



Solidarity Report

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."
~John F. Kennedy

Teacher Appreciation Week!

This week, we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week.

We love our teachers, our support staff and our TSP's!

This has been one of the most challenging years for our union and VCS. Together, we've navigated ongoing issues with pay, taxes, and leave balances, real challenges that have impacted our daily lives and our families. Yet, through it all, you continue to show up for your students and provide the commitment that makes the difference in their lives. Your dedication during times of uncertainty, and your focus on making a positive impact no matter the circumstances, is what keeps our union strong.

So we take this moment to say THANK YOU.

Thank you for your dedication, resilience, unwavering focus, and commitment. We truly appreciate you and recognize that OUR VUE is strong because of YOU!

VUE Member Appreciation Week!

To show our appreciation and to recognize the hard work of each member of our VUE family, we are sending a small token of our appreciation to you.

The gifts were sent out to stewards through the interoffice mail last Wednesday. Stewards will distribute them this week.

We know that our members give their all to help the children of Volusia County excel and to keep this district running. Thank you for all that you do, because it matters. You are more than educational and trades and service professionals, you are the **KEY** to our union!

It is with sincere gratitude that we show our appreciation to you not only this week, but every day of the year. Thank you for all that you do to make a positive difference in the lives of our students and in our union. Solidarity!



200 Members In 20 Days UPDATE

Last week we kicked off our End-of-the-Year Recruitment Blitz. Our goal is to recruit 200 new members in the 20 workdays before Memorial Day. Last week we welcomed 20 new members into the VUE family! That's great work, but the real story is that 38 more people are waiting to cross the finish line to become members.

The eDues enrollment process requires 2 steps to complete; creating a portal and linking a bank account. These individuals are half-way through the process. They just need to complete the final step and their membership will be finalized.

We are closer than we realize to achieving our goal, and once we help these folks finish the process, we will be in a great spot. We are reaching out to them this week to help them cross the line. In the meantime, we need to continue to focus on achieving our goal.

The numbers don't lie. Across the three bargaining units there are thousands of potential members waiting to be asked to join.

- **Instructional Unit: 1,940 potential members**
- **Support (OS & Para) Unit: 899 potential members**
- **TSP Unit: 1,386 potential members**

This campaign doesn't require anything complicated. If each of us commits to just one conversation a day, across this district, the growth we need will happen.

This isn't about perfect speeches or having all the answers. It's about stepping up and asking a simple question, "Have you thought about joining VUE?"

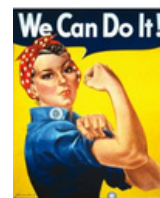
Our contract, and the protections we've worked hard to secure depend on us reaching 60% membership density. This is an important moment. It's worth asking our colleagues to reflect on the rights and protections we rely on every day and what it takes to keep them.

Are you willing to stand together to protect what we've built?

200 in 20 Days! We Can Do It!



Membership QR Code



Trades and Service Professionals - Evaluations, Displacements and Non-reappointments

Trades and Service Professionals (TSPs) are currently evaluated using the non-instructional evaluation tool in MyPGS. It is mislabeled as “Non-Bargaining Employee Performance Review Handbook.” TSPs are now bargaining unit employees, and the **evaluations must be completed before May 22, 2026.**

TSPs are evaluated using a 23 component scale that groups employee performance into 5 main categories. Each employee must participate in an evaluation conference to review their results in the MyPGS platform. Employees will be required to electronically acknowledge that the conference occurred. This acknowledgment does not indicate agreement with the evaluation, only that the meeting took place.

Employees have the right to submit a written response following the evaluation conference. This response must be uploaded in the MyPGS evaluation platform within ten work days of the evaluation conference.

An overall performance rating of *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory* shall require a conference with the immediate supervisor to establish a timeline and strategies for improvement. Improvement plans (Level I, II, and III) must be developed collaboratively with the employee, and are intended to support progress toward meeting performance expectations.

If you have been displaced or non-reappointed, contact us immediately. It is critical that we ensure you received proper notice of concerns and a fair opportunity to improve.

YOUR UNION is committed to ensuring that TSP evaluation procedures are applied equitably and correctly so that every VUE member's rights are protected!

If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.albert@floridaea.org.

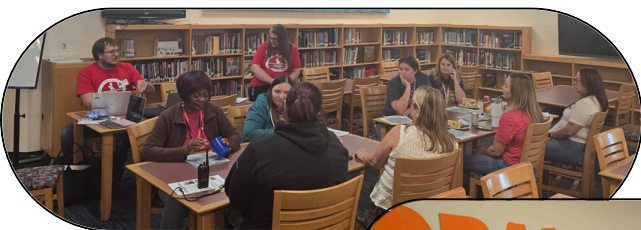
VUE Visits

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:

- R.J. Longstreet
- Palm Terrace Elementary
- Hinson Middle

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



NEA National Salary Ranking

Last week, NEA released their National Salary Ranking Report. It should be of no surprise that Florida is still at the very bottom. Our friends at FEA have shared the following details from the report:

- **For the third year in a row, Florida ranks #50 in the nation for average teacher salary out of all 50 states and D.C.**
- Of note nationally, when considering the effects of inflation, the average salary of classroom teachers has actually decreased by an estimated 4.6 percent from 2016-17 to 2025-26. Similarly, the average salary for instructional staff has decreased by an estimated 5.1 percent nationally when adjusting for inflation.
- **Florida is the third-largest state with 2.86 million students in 24/25 but ranks 41st in estimated per-pupil spending.**
- While average starting teacher salary in Florida increased from \$48,639 in 23/24 to \$49,435 in 24/25, our national ranking fell from #17 to #19 meaning pay is not keeping up nationally.
- **While the average K-12 ESP salary increased from \$33,342 in 23/24 to \$34,645 in 24/25, Florida's living wage for a family of one adult and one child to have a modest but adequate standard of living is \$63,853.**

All of this comes at a time when Florida's cost-of-living growth has **nearly quintupled compared to the previous decade**. Everyday goods are getting more expensive and our budgets are stretched tighter than ever. Many educators are struggling to support themselves and their families. We all want the ability to build a better life, to be able to afford our bills, to be able to take care of ourselves and our loved ones, and to have affordable healthcare. For too many of us, that feels more out of reach each year.

Please take a moment to review a county by county comparison of average teacher salaries across Florida. [Map of Florida Average Teacher Salaries](#)

Now more than ever, we need to build our membership in order to build our power. Please take the time to listen to the Governor as he addresses the public prior to signing into law the Anti-Union, Anti-Worker legislation: SB 1296 and HB 1279. His statements to the crowd are inflammatory, reckless, irresponsible, and incorrect. You can listen to the address [HERE](#). Individuals are entitled to their own opinions, but not their own facts. We must take these attacks seriously if we want to have a shot at a future that provides for our students and our families.

Check Your Check

It is very important that we continue to “check our checks” each payday. With the exception of any additional enhancements, (retention, stipends, supplements), your paycheck should be about the same each payday.

Please make sure to note any discrepancy in your social security (6.2% of gross wages after pre-tax deductions), Medicare (labeled soc sec/Medicare 1.45%), federal income tax (varies depending on individual deductions), cost of benefits (should be a fixed cost), and stipends or supplements.

If you believe that your paycheck is incorrect, please contact our office right away, (386) 238-1605. We need to make sure that any issues are addressed quickly.



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

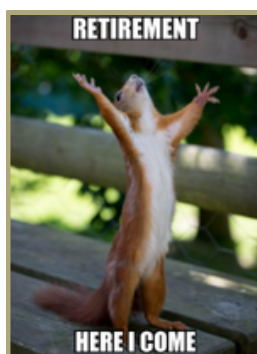
Federally insured by the NCUA.

Retiring Soon?

Make sure you join VUE-Retired when you retire!

Do you know that your insurance policies with NEA/AFT will end with your retirement? By joining VUE-R you can retain those precious benefits!

Visit our website at vueretired.org for more details or contact CJ Allen, President VUE Retired, 386.212.4245 or cj-english@msn.com



VUE Professional Learning

VUE will continue to offer summer learning programs for our members. We will offer the course 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

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

Resigning or Retiring from VCS?

If you are planning to retire, resign or otherwise separate from VCS at the end of this year, we need to know. We need to update our membership files to reflect this change.

Our VUE policy states that it is the member's responsibility to inform the VUE office of any change in membership status.

If you are leaving, please contact Beth at beth.friedl@floridaea.org or call the office at 386-238-1605.

