



Solidarity Report

"But how can you live and have no story to tell?"

~Fyodor Dostoevsky

A Story Worth Telling

For many VUE members, our work has never been just about our contract, one issue, or a single moment in time. It is about refusing to spend our careers simply floating along while decisions about our students, our profession and our work are made for us by people who are disconnected from what we do all day. And unfortunately, the decisions they make often result in making our work more difficult and cumbersome.

The quote shared today by Fyodor Dostoevsky asks, "*But how can you live and have no story to tell?*" That question is deeply connected to the work we do together as members of VUE. Every time a member advocates for their rights, speaks at a board meeting, fights for fair treatment, or has one honest conversation with a colleague about why VUE matters, they are choosing to become part of a larger story instead of remaining a silent observer.

The story of our union includes challenges, setbacks, and difficult times; however, it also includes great victories and moments of extreme success due to the resilience and determination of the members of VUE. Members who care about our union and each other.

This year has been especially frustrating as we have dealt with payroll failures, insurance issues, political attacks, and the exhaustion that comes from constantly being asked to do more with less. Yet through it all, VUE members still showed up for students and for one another. That's what makes the difference, and that's what gives me hope for the future of our union.

Being a part of VUE requires courage, vulnerability, and the ability to look for the opportunity within a challenge. Fellow teacher, Jaime Escalante said, "*Life is not about how many times you fall down. It's about how many times you get back up.*"

Our actions must be intentional and focused on the goal. We cannot allow the behavior of others to distract us from our work. The conversations we have and the steps we take are evidence that we will not allow life to just happen to us. We are actively shaping the future for our students, our schools, our profession, and most importantly, our union.

The story of VUE is about the people who choose not to stay silent. The people who in times of uncertainty and chaos, rise above the noise and stand together to fight for what matters. The educators, support staff, trades and service professionals who understand that protecting our rights, our privileges, our contract, and public education is worth fighting for. Our story is still being written. I urge you to continue to be a part of it. Stand up, speak out, and stay engaged. The future of VUE will not be determined by those who sit quietly on the sidelines, but by those who are willing to stay united and do the work. The future is ours, let's write a story that is worth telling!

What is VUE Doing for Me?

Your VUE staff is continuously and aggressively advocating for our members. With recent changes at the district, we have attempted to give grace and understanding as individuals transition into new roles or assignments. However, we are experiencing extreme delays in receiving requested information and documentation, failure to respond to communications, and no visible action taken on issues discussed with management. Therefore, it is time to move to formal action.

On Friday, we filed the following Grievances:

- **Lack of payment for identified Supplements, Stipends, and Advance Degrees**
- **Lack of payment for subbing, tutoring and other services paid on invoice**

These grievances were filed at Step 1, but as allowed in the contract, we have asked the district to agree to expedite the process by immediately moving to Step 3. The nature of these issues and the time of year require a speedy remedy. The concerns related to employees not receiving compensation they have earned and holding the district accountable are our priorities.

In addition, your VUE staff have formally filed the following Demands to Impact Bargain:

- **Magnet Programs**
- **Reduction of Hours Office Specialists**

Impact bargaining results when management makes decisions that affect employees' terms and conditions of work, pay, and/or hours. These demands ensure that your voice is represented and that any potential change to the mandatory subjects of bargaining are negotiated prior to the implementation of the change.

Additionally, we are working with our attorney to discuss legal options for the failure of VCS to properly calculate Federal Income tax, the recapture of overpayments without the consent of employees (transportation overtime payments), and the contractual violations for the provision of employee leave.

Advocacy requires 24 hour, 365 day dedication. Your VUE staff remain committed to holding the district accountable and protecting our members. Our contract must be honored and upheld. VUE is the only organization built and led by experts who do the work every day to educate and support our students. Our strength comes from our members.

We hear you, and we are fighting for you! Solidarity.



District Issues Update: Labor Management

The VUE staff met with VCS to discuss labor/management issues. It is worthy to note that the labor management process has been interrupted and is not producing the results it has in the past. It seems that the individuals who can make decisions to improve working conditions or remedy an issue are often not available to attend the meetings. This causes delays and continued frustration for members and the VUE staff.

During the summer we will discuss addressing these issues when we return to the bargaining table. No one has time to wait on solutions or to meet when there is no actionable result of the meeting. We will keep you updated on this situation. However, the issues/concerns below were discussed during the most recent labor management meeting:

- SSS covering IEP meetings (subbing) - We are requesting that SSS who cover IEP meetings receive sub pay. This issue has been ongoing for several months. The first response was that only the SSS identified as Mentors were covering meetings. This was not an accurate statement. We then provided coverage data to Ms. Copeland. The most recent response to our request for sub pay was, “**SSS only cover when there are holes in their calendar, no meetings are held outside of contract hours, and no extra duties other than covering the meeting (no prep) are required of the individual who covers. The request for sub pay has been denied.**” It is our belief that the contract language for non-rostered instructional personnel substantiates the appropriateness for sub pay. We are looking at next steps on this issue.
- What is supposed to be entered into Ed Mod when teacher is not able to provide service due to testing, field trips, personal leave, etc.- **Teachers don't need to add if the student is missing, the absence is recorded.**
- Ratios of ESE to Gen Ed students in classes - **Per Ms. Copeland, only the students who are receiving services in that class count toward the ratio. If the student has an IEP but does not receive services in that class, they are not counted as ESE.** We will follow up with the Ed Mod expectations for teachers.
- Concerns about bookkeepers being required to run multiple reports for the same event (ex. field trips) - **The district will follow up and respond.**
- Office specialist responsibility for metal detectors - **OS are NOT responsible for nor should they be monitoring the metal detectors.**
- Reimbursement for accountant services resulting from W-2 error - **District will follow up and respond.**
- Department site-based funds “disappearing” with April 1 transition to Focus - **District will contact CFO and CIO for information and will respond.**

Additionally, questions have been raised about mandatory meetings and travel reimbursements. It was confirmed that when employees are required to attend a meeting, travel reimbursement is allowable. Travel reimbursement is now completed in Focus. We have uploaded the “Travel Request” and “Travel Reimbursement” Guides to the VUE website. You can access them [HERE](#). If you have questions or need support with travel reimbursement or anything else, please contact your steward or member representative.

TSP Bargaining Update

On Wednesday, May 13th, VUE and VCS met for the fourth time to bargain for TSPs. During the bargaining session the following actions occurred:

VUE proposed language on the following topics:

Article 10 - Seniority

Article 11 - Employment Conditions - new employees, transfers, employee evaluations, notice for end of year reassignment or non-reappointment, layoff/recall and reduction of hours, employee protection

VUE submitted a counter proposal to the language previously submitted by VCS on:

- **Employee Discipline**
- **Suspension & Demotion**

VUE and VCS tentatively agreed on the following articles:

Article 7 - Change in Past Practices /Terms/Conditions of Employment

Article 8 - Fair Practices

Article 19 - Employee Legal Protection

Article 25 - No Strike Agreement

Article 26 - Political Activity

The remainder of the time allocated for the meeting was used to work in subcommittees to discuss issues and solutions for specific job roles. The subcommittees included School Way Cafe, Safety and Security, Skilled Trades, and Transportation.

We want to extend our thanks to the TSPs who were able to attend the meeting. Bargaining is a public meeting and everyone is invited to attend. Our next meeting is scheduled for June.

If you are interested in watching the bargaining session, please click [HERE](#).

Bargaining Survey



It is once again time to begin planning for instructional and support staff bargaining. Your VUE bargaining teams are committed to BIG, OPEN, and TRANSPARENT negotiations. This year we will once again be counting on YOU to be present during negotiations. We will hold the sessions in the early evening so you can be in the room to listen to negotiations and provide feedback in real time to the members of the team.

Please take a moment to complete this short **survey**. The responses from the survey will guide the work of the Bargaining Committees and the team. An ALL CALL to form the committees and teams will occur once the state completes the budget.

Due to changes in the law during the legislative session, the TSIA performance pay money will have to be settled very quickly or districts will be forced to declare impasse. While we are no stranger to impasse in Volusia County, it is good to avoid it if possible. Our intent is to work with the district and mutually agree to a MOU stating that although the law requires the settlement of the TSIA within a time certain, it will not prohibit further salary negotiations .



Calendar Updates: May, June, & July

May:

Wed. 5/20 - Early Release (ER)
Mon. 5/25 - Memorial Day - District/Schools Closed
Thurs. 5/28 - ER & last day for students and Paraprofessionals
Thurs. 5/28 - Payday - All Employees
Fri. 5/29 - Post Planning - Report Card Grades due

June:

Mon. 6/1 - Payday- 10 month instructional - multi checks
Mon. 6/1 - Post Planning - Final day 10 month inst.
Mon. 6/8 - Thurs. 6/11 -VUE PD (ESOL & Reading/ESE)
Mon. 6/15 - Payday- final check 10 month inst.
Tues. 6/30 - Payday- final check paras, multi checks. - 11 & 12 month personnel

July:

Thurs. July 30 - Payday- 12 month personnel
Mon. July 27 - New Teacher Academy- Mainland

Memorial Day- Honoring the Sacrifice

Memorial Day is a day to pause and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation.

The VUE staff is proud to honor the men and women who gave their lives to our country and its citizens. Their courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to the ideals of freedom and justice will never be forgotten.

It is with the deepest respect for our brothers and sisters that we honor their memory, and we look forward to carrying on the good work of fighting for justice and liberty for ALL citizens of our great nation.



0% Interest Loan for VUE Members!

Our great friends at Launch Credit Union are once again offering VUE members a 0% interest loan. This year they have made this unbelievable opportunity available before summer break.

If you have unexpected expenses or need a little boost during the summer months, please take advantage of this no interest loan. Please contact a branch near you or apply online today!

We love our partners!

LAUNCH
CREDIT UNION

No INTEREST. All APPRECIATION.

0% Interest Educator's Loan!

- Borrow up to \$750
- 6 Month Maximum Term
- Apply May 1ST – August 31ST, 2026

The Volusia County School Board is not affiliated with these events/programs in any manner, nor does it endorse or assume any responsibility for any activities which may occur in connection with them.

Apply online at launchcu.com, at a branch, or call us at 800-662-5257, option 5

*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Loan requires credit approval and credit report. Savings account required for loan. Term of loan limited to a maximum of 6 months; maximum loan amount \$750. (Payment example: payments on a loan with a term of 6 months at 0.00% APR would be approximately \$16.67 per \$100 borrowed.) For loans funded from May 1st through August 31st, 2026. Must show proof of employment with Volusia County Schools when applying, and must be a current employee. Only a \$5 minimum deposit required to open account and become a Launch CU member. You can open an account if you live, work, worship, or attend school in the counties we serve. Please use Purpose Code A to ZVolusia

Federally insured by the NCUA.

VUE Office Hours

In honor of Memorial Day, the VUE office will be closed on Monday, May 25, 2026. We will reopen on Tuesday, May 26th at 8:30 am.

The VUE office will convert to summer hours beginning on Monday, June 1, 2026. The office will be open Monday - Thursday from 7:00 am - 5:00 pm., with the exception of:

- Monday, June 19th - Juneteenth observance
- Monday, July 6th - Independence Day observance

