



Solidarity Report

"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination."
~Jimmy Dean

Referendum Update

If you have not yet had an opportunity to read the Referendum Update that was provided late Friday night, we are providing a brief summary below. You can access the full update by clicking [HERE](#).

The discussion during Friday's special board meeting included:

- a review of the difference between a referendum and sales tax and the purpose of each
- an economic comparison of Central Florida school districts
- a review of pending legislation that could impact school districts (the elimination of property tax)
- the lack of a budget from the state for the 2026-27 year
- the polling data on a potential referendum by super voters in Volusia County - 62% support
- a review of the data from the 33 school districts in FL who currently have a referendum/millage
- proposed Resolution language to submit to the Volusia County Counsel to put on the ballot in November
- a timeline to implement the referendum campaign

During the conversation that followed the presentation it was clear that additional details need to be provided to clarify the process of establishing a Political Action Committee (PAC) to run the referendum campaign and to identify which employees would receive the salary enhancements generated by the referendum.

A Memorandum of Understanding, and a final Resolution will be presented to the members of the school board during the May 12th board meeting. It is our hope that the information will be sufficient enough to receive final approval from the board to put this initiative to the voters during the November election.

If you are interested in supporting this work, we invite you to attend the May 12th school board meeting. The purpose of the referendum is to make life better for the men and women who work tirelessly to support our students and keep our district running. When we do better, so do our students!



Changing the Narrative

I have spent a significant amount of time reflecting on the conversation that occurred during Friday's special board meeting. A concern raised by more than one board member is the approach that is used when advocating, publicly and via email, about issues within the district. It is the perception of some that all we do is criticize and attack VCS. While I know that this is not our intent, I also know that perception is reality for most people, and that becomes the truth in the mind of the individual.

I also believe that fundamentally, we all have the same goals; to be able to earn enough money to take care of our families, to be known as a person of integrity and good character, and to ensure that our children and our students succeed.

So if the perception of district leaders is that our focus is only on the negative, we must shift our narrative so that we can bring our concerns forward, explain the impacts of issues, and suggest solutions in a way that not only are we heard, but that we are effective in getting our point across to those who can take action to make things better.

I am not suggesting that we soften the truth or compromise our commitment to advocacy; I am suggesting that we must become strategic in our communication and sharpen our skills.

As the workers within VCS, your voice matters. Your story matters, and we need to humanize the issues we are facing for the members of the board and district leadership. Telling our story makes the issues real for those who are not experiencing what we are, and when we bring our issues to life, it becomes harder for anyone to dismiss what we are saying.

Speaking at a board meeting is one of the hardest but most influential ways we can advocate. We must continue to do this work, we just need to be more intentional in how we do it. We must be sure our message leads to action.

If you are ready to take action to support the work of your union, we need you in the board room on May 12th. If you are ready to share your story and add your voice to support why we need a referendum to increase salaries and bring additional programs to VCS, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org. When we stand together for the improvements we need, we turn our actions into positive outcomes! Solidarity.



Tutoring Pay Tips

It has been brought to our attention that there are a few misconceptions about the process that needs to be completed to be paid for services provided through grants and/or Federal Programs. We are sharing important information from the Federal Programs & Grants Department on how to correctly submit for timely payment.

- If an individual is receiving payment for tutoring, collaborative planning, academic nights or any other approved event through Federal Programs, the individual must submit their electronic timesheet information on the day of the event or within 24 hours of the event.
- Payment for events is dependent upon the date the information was entered into the electronic time sheet, not the day that the actual event took place. For example, Federal Programs cannot submit tutoring completed in January to payroll if the information was not entered in the time sheet until March 30.
- Timely and accurate payment is entirely dependent upon the individual correctly entering the information in the electronic time sheet on the day of the event or within 24 hours.
- Incorrect entries on the time sheet like typing the wrong employee ID, incorrect dates, duplicate entries, etc. slow down the process and can keep your payment from being processed in the appropriate pay period.

If you have any questions about tutoring pay or anything else, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org.

District Update

This week VUE staff had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Kuhn, VCS Chief Technology Officer, Dr. Ryser, Executive Director of HR, several members of the IT staff, payroll, and a representative from Focus. The purpose of the meeting was to identify payroll issues in a comprehensive way rather than bringing isolated issues forward one-by-one, and to collaborate on solutions that build sustainability and fluency with the Focus system.

The discussion included the following concerns:

- the process and complications with sick leave/personal leave requests
- understanding the new W2 and comparing it with the format of W2s from the Cross Pointe system
- retirement disbursements and the timeliness of the process
- summer school and other retro payments still owed
- listed hours for overtime
- imputed income and tax rates
- advanced degree category updates

The meeting was collaborative and both parties were genuinely focused on understanding the issues and the steps needed to find solutions. We agreed that there is a need to provide additional training materials, including videos, to help employees navigate the Focus system. We also learned that several processes that were allowable in the old Cross Pointe system are not available in Focus, so the district is working to build new systems to restore certain capabilities.

A conversation occurred about the outstanding summer retro and correcting the payments for individuals who have shifted from one supplement payment category due to years of service. There is a tool that has been created to complete this work, but the district has not yet completed the process. We discussed the potential of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize this situation.

District Update, cont.

It is important to VUE and VCS to ensure that this work is completed and the impacted individuals are made whole. We will work with the General Counsel to continue this discussion.

We will continue to provide updates as we receive additional information from Dr. Kuhn and his team. We were very encouraged by the commitment of the VCS team to work with us to find solutions. We are looking forward for additional opportunities to continue this good work.

Important HR Timelines



The graphic features a yellow background with a white rectangular area containing text. At the top right of the white area is a blue pushpin. The text reads: 'IMPORTANT HR REMINDERS' in red, followed by 'The week of April 20th' in black. Below this are three bullet points: 'Instructional Non-Reappointment meetings begin Monday, April 20th', 'Displacement meetings begin Tuesday, April 21st', and 'Tentative assignments shall be provided no later than Friday, April 24th'. At the bottom of the white area, it says 'If you have any questions or if you need support, please contact the VUE office at 386-238-1605.' In the top right corner of the yellow background is a circular logo for the Volusia United Educators Local 1605.

Update Your Information



Have you recently moved or changed your phone number? If so, we need you to update your contact information.

It is also very important that we have your personal email address.

Since we have not reached the required 60% membership density in any of the bargaining units, we must participate in a PERC election. VCS will send address information to PERC for all eligible voters.

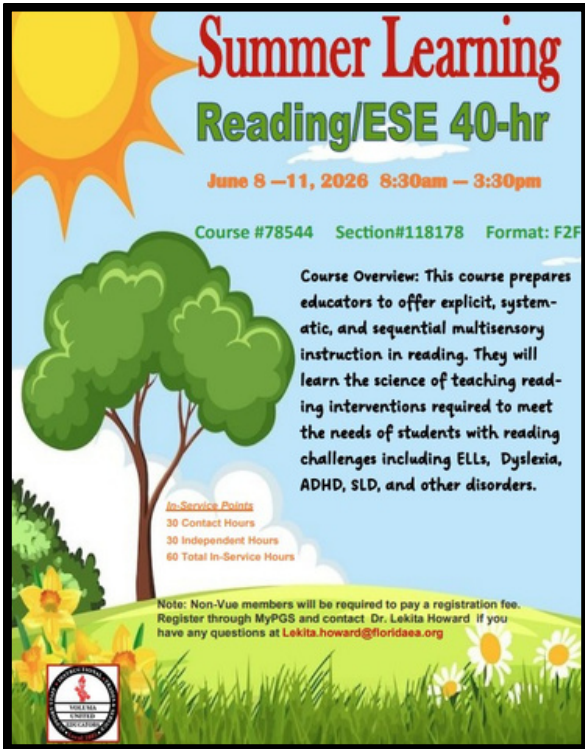
With the implementation of SB 1296 it is critical that your correct address is on file with the district. We also need to have good contact information for our members. Please let us know if your address, phone number, and/or personal email information has changed.



VUE Professional Learning

VUE will continue to offer summer learning programs for our members. We will offer the courses listed below at no cost to members. Seating is on a first come, first served basis, so please register today if you need points for recertification.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Lekita Howard at lekita.howard@floridaea.org.



Summer Learning
Reading/ESE 40-hr

June 6 –11, 2026 8:30am – 3:30pm

Course #78544 Section#118178 Format: F2F

Course Overview: This course prepares educators to offer explicit, systematic, and sequential multisensory instruction in reading. They will learn the science of teaching reading interventions required to meet the needs of students with reading challenges including ELLs, Dyslexia, ADHD, SLD, and other disorders.

In-Service Points
30 Contact Hours
30 Independent Hours
60 Total In-Service Hours

Note: Non-Vue members will be required to pay a registration fee. Register through MyPGS and contact Dr. Lekita Howard if you have any questions at Lekita.howard@floridaea.org

VCS Summer Learning.



SEA LAB
Hands On Professional Development

- Behavior Management
- BEST Standard Lessons
- Classroom Set Up
- Small Group Implementation
- Tips for VSET
- Implement Technology into Lessons
- Earn \$15 an hour
- 20 Professional Development Points

REGISTER TODAY!

MYPGS SECTIONS:

LOCATION: TIMBERCREST ELEMENTARY
JUNE 9TH - 12TH #118208
JUNE 15TH - 18TH #118205

LOCATION: LONGSTREET ELEMENTARY
JUNE 8TH - 11TH #118202
JUNE 15TH - 18TH #118206

VUE Visits

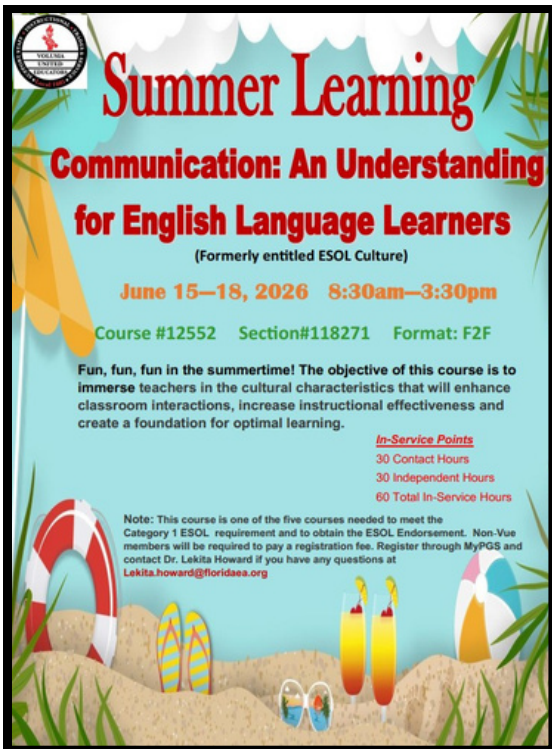
The VUE staff is hitting the road and working hard to visit every school and worksite in the district before the end of the year.

This week our visits will include:

- Atlantic High
- Pine Ridge
- Taylor Middle/High
- George Marks
- Champion
- Sugar Mill
- Heritage
- Beachside
- Pathways
- NSBMS

Please plan to stop by if we are scheduled to visit your school this week. We have important information and update to share!

We want to give a special SHOUT OUT to the phenomenal VUE members at Edgewater Public. We appreciate YOU!

Summer Learning
Communication: An Understanding
for English Language Learners
(Formerly entitled ESOL Culture)

June 15–18, 2026 8:30am–3:30pm

Course #12552 Section#118271 Format: F2F

Fun, fun, fun in the summertime! The objective of this course is to immerse teachers in the cultural characteristics that will enhance classroom interactions, increase instructional effectiveness and create a foundation for optimal learning.

In-Service Points
30 Contact Hours
30 Independent Hours
60 Total In-Service Hours

Note: This course is one of the five courses needed to meet the Category 1 ESOL requirement and to obtain the ESOL Endorsement. Non-Vue members will be required to pay a registration fee. Register through MyPGS and contact Dr. Lekita Howard if you have any questions at Lekita.howard@floridaea.org

