentative agreement for support staff was ratified last week with **862 Yes votes, 69 No votes, and 1 void ballot**. This result shows a 93% approval rate. More than 68% of the bargaining unit voted in the election! This is a larger turnout than the instructional ratification and reflects clear confidence in the direction and priorities of OUR UNION.

These results demonstrate the collective strength and engagement of office specialists and paraprofessionals. Together we will continue our work to improve wages, working conditions, and respect for every employee.

The agreement will be presented to the members of the school board for approval at Tuesday’s meeting. If approved, the payroll department will move forward to pay the 1% stipend to all office specialists and paraprofessionals working in VCS before we leave for winter break.

We must build upon this momentum to continue to increase our support staff density. When our density increases, so does our power, and influence at the bargaining table. Solidarity!

December Pay dates

- **Dec. 12** - Regular paychecks - dues assessed
- **Dec. 17** - Retention Supplement -eligible instructional, 1% Stipend TSPs and Support Staff (pending approval by the board) - no dues assessed
- **Dec. 19** - Regular paychecks - dues assessed
- College Degree Program Payments - eligible support professionals - payments will be provided no later than December 19th, but more than likely will be included in the December 17th payments. - no dues assessed



Important Dates in December

- **Dec. 9** - School Board Meeting
- **Dec. 10** - early release
- **Dec. 13** - TSP OPEN HOUSE - at the VUE Office
- **Week of Dec. 15 - 19** - **NO MEETING WEEK**
- **Dec. 17** - **NO EARLY RELEASE**
- **Dec. 19** - Early Release - **DPP #1 DUE** - Winter Break Begins!

Trades and Service Open House

We are excited about the opportunity to welcome our trades and service professionals working in VCS into our union family.

We know that schedules vary depending on the role our TSP members have within the district, so we are hosting an **OPEN HOUSE at the VUE office** for our TSPs.

The Open House will be held on:

Saturday, December 13, 2025

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

VUE Office- 1381 Educators Rd., Daytona Beach

Refreshments will be provided

RSVP now by clicking this link,
<https://forms.gle/DKGMES2DF9upJBUP6>

This event is an opportunity to meet VUE leadership, learn more about the newly formed TSP unit, and hear how we are preparing to advocate for fair wages, improved working conditions, and professional respect for every trade and service professional across the district. Please make sure to share this information with the TSPs at your worksite. Solidarity!

OPEN HOUSE

At VUE

1381 Educators Rd.,
Daytona Beach

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Curative: What's Changing and Why

During last week's Insurance Committee meeting we were informed that effective December 31, 2025, Curative will no longer be affiliated with the First Health Network.

While Curative representatives shared several reasons for the change, the announcement was unexpected and deeply concerning to committee members.

When asked about provider disruption, we were told none is expected because any provider not participating in the new network would automatically become Cash Card eligible. While this may sound reassuring, many employees have already experienced issues with the Cash Card not being accepted at the point of service as originally promised.

How Will This Impact Me?

At this time, there is very little we can do regarding the district's contract with its insurance provider. This issue will continue to be addressed through the Insurance Committee after the first of the year. However, I want to publicly acknowledge Ms. Kim Adkins for her tireless work supporting employees with insurance challenges. Kim advocates daily for more than 6,000 employees, and as a VCS employee herself, she understands firsthand the real impact of a flawed insurance plan.

Our hope is that while the network is being updated, there will be no impact to employees and their care, but if there is, we need to know so that we can not only document the issues but help find solutions.

Speaking as an individual, my experience with Curative so far has been good, but I do not have ongoing medical needs. I know that is not the case for everyone. That is why YOUR UNION remains committed to closely monitoring this transition and advocating for every employee affected.

If you have any questions please contact the office or reach out to Kim Adkins, VCS Benefits Liaison at kmadkins@volusia.k12.fl.us.

Important VSET Reminders

DPP #1 must be completed and submitted in MyPGS by this **Friday, December 19, 2025** to be considered for a Distinguished rating.

Mid-Year Self Evaluation - This OPTIONAL Mid-Year Self-Assessment (Category 2 personnel only) allows the individual to submit ratings in advance of the end of the year to determine if there are differences between the self-analysis of performance and the evaluator's assessment. Individuals may submit Domains 1 and 4 evidence to be considered for the year-end evaluation as well. A second submission in Domains 1 & 4 is not necessary if the Mid-Year is completed. The Mid-Year Self Evaluation must be submitted by January 9, 2025. We strongly encourage members to complete this process to eliminate any surprises at the end of the year. For more information on employee evaluations, please contact the VUE office.

Class Action Grievance: Focus

On Friday, December 5th VUE filed a Class Action grievance against the district. The grievance is for contract violations for instructional and support staff related to the provision of earned sick leave.

The contracts state the following:

Instructional - four (4) days of earned sick leave shall be credited as of the first day of employment each contract year. Hereafter, sick leave will be credited at the end of each month until all sick leave earned for the year has been credited.

Support - each full-time employee shall earn one (1) day of paid sick leave for each month of employment which shall be credited to the employee at the end of the month.

Using myself as an example for instructional and an OS III 12-month employee, we have evidence that the contract language is not being followed. Additionally, we have several members who have contacted us due to being docked pay because their leave had not been credited correctly. This is harm that has been inflicted upon our members and we are taking action.

The district has 10 work days to respond to our Level 1 grievance. We anticipate a quick win as the evidence is unmistakable. We are seeking to have the system fixed, leave balances corrected for all employees by January 5th, and anyone who has been docked to be refunded within 48 business hours.

If you have been docked due to a leave error and have not yet contacted us, please reach out to Marlo at marlo.spallone@floridaea.org we need to know who has been harmed to make our case as strong as possible. Additionally, if the district refuses to comply, this could lead to Arbitration, and we will need this data. Thank you for your help.

VCS Tax Withholding

Last Thursday at 3:00 p.m., the district's attorney, Mr. Langenbach, notified me of the tax-withholding error related to the transition to FOCUS. I immediately raised concerns about communication to employees, and within 15 minutes of that call the district released its poorly written email.

As we know, VCS has a long history of poor communication and little consideration for how these issues impact employees.

My first step was to contact FEA to consult with the General Counsel and the CPA. While we are still reviewing whether formal action can be taken, the CPA confirmed that the district's explanation regarding the IRS requirement is accurate.

While we cannot give tax advice, for most employees no immediate action appears necessary. Any owed amount will be addressed when you file your taxes by April 15, 2026, and in many cases refunds will offset all or part of what is owed. The concern about a "penalty" is not likely to occur, but if it does, we have the commitment from VCS that they will pay the penalty for the employee.



VCS Tax Withholding, cont.

Employees also have the option to voluntarily make payments directly to the IRS during the year. For larger anticipated amounts (for example, \$600–\$700), partial payments can reduce the final balance owed which allows you to remain in control of the payment rather than VCS. To learn more about payment options with the IRS, click [HERE](#).

Please know that YOUR UNION is still working to determine if formal action is available. We will provide updates as we learn more.

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)!



2027 Teacher of the Year Nominees

We are proud to recognize the outstanding educators nominated as the 2027 Teacher of the Year!

The nominees exemplify excellence, dedication, and a deep commitment to our students. Here are a few fun facts about this year's nominees:

- **67% of all nominees are proud members of VUE!**
- **12 of the nominees are VUE stewards!**
- **ALL 5 FINALISTS ARE VUE MEMBERS!**

Each nominee reflects the power of collective professionalism and the remarkable impact VUE members make every day. We celebrate the accomplishments of all nominees and stand with them as they continue to inspire, lead, and elevate the teaching profession across Volusia County Schools. Solidarity!



Building Our Power, Growing Our Union

As you know, when our union grows, so does our ability to influence outcomes with the district. Also, every new member we recruit moves us one step closer to reaching the required 60% membership density with PERC.

The work of recruiting new members is not just for VUE staff, stewards, and E-board members. This work needs to be done by each of us. Actively talking with colleagues about the benefits of membership, including building power, is an obligation for all members. It's not that hard, we simply just need to share the "WHY" behind our membership! 😊

Ask a colleague to join today. Use the QR code to the right, or visit, www.ourvue.net/membership. With each new member, our power and influence grows!



Membership
QR Code

