

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BREAKING BARRIERS • SETTING RECORDS • BECOMING 5 STARS



TESTIMONY

IN SUPPORT OF
BILL NO. 36-0308

★
An act appropriating the sum of \$150,000 from the
Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to the
Virgin Islands Department of Education to conduct
a biannual fixed asset inventory.



★
BEFORE THE
Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance



HEARING DATE & TIME
Thursday, August 20, 2026 | 1:00 p.m.



HEARING LOCATION
Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

PRESENTED BY
Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.
Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Education

*Breaking barriers,
Setting records,
becoming 5 stars*



Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.
Commissioner

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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August 18, 2026

Honorable Novelle E. Francis Jr., Chairman
Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance
Capitol Building
Post Office Box 1690
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00804

Sent electronically via ccarty-brown@legvi.org

Dear Senator Novelle E. Francis:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance on behalf of the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE). We appreciate the Committee's consideration of **Bill No. 36-0308**, which proposes an appropriation of \$150,000 from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to conduct a biannual fixed asset inventory.

Maintaining an accurate inventory of the Department's property, equipment, technology, and other fixed assets is essential to ensuring accountability, safeguarding public resources, and strengthening our internal controls. A biannual inventory will allow VIDE to identify, document, and properly account for assets throughout the Territory while supporting sound fiscal and operational decision-making.

We respectfully request the Committee's favorable consideration of this measure as we continue our efforts to strengthen the Department's stewardship and accountability of public resources.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the students and families of the Virgin Islands. We remain available to address any questions or provide additional information the Committee may require.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dionne Wells-Hedrington".

Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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Introduction

Commissioner's Statement

Good afternoon, Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance, members of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, and all distinguished guests.

I am Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE). On behalf of the Department, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to provide testimony in support of Bill No. 36-0308, an Act appropriating \$150,000 from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to the Virgin Islands Department of Education to conduct a biannual fixed asset inventory.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education recognizes that effective stewardship of public resources requires more than simply acquiring and utilizing assets; it requires maintaining an accurate, reliable, and continuously updated accounting of those assets. As one of the largest agencies within the Government of the Virgin Islands, the Department is responsible for a significant inventory of property, equipment, technology, furniture, vehicles, instructional resources, and other fixed assets distributed across our schools, administrative offices, and facilities throughout the Territory.

Conducting a comprehensive biannual fixed asset inventory will strengthen the Department's ability to accurately identify, document, safeguard, and account for these resources. It will also provide greater transparency and accountability in the management of taxpayer-funded property, assist in identifying lost, damaged, obsolete, or unaccounted-for assets, and support sound fiscal and operational decision-making.

The requested appropriation represents an important investment in strengthening the Department's internal controls and ensuring that the Virgin Islands Department of Education has the systems and resources necessary to responsibly manage the public assets entrusted to us. We respectfully urge the Committee and the 36th Legislature to support Bill No. 36-0308.

Accompanying me are:

- Victor Somme III, Assistant Commissioner
- Hasina Harris, Deputy Commissioner of Fiscal and Administrative Services
- Shirleen Richards, Director of Division of Fixed Asset Management

Thank you for your unwavering support and the opportunity to testify today.

Support of Bill No. 36-0308

After an internal analysis of the proposed legislation, the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE/the Department) fully supports Bill No. 36-0308 with the recommendation that this appropriation be renewed as long as the biennial inventory remains a critical compliance requirement under the United States Department of Education, General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR Part. The biennial inventory was previously funded with General Funds. The Department attempted to fund this activity with federal funds under the Consolidated Grant Application (CGA). However, we were unable to revise the CGA in time to fund the inventory by or before the end of the current fiscal year, and more importantly, not all capital assets to be inventoried were purchased with CGA funds such as Special Education equipment, for example. Funding sources for assets not purchased with CGA funds could not financially contribute to the mandatory 2-year inventory.

As you may all be aware, the VIDE is required to comply with EDGAR, specifically 34 CFR, Parts 74-86 and 97-99. Part 80.32 requires that a physical inventory be conducted at least every two (2) years. Specific to this statement of work, the VIDE must comply with the following requirements:

- The VIDE must ensure that all tangible personal property procured under United States Department of Education (ED) Grants are managed in accordance with the requirements of 34 CFR 80.32(a) and (c)-(g) to ensure that such property with a purchase price of \$5,000 or greater is properly inventoried, maintained and stored to prevent loss, damage or theft.
- The VIDE must conduct a bi-annual inventory of assets with a purchase price of \$5,000 or greater.
- The physical inventory count must be completed and validated across all school districts no later than September 30, 2026, to meet federal compliance mandates. The Biennial Inventory is scheduled as follows:
 - August 31 – September 9, 2026: St. Croix School District
 - September 11-22, 2026: St. Thomas-St. John District
- Following the physical count, the contractor must reconcile the inventory to the property records maintained in VIDE's fixed asset system of record (ERP) to ensure the system is updated with accurate, real-time data.

Timely execution is essential to protect the Department's federal grant standing. In order to conduct this process efficiently, the Department has elected to retain the services of a contractor, Bondurant Enterprises, Inc. (aka Pro-Bar), to carry out this task due to the scope of work and the limited work force in the Department's Division of Fixed Asset Management (FAMD). The contractor will be responsible for conducting a physical inventory count that will include the following activities:

- Physical inventory count planning and preparation;

- Conducting the physical inventory count (to be completed by September 30, 2026);
- Performing the inventory reconciliation and ERP update; and
- Delivering the final report.

For the 2026 cycle, the VIDE is focusing exclusively on federal (capital) assets with an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or greater. Capital assets at VIDE include, but are not limited to, vehicles, commercial stoves/ovens, interactive boards, playground equipment, certain musical instruments such as the concert tuba, multifunction copiers/printers, etc. The total number of assets to be inventoried is approximately 486. The table below provides a breakdown of these assets and the number of schools and activity center locations:

Table 1 – Breakdown of Assets by Island and Number of Locations

Island	St. Thomas	St. John	St. Croix	Total
Number of Locations	35	3	27	65
Number of Assets (\$5,000+)	307	10	169	486

Currently, the VIDE uses BMI TransTrak PPC software and BMI AssetTrak PPC handheld scanners to tag, scan, verify, and validate inventory. This process involves downloading asset data from the VIDE fixed asset system of record (the ERP) to the BMI software, which is then imported into handheld scanners for field use. Once scanned, the system generates automated exception reports by location, identifying discrepancies that must be addressed during the reconciliation phase. The selected contractor must describe an approach and equipment process that is compatible with this framework to ensure that all data collected during the physical inventory count can be seamlessly reconciled and used to update the ERP.

The appropriated amount of \$150,000.00 accounts for the projected logistical costs of mobilizing teams across all three islands to the sixty-five distinct sites within a condensed timeframe, as well as the specialized technical expertise required for fixed asset reconciliation and the subsequent integration into the Department's system of record.

Conclusion

In closing, the Virgin Islands Department of Education strongly supports Bill No. 36-0308. Collaboration remains essential in maximizing the limited funding and human resources that plagues the Department. The Department is earnestly endeavoring to complete all aspects of EDGAR, relative to the biennial inventory, so that we can remove the financial burden placed on this Department and remove the third-party fiduciary oversight. To enact this goal, the VIDE cannot afford to delay the start of this critical project and respectfully seeks the Legislature's positive support. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We stand readily available for questions.