



Solidarity Report

"True leadership and management are not built on fear. Instead, they are founded on trust, respect and open communication."

~ Gifford Thomas

Labor Management Update

Last week, VUE and VCS met for the first time since November for labor management. We had a long list of items to discuss. You will find a summary of the meeting below. If you have concerns that you want us to take to the district, please make sure to contact your steward or member representative.

- **ELA classes and media center usage** - we are aware that at some schools the media center is only accessible to students during lunch or before/after school. We find this to be problematic. Dr. Baker-Drayton will be contacted for additional information.
- **Indoor space for elementary PE classes** - At some schools the indoor space for PE classes is compromised and/or non-existent. Ms. Corr will follow up with identified schools.
- **Hiring practices for Office Specialist positions** - it seems that at certain sites, the process to interview and hire OS personnel is not equitable. While we cannot force the district to hire an individual, we believe that the process should allow all applicants a fair chance at being hired. VCS responded that it was supervisor preference who they hired. We will continue to monitor this issue.
- **SSS covering IEP meetings when needed** - it has come to our attention that frequently SSS receive emails and text messages to cover meetings when colleagues are out. While we understand the need to do this, it is our expectation that sub pay shall be provided as it is for other instructional groups. Contract language sets forth this process and we believe this is a potential grievance should the district not agree to provide the payment.
- **Reading Endorsement requirement**- we have learned that at least one principal has communicated to staff that it is mandatory to have their reading endorsement. This is not a true statement. Florida law states that in order to provide Tier 3 reading interventions, personnel must have the endorsement. This has caused division among some teachers. However, while the endorsement itself is not mandatory, it is important to understand that, given the number of students identified as needing Tier 3 interventions, holding the endorsement may become a factor in assignment or displacement decisions.
- **Retro Bereavement Leave** - the district continues to refuse to make this long overdue and humane benefit retro to July 1st. We will not stop pushing for this to change.

Legislative Update: Knowledge is Power

The legislative session is in full swing and this week, Executive Vice President for Support Staff, Valerie Jessup and I will be traveling to Tallahassee to advocate for YOU! We have meetings scheduled with two members of the Volusia Delegation and we are working to schedule a few more. The work of representing our members never stops and it certainly isn't confined to the borders of our county.

Please take a few minutes to read an excerpt from the latest legislative update provided by the *FEA Frontline Report*.

- **Anti-Freedom, Anti-Worker legislation: HB 995** was heard in committee last week. This bill would limit the grievance protections, Unfair Labor Practices, increases the requirements to keep your union, and reduces the time allowed to bargain salaries to July 30th. Most importantly, it makes it much easier for a union to be decertified. This is a direct attack on your right to belong to your union. The senate version of the bill, **SB 1296** will be heard in committee on Monday, Feb. 2nd. Click [HERE](#) to tell the members of the committee to VOTE NO on SB 1296!
- **Proposed Committee Bill (PCB) 7036**: this proposed bill would expand a district's ability to circumvent current law and mandatory subjects of bargaining, including placement of employees, wages, salary supplements, expectations of instructional personnel, and working conditions. This bill will expand the district's ability to bypass collective bargaining for "persistently low performing schools" — defined as any school in the bottom 10% for grade 3 ELA or grade 4 math — even if that school is rated "A" or "B". The very broad definition of "persistently low performing" means every district in Florida has at least one school under this definition. This is one more attempt to undermine collective bargaining under the guise of "student performance." Keep an eye out for a way to take action on these bills. We need every voice raised against these ridiculous attacks against our students, our public schools, and our union!



Pot of Gold Membership Blitz

Attention Everyone: The **Pot of Gold Membership Blitz** is underway and each of us have a role to play. Lucky the Leprechaun is not coming to do the work for us, it is up to us to build our union.

From now through St. Patrick's Day, schools and worksites will compete to see who can recruit the largest number of new members. The sites that grow the most will walk away with a prize, and serious bragging rights!

Building power doesn't happen by luck or wishful thinking, it's all of us doing the work and talking with potential members about the power of us. Contact your steward(s) today and ask who you can talk with or how you can help.

Let's get make this blitz the best one yet so your school or worksite can strike gold at the end of this rainbow!

To share the link to join VUE, click **HERE**. The QR code to access the membership portal is below. If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out!



Membership QR Code:

It's All "BUZZING" at Freedom Elementary!



The "Bees" were buzzing recently at Freedom Elementary. We had the honor of being invited to help judge the 4th and 5th grade Spelling Bee.

The students who represented their classes were top notch, and although there could only be one winner, they were all winners to us.

We want to congratulate the students and thank Joanne, Katina, and Charles for allowing us to be a small part of this BEE-utiful event!



IMPORTANT REMINDER

There is **NO EARLY RELEASE** this week due to FTE. Please plan accordingly.

CALL TO ACTION: February Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 10, 2026, is the date for the only meeting of the board this month. We are calling on members who have been the victim of physical violence from students or who have had their personal safety threatened by a student to attend this meeting.

You have the right to be safe at work and your experiences matter; they should not be overlooked or minimized. When the boss states that "you know what you signed up for," or someone tells you that it is part of the job; they are wrong! These statements are disrespectful and untrue, and it is time we stand up and demand change.

When one voice speaks the truth about workplace issues, it is easy for them to be ignored, but when we show up in force, we cannot be ignored. I know that speaking out can seem risky, and that fear of retaliation is very real, but we cannot allow these behaviors to remain in the dark. We must shine the light on what is occurring in our schools, classrooms, and school buses. Many of our colleagues are walking away due to student behaviors and it is time to put an end to this.

Tell your story. Make it a public record. Demand that violence against employees be taken seriously, investigated fully, and addressed with real consequences and real protection.

Your right to a safe and respectful teaching and working environment is key to student success. If you are able to attend the board meeting, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org.

Curative: Pass or No Pass?



curative

NEED CARE?

CURATIVE EPO VALUE MEMBERS

WHEN DO I NEED A PASS???

You WILL need a pass for any planned care. This includes:

- Doctors appointments
- Radiology (x-rays, CT scans, MRIs, etc.)
- Surgery centers & scheduled hospital procedures

You do NOT need a pass for:

- In-network labs/blood work
- In-network pharmacies
- Urgent Care
- Emergency services

NEED HELP?
Curative Contacts

Member Services: 833-322-8272
Care Navigator: carenavigator@curative.com

HAVE CURATIVE CONCERNS?
You have a VCS advocate for that!
Contact Kimberly Adkins @ kmadkins@volusia.k12.fl.us

