Volusia United Educators Bargaining Update
11/5/2026

Support and Instructional Bargaining Sessions

This week YOUR UNION met with VCS on Wednesday and Thursday to bargain for better pay, benefits, and working conditions for our members. We have included a summary and the live stream links for each unit below.

It is important to note that the district did not come prepared to discuss wages for support staff. They have not held an executive session with the board to receive direction on our proposal. During the instructional session, they continued the same narrative of, "we only have so much to give," and they did not move from the $6 million they originally offered in July.

We are tired of hearing that they don't have enough. VUE members, friends, family, and community members keep showing up to support us, and it is time that the district did the same. Enough is enough. The board must make employees the priority and direct their team to deliver a meaningful financial proposal.

Support Bargaining

- We reached an agreement on the following articles:
  - **Article 4- Union Rights, Privileges and Obligations –** we refined data access needed for membership.
  - **Article 5 – Employee Rights –** we agreed to specific language to ensure employee health and safety if an issue occurs in the workplace.
  - **Article 6 – Board Management Rights –** we agreed to blend the current language in Article 6 and Article 9 into this section of the contract.
  - **Article 10 – Union Rights and Responsibilities -** we refined the current union release language that allows a member of VUE to conduct union business during a board meeting.
- We did not agree on the following changes proposed by VCS:
  - **Article 11- Employment Conditions-** The district rejected language that would give employees with greater seniority the opportunity to voluntarily change positions to avoid a layoff, stating they do not want to be "contractually bound" to fill a position. VUE believes employees with greater seniority should have the opportunity to remain employed in positions for which they are qualified before employees with less seniority are retained.
  - **Article 13- Working Conditions**- The district rejected a thirty (30) day timeline to begin bargaining if the Superintendent recommends changes to the Job Description Committee's proposal, proposing sixty (60) days instead, and will not agree to identifying specific items to include in the safe toileting training for paraprofessionals.
  - **Article 14- Leaves and Temporary Duty**- we agree on when earned sick leave can be used but remain divided over the contract wording. Our position is clear: a sick leave day is available for use on the day it is credited or any day thereafter.

- **Article 17- Benefits/Terminal Pay** – we are reverting to our proposal that VCS increase their contribution to the health insurance premiums from $605 per month to $635.25.

After proposals were presented, VUE instructional member Tonya Pohl spoke in support of paraprofessionals, sharing her perspective as a teacher and mother on why VCS must prioritize better pay and working conditions. VUE Executive Board member Cindy Solis, a paraprofessional at Orange City Elementary, also highlighted the challenges and concerns facing paraprofessionals across the district.

The next bargaining session for support staff is scheduled for November 30th. If you are interested in listening to the Support Staff bargaining session, please click HERE.

Instructional Bargaining

- We reached an agreement on the following articles:
    - **Article 5: Employee Rights/Responsibilities –** we reached consensus on the language for professional attire. We agreed to remove the examples of inappropriate attire and focus on employees being professionals and they should dress appropriately for their assigned duties.
    - **Article 29- Employee Assistance Program-** the district reverted to the original contract language. We agreed to formally TA this article since it was opened for discussion.
- We did not agree on the following proposals:
    - **Article 3 -Scope of Bargaining –** we are proposing language to protect our right to jointly develop the school calendar.
    - **Article 19 – Educational Support** – in an attempt to reach an agreement, we reworded the language for the ESE Workgroup committee to identify certain participants but not to limit participation to only those named in the language.
    - **Article 9- Working hours and Conditions**- The district presented their counter proposal which includes:
        - A complete reworking of New Teacher Academy NTA language.
        - A "Pilot Program for 2027-2028" for remote work on non-student days. The ability to work remotely is based upon mutual agreement with administration and expectations for teacher gradebooks.
        - Changes to the VOL work hours window, office hours, and evening hours. Mandated training for VOL teachers, and language referencing the VOL Solutions Handbook.
        - Increasing PLC meetings to "up to two per week," during the 2027-2028 pilot program for remote work period.
        - Removing the No Meeting Weeks during the 2027-2028 pilot program for remote work period.
    - **Article 26 – Compensation** – we presented a counter offer that proposed compensation for all advanced degrees regardless of the area of certification, increases to the retention supplement amounts, a 1.5% salary enhancement for all

instructional staff with at least one year of service, maintaining starting salary at $50,000 for new employees, adjusting pay for summer school and additional work to include job role stipends and advance degree pay, and providing the agriculture job role stipend to teachers working in the AG magnet programs at the elementary level.

The next bargaining session for instructional personnel is scheduled for December 2nd. If you are interested in watching the bargaining session, click HERE.

This week's bargaining sessions made it very clear that district leadership is not focused on the needs of the employees, nor do they acknowledge the continued day-to-day struggle to meet the expectations placed upon us. The district's attempt to increase mandated meetings and reduce teacher guided planning time is evident of their desire to micromanage every facet of your day. If they are attempting to bargain this into our current contract, imagine what they will do if our contract no longer exists?

We must use the lessons learned this week to build our power through recruitment. Share this update with a colleague who has not yet joined our union. Show them how standing together gives us the power to take back our district and improve our working conditions. This is a time for action. Commit to asking one colleague to join VUE this week—and help them complete their membership application (https://feacms.floridaea.org/portal/fasttrack/93). Every new member strengthens our voice at the bargaining table.

In Solidarity,

Elizabeth Albert