

REFORMING, REBUILDING, AND REBRANDING PUBLIC EDUCATION

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
35TH LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT MEETING

PRESENTED ON NOVEMBER 16, 2023
DR. DIONNE WELLS-HEDRINGTON
COMMISSIONER



Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.
Commissioner

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF
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November 15, 2023

Honorable Marise C. James
Chairwoman, Committee on Education and Workforce Development
#20 Estate Golden Rock
Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00820

Sent electronically via dpayne@legvi.org.

Dear Senator James:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the status of school facilities, the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance, and a detailed breakdown of federal grants and utilization of funds for their respective purposes or programs they support.

This handbook provides testimony and accompanying information. Thank you for your continued support and attention regarding the needs of the Virgin Islands Department of Education.

Sincerely,

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

Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

Commissioner

Table of Contents

- Statement by the Commissioner 3
- Status of School Facilities 5
- Disaster Recovery Projects/New Schools 7
- Status of the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance 8
- School Safety 9
- St. Croix District Updates 12
 - Overcoming Challenges: Adapting to Heatwaves, Infrastructural Issues, and Innovating School Schedules in St. Croix District..... 13
 - John H. Woodson Hybrid Schedule 15
 - John H. Woodson Weekly Rotation 15
 - High School Adjusted Hybrid Schedule..... 16
 - St. Croix District Federal Grants American Rescue Plan (ARP) Roadmap 16
- St. Thomas - St. John District Updates..... 17
 - Start & End Times of Schools in the St. Thomas/St. John School District 18
 - St. Thomas-St. John District Federal Grants American Rescue Plan (ARP) Roadmap 19
- Conclusion..... 19
- Addendum A..... 20
- Addendum B..... 29
- Addendum C 30
- Addendum D 31

Statement by the Commissioner

Good afternoon, Committee Chairwoman, Senator Marise C. James. Vice-chair, Senator Donna A. Frett Gregory, other committee members Senator Diane T. Capehart, Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Javon E. James Sr., Senator Franklin D. Johnson, and Senator Carla J. Joseph and other member of the 35th legislature, listening and viewing audience. I am Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Education, where we remain committed to ensuring that every single child that walks through our doors can be educated, empowered, and enriched to be the best version of themselves. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the status of school facilities, the Status of the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance, and school schedules.

With me are members of my leadership team: Mr. Victor Somme III, Assistant Commissioner; Dr. Ericilda Ottley-Herman, St. Croix District Superintendent; Dr. Stefan Jürgen, St. Thomas-St. John District Insular Superintendent; Alan Fleming, Chief Operations Officer; Davidson Charlemagne, Territorial Director of Facilities and Maintenance; Yauncey Milligan, Director of Maintenance St. Croix District; Gene Weekes, Director of Maintenance St. Thomas-St. John District.

Today, I would like to begin by commending the hard-working employees of the Virgin Islands Department of Education for their commitment, dedication, and passion for our children as we embark on yet another year of enriching, inspiring, and educating the young minds of this territory. At the VIDE, we share in the common vision that we are transforming today's learners into tomorrow's leaders. With our rebranding, communication is key, and we will continue our efforts to keep the internal and external stakeholders informed. We are open to having those difficult conversations, finding solutions to our myriad of problems, and working closely with all stakeholders to make our schools exceptional learning communities.

The department accepts our part in being accountable for the level of service provided to our faculty, staff, and students. We do not take that position lightly, and we commend our faculty, staff, and students for holding the department accountable for the conditions of our schools. It is our hope today, as we get to the core of where we are with our facilities, that we bring clarity to the concerns of all.

Maintenance will always be a challenge for the current state of our facilities because they have aged out, and our deferred maintenance, as reported in 2015 by the Army Corp of Engineers, was \$22 million, and we are now in 2023. Therefore, we expect our issues to continue as we work with our federal partners to acquire funding to modernize or rebuild our schools. Currently, in the territory, we have four facilities under 40 years old, which is historically the life cycle of a school, based on our research (See Table 1).

The department is committed to continuing our efforts to leverage the resources that we have as we continue to maintain our sites.

Table 1: Age of the Facilities

Island	School	Age	Year Built
St. Croix	Alexander Henderson Elementary School	51	1971
St. Croix	Alfredo Andrews Elementary School	53	1973
St. Croix	Arthur A. Richards Junior High School	46	1977
St. Croix	Charles Emanuel Elementary School	65	1958
St. Croix	Claude O. Markoe Elementary School	65	1958
St. Croix	Elena Christian Junior High School	51	1971
St. Croix	Eulalie Rivera Elementary School	58	1965
St. Croix	Evelyn M. Williams Elementary School	51	1971
St. Croix	John H. Woodson Junior High School	42	1981
St. Croix	Juanita Gardine Elementary School	60	1963
St. Croix	Lew Muckle Elementary School	50	1970
St. Croix	Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School	43	1982
St. Croix	Positive Connections Alternative Education	179	1844
St. Croix	Ricardo Richards Elementary School	45	1976
St. Croix	St. Croix Central High School	56	1967
St. Croix	St. Croix Educational Complex High School	28	1995
St. John	Guy H. Benjamin Elementary School	48	1975
St. John	Julius E. Sprauve School	65	1955
St. Thomas	Addelita Cancryn Junior High School	57	1966
St. Thomas	Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School	20	2003
St. Thomas	Charlotte Amalie High School	65	1955
St. Thomas	E. Benjamin Oliver Elementary School	48	1975
St. Thomas	Edith L. Williams Alternative Academy	42	1981
St. Thomas	Evelyn Marcelli Elementary School	106	1917
St. Thomas	Gladys A. Abraham Elementary School	53	1970
St. Thomas	Ivanna Eudora Kean High School	48	1975
St. Thomas	J. Antonio Jarvis Primary School	141	1882
St. Thomas	Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School	64	1959
St. Thomas	Joseph Gomez Elementary School	53	1970
St. Thomas	Joseph Sibilly Elementary School	50	1973
St. Thomas	Leonard Dober Elementary School	85	1938
St. Thomas	Lockhart Elementary School	23	2000
St. Thomas	Ulla F. Muller Elementary School	41	1979
St. Thomas	Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School	23	2000

Status of School Facilities

Plan/Timeline

The Virgin Islands Department of Education facilities are experiencing an annual increase in maintenance work orders. The current listing of concerns has been received from the maintenance staff, principals, unions, and students. The compilation of those complaints received has been prioritized and will be addressed based on the approved funding that we have in place. The progress of our Operations unit will be shared monthly so that all stakeholders are aware of the department's progress. The increase in maintenance concerns can be traced to the age of facilities and the increased requirement for air conditioning and electrical connections for modern educational hardware. Plans for maintaining VIDE facilities for the fiscal year 2023/2024 will include critical infrastructure maintenance projects utilizing contracted consultants and district maintenance staff. Two contracts are in place, one for comprehensive electrical assessments and a task order for construction and maintenance services.

1. **Comprehensive electrical assessments** have been submitted to the Department for the Eulalie Rivera Elementary School, Lew Muckle Elementary School, Juanita Gardine Elementary School, Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School, Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School, Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, and Charlotte Amalie High School. Comprehensive assessments provide an overview of the facility's electrical system with recommendations for action required due to Code infractions. Comprehensive assessments for Julius E. Sprauve School, Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, Leonard Dober Educational Complex, and Ulla F. Muller Elementary School are being completed for submission to the Department. Bid Packages for actions requiring immediate actions have been prepared and are being submitted to Property and Procurement for the assessments received. Phase one of Juanita Gardine's immediate actions, upgrading the service entrance wiring and installing a 600-amp breaker, has been completed, allowing the continued use of recently installed classroom air conditioners. Due to the extent of the required work, these projects will be phased in to ensure the continued operation of schools. Completions are expected to take eighteen (18) months.
2. **Upgrades to our wastewater systems** at the Yvonne Bowsky Elementary School, Joseph Sibilly Elementary School, and the Joseph Sibilly Annex are in the planning stage. Yvonne Bowsky Elementary School's wastewater treatment plant will be renovated to include the installation of new pumps, blowers, and a new electronic control panel. Joseph Sibilly Elementary School and the Joseph Sibilly Annex will have septic tanks replaced. Completion is expected by August 2024. 2009 MF Bond and 2012 GRT Bonds will be used to fund these upgrades.

3. **Installation of a generator and automatic transfer switch** for the St. Thomas/ St. John School Lunch LAGA cooler and freezer is on the way. Renovations are also planned for the District School Lunch Warehouse in Subbase. This project will provide much-needed relief to the warehouse staff. The existing generator will be assessed, serviced, and/or replaced in the St. Croix District as required. Completion of these projects is expected by April 2024.
4. **Cisterns:** The VIDE will utilize the Task Order Contractor to assess the department's cisterns and pump rooms for repair and renovation. Renovations will include but not be limited to the installation of filters to retain EPA/DPNR's safe water compliance. Completion of these projects is expected by May 2024.
5. **Air quality** in VIDE's facilities is being addressed with an air quality test to determine the actions required for remediation. The current St. Thomas/ St. John District test resulted in mold remediation at the Charlotte Amalie High School and Lockhart Elementary School. Remediation in this district will continue at the Julius Sprauve School. A mold remediation contract with ADCON in the St. Croix District has been prepared for the John H. Wodson Junior High School. Bids for air quality testing are being solicited for the remaining St. Croix District Schools. Completion of contracted remediation is projected for December 2024.
6. **Bathroom renovations** territory wide is a priority. A contract is in place with Lightning Construction to repair the 14 restrooms at Central High School. Bundling was done for the remainder of the restroom renovations in the St. Croix district. The scopes are prepared, bid packages have been dispersed. Once a vendor is selected then we will be able to proceed with the renovations of the restrooms. The same bundling will be done in the St. Thomas-St. John district to upgrade all restrooms and will follow the procurement process. While meeting with the students, it was expressed that the issues in our restrooms include small stalls, inadequate fixtures, lighting, and general cleanliness of our restrooms. We also talked about the next steps once these restrooms are completed that we work together to ensure that students take care of the property.
7. **Enhanced HVAC System:** Our ventilation and air conditioning systems are being inspected and cleaned to ensure optimal performance for everyone. Repairing and replacing Air conditioners is an ongoing effort in both Districts. Commercial fans are being installed in schools where it is feasible to ensure comfort.
8. **Electrical and Plumbing Upgrades:** We have conducted a comprehensive review of our electrical and plumbing systems, including inspections of wiring, outlets, fixtures, pipes, and faucets, to identify and resolve potential issues that could disrupt day-to-day activities. Identified repairs are approximately 80% completed.
9. **Renovated Classrooms:** We have refurbished several classrooms, creating a fresh and inspiring atmosphere where students can thrive academically. The

renovations included new flooring, upgraded lighting fixtures, restrooms, and air conditioning. Replacement of modular wall finishes, and ceiling tiles are scheduled for rooms that were remediated to include the removal of compromised ceiling tiles and wall cavities.

10. **Painting and Repairs:** A fresh coat of paint has been applied to various areas throughout the school premises, including classrooms, hallways, and common areas, to create a more vibrant and welcoming atmosphere. Flashing and patching of modular roofs are in progress in both Districts to ensure a watertight envelope. Repairs, such as fixing broken windows and walkways and replacing ceiling tiles and window operators, are also taking place.
11. **Safety Upgrades:** The safety of our school community is of utmost importance to us. Therefore, we have conducted thorough inspections and made necessary improvements. This includes installing additional fire safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and extinguishers, and improved emergency exit signage and evacuation plans.
12. **Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance:** Our outdoor spaces play a significant role in providing a pleasant learning environment. Our landscaping contractors are working diligently to maintain grounds and trees while ensuring pathways remain safe and well-maintained.

Additionally, all contracts executed for services generally include a performance period of a minimum of 120 days. Also embedded within the contracts are penalties for extended terms of the contract. Those services that require construction contracts utilizing federal funding also stipulate that all contractors have 100% bonding. That has been a challenge for many local contractors which in some cases hold our projects up. The Government of the Virgin Islands is working to provide support to our contractors with their bonding.

Disaster Recovery Projects/New Schools

The Virgin Islands Department of Education continues working with FEMA to attain the needed funding for new and modernized schools, optimistically \$4 billion. Local funds are being leveraged to undertake Early Start Projects that support building the new Arthur A. Richards PreK-8, a new Charlotte Amalie High School, a new Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, a new Alexander Henderson, a new Claude O. Markoe, a new Jane E. Tuitt, a new E. Benjamin Oliver, to name a few. Every school in this territory will be rebuilt or modernized based on the facilities master plan. The was able to leverage asset recovery funding for our early projects, which include the CAHS 9th Grade Center at Wheatley, Arthur A. Richards Demolition, Evelyn Williams Demolition, and Abraham Center for CTECH & Adult Education and CAHS demolition.

The VIDE is working with the Program Management (PM) firms to develop implementation timelines. Approximately \$6 million in permanent projects have been completed, and more than \$186 million are under construction.

Design-build teams for the New Central High School, the New Charlotte Amalie High School, and the Boschulte PreK-8 Modernization have been selected, and the Department of Property and Procurement is preparing the contracts. Design is in progress for the Henderson, Markoe, and Lockhart campuses, which will be prepared for solicitation in the first quarter of 2024.

Status of the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance

On October 13, 2023, the Virgin Islands Department of Education posted the position of Executive Director of the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance. The VIDE and the representative from the Governor's Office will be scheduling interviews for December 2024 for the applicants. We were able to secure seven applications, and we are looking forward to a successful selection process. Once that individual comes on board, they will begin to organize the Bureau by selecting additional employees to fill the various positions outlined in the law's language. Budgets have already been made available to the Bureau. The table below shows the budget allocation in the various categories for local funding in the amount of \$5 million for routine maintenance territory-wide.

Table 2: Budget Breakdown for Maintenance Budget- \$5 million

Category	Percentage	Amount
	%	\$5,000,000.00
Other Services	60%	\$3,000,000.00
<i>Professional services</i>	60%	\$1,800,000.00
<i>Travel</i>	5%	\$150,000.00
<i>Transportation (not travel)</i>	2%	\$60,000.00
<i>Repairs and maintenance</i>	12%	\$360,000.00
<i>Rental of Machine and equipment</i>	10%	\$300,000.00
<i>Other N.O.C.</i>	10%	\$300,000.00
<i>Training</i>	1%	\$30,000.00
Supplies	2%	\$100,000.00
<i>Repairs and Maintenance</i>	56%	\$56,000.00
<i>Small Tools and equipment</i>	16%	\$16,000.00
<i>Data Processing Software</i>	6%	\$6,000.00
<i>Clothing and Cloth material</i>	2%	\$2,000.00
<i>Operating Supplies</i>	10%	\$10,000.00
<i>Vehicle supplies</i>	10%	\$10,000.00
Capital Outlay	38%	\$1,900,000.00
<i>Repair and renovations</i>	60%	\$1,140,000.00
<i>Improvement to Buildings</i>	16%	\$304,000.00
<i>Improvement other than Buildings</i>	2%	\$38,000.00
<i>Machinery and Equipment</i>	2%	\$38,000.00
<i>Vehicles</i>	0%	\$0.00

In addition to the increase in the annual maintenance deposit, the Bureau received another \$7.5 million from the Education Initiative Fund for the organization of the bureau and the reprogramming of \$3,417,978.25 from PFA funding. This is distributed by districts \$2,032,774.77 St. Croix District and \$1,385,203.48 for the St. Thomas-St. John District. When the Executive Director comes on board, he/she will be able to provide this body with more details on how that funding will be utilized. The VIDE is looking forward to the collaboration as we work to improve our infrastructure here in the territory.

School Safety

In lieu of the recent school-related incidents. It is important that VIDE highlight the things that have been done when referencing school safety and security, it is also important to discuss preparing and training those responsible for the safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors on our campus as well: school monitors. In that regard, the Department has taken substantive, proactive measures to ensure the safety and security of students, faculty, staff, schools, and programs. The Department has taken a specific focus on training and equipping school monitors as they serve as the first line of defense. They play a crucial role in maintaining a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors, recognizing that effective teaching and learning happens in secure settings.

The VIDE has been proactive in its commitment to school safety demonstrated by the first high-level meeting for the 2023-2024 school year with the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) on September 1, 2023. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the functions and limitations of the School Resource Officer (SRO) and the juvenile investigation bureau, police presence on school campuses and school events for situational/crowd control, enforcement of banned parents/visitors to school campuses, and general SRO interaction with students.

Meeting participants included:

VIPD PARTICIPANTS	VIDE PARTICIPANTS
Assistant Commissioners, St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John	Territorial Assistant Commissioner
St. Croix Police Chief	St. Croix Insular Superintendent
St. Croix Deputy Police Chief	Acting Deputy Superintendent, St. Croix
School Security Bureau Chiefs, St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John	Territorial Director, Division of Disaster Planning and School Security
Juvenile Bureau Detective (1)	
St. Croix School Resource Officers, St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John	

The first professional development training for school monitors for the 2023-2024 school year was recently conducted October 13, 2023, in the St. Thomas-St. John District and October 16, 2023, in the St. Croix District. This training focused on Home Made Explosives (HME) and was conducted by the New Mexico Tech-Energetic Research and Testing Center. The training was a *“course designed to provide.....the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and respond to incidents involving HME.”* Thirty-seven monitors participated in the St. Thomas-St. John District and 56 in the St. Croix District. Participants will receive certification of attendance from New Mexico Tech. Additional training for monitors is referenced further within this testimony.

The Department has completed the first round of procuring various security equipment and uniforms, for both school districts, to enhance the safety and security of schools. The equipment, purchased with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, includes the following:

- **Body Armor Bulletproof Vests:** These vests provide concealable protection against both ballistic and stab threats. They are designed to be discreet while offering robust security. Size information for all monitors has been collected and shared with the vendor.
- **Tear-Resistant Arm Protectors:** These arm protectors are adjustable, anti-scratch, and are useful for safeguarding against bites and burns.
- **Body Cameras:** The body cameras come with fifteen hours of video recording capacity, 128GB memory, and a 180-degree rotation camera feature. These cameras can be used to record incidents and activities.
- **Handheld Metal Detectors:** These detectors are designed for security inspections and can operate continuously for 40 hours. They are highly sensitive and can detect guns, knives, and other metal objects that may pose a threat on school campuses.
- **Two-way Opposite Direction and Single Dome Cameras:** The St. Thomas-St. John District has contracted with SM@RTNET.VI, a broadband technology company, to install 952 cameras at all schools at a total cost of \$2,497,802.45 funded by ARPA. This amount covers installation, all materials, software, licensing and warranty. The St. Croix District selected Mon Ethos Pro Support, LLC, to install 929 cameras in all schools and programs in that District at a cost of \$2 million approximately.

EQUIPMENT	DISTRICT		
	St. Croix	St. Thomas-St. John	TOTALS
Bulletproof Vests	60	60	120
Arm Protectors	60	60	120
Body Cameras	60	60	120
Handheld Metal Detectors	60	60	120
Handcuffs	Purchase not allowable w/ARPA Funds		NA
Two-way Opposite Direction and Single Dome School Security	929	952	1,881
Uniforms and Caps (*Polo shirts and caps)	NA	NA	649 (shirts)
NOTES:	*Pursuant to the USW-Master CBA, "the Department shall provide each monitor with two (2) caps and six (6) polo shirts with the departmental or		

The Division of Disaster Planning and School Security (DPSS/the Division) is tasked with developing plans, policies and procedures that speak to holistic school security measures. As such, the DPSS will complete the School Security Equipment Use Policy and Procedural Manual by November 15, 2023. Training on the use, operation and maintenance of this equipment is tentatively scheduled for November 22, 2023, a professional development day for VIDE.

The purpose of the School Security Equipment Use Policy and Procedural Manual, which mirrors similar policies at the Virgin Islands Police Department, is to use security equipment to improve the performance of and protect school monitors. Security equipment assigned to school monitors is meant to enhance operational effectiveness and increase their accountability.

In addition, we recognize the need to address our student population and partner with agencies to support our population with their needs. As such the department has embarked on partnership with the Virgin Islands Police Department, Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services. We are looking for ways to ensure that the needs of the whole child are being addressed. The recent rash of student fights across the territory is a clear indication that our students need that support. The team has implemented a multi-tiered system of support that would ensure that children who display aggressive behaviors from elementary are put on behavior improvement plans immediately. Tracking student behavior and using that data to inform decision is at the core of the work of the district and schools. Many of the altercations that we have

experienced range from envy, rivalry, cyber bullying, differences in opinions and other external variables.

As we transition into site-based management, building administrators must ensure that they are tracking and intervening using their basic child study teams and putting plans in place to support their students. Funding will be available at schools to ensure that schools can implement their Positive Behavior Intervention Supports initiatives, wrap around services, training on conflict resolution, anger management and any other relevant topic to student experiences. Students on the high school level, specifically student council representatives and protestors, have indicated a desire to work on ways to improve morale with students. We have discussed initiatives such as lunch leagues, student of the month, wellness centers, pep rallies and other initiatives that would foster that sense of family. The student council leadership will continue to meet with senior leadership monthly as well as work with the building administration to put their ideas into action. We will continue to collaborate to ensure that our students are given the opportunity to change their trajectory and improve their behaviors.

St. Croix District Updates

As of November 8, 2023, the St. Croix District remains deeply committed to providing the best education for our 5,114 enrolled students, who come from diverse backgrounds, including 259 English Language Learners (ELL), 416 students receiving Special Education (SPED) services, and 29 students in Modified/ELL subgroups. We are resolute in our dedication to ensuring that every student, regardless of their individual needs and challenges, can thrive and reach their full potential.

Celebrating Achievements: Highlights from the 1st Marking Period

It's truly wonderful to celebrate the achievements of the educators and students in the St. Croix District for the 2023-2024 School Year's 1st marking period. These accomplishments reflect the dedication and hard work of all involved and contribute to the growth and success of the district. The following highlights are particularly impressive:

- Superintendent's Honor Roll: Congratulations to the 226 students from 1st through 12th grade who received the Superintendent's Honor Roll Certificate for achieving a remarkable grade point average of 98% or higher. This is a testament to their commitment to academic excellence.
- Bush Cook Competition: Kudos to Alfredo Andrews for securing 1st place in the Middle School division and Lew Muckle for achieving 1st place in the Elementary division of the Bush Cook competition. Their culinary skills and achievements are commendable.
- Parental Engagement: The high level of parental participation at Juanita Gardine, Claude O. Markoe, Pearl B. Larsen, and Ricardo Richards is outstanding. Engaged parents play a crucial role in students' success and overall school development.
- Community Partnerships: The Eulalie Rivera PK-8 School's approach to organizing an open house with community partners and agencies is a fantastic way to connect

with families, resulting in understanding the USDA Home Buyers program and five parents registering for the St. Croix District Day Adult Education program.

- **Sports Achievements:** The district has excelled in sports with champions at every level, including Lew Muckle Elementary Flag Football Champs and Girls Netball Champs, Eulalie Rivera Middle School Flag Football champions and 1st place in Cross Country, and Pearl B. Larsen Middle School Volleyball Champions. Additionally, the St. Croix Central High School Varsity Flag Football Team and Volleyball Champions have made us proud. These victories showcase the commitment, teamwork, and talent of the student athletes and their coaches.
- **Civic Matters Quiz Bowl:** It's a great achievement for the St. Croix Educational Complex Team of 9th grade students to be the Civic Matters Quiz Bowl Champions. This demonstrates their knowledge, critical thinking, and dedication to civic education.
- **Junior High Skills USA Charter:** John H. Woodson Jr. High School's creation of the first Junior High Skills USA charter is a significant step in developing career and technical education opportunities for students as they transition to high school. This initiative will help students acquire valuable skills for their future.
- **Electronics Program:** The revival of the Electronics program next semester at the Career & Technical Education Center after eight years is an exciting development. It will provide students with the opportunity to learn about a valuable and relevant field.

These accomplishments indeed reinforce the St. Croix District's commitment to nurturing well-rounded children and providing them opportunities for success. It's a testament to the hard work and dedication of students, educators, and the entire school community. Congratulations to everyone involved, and may this success continue throughout the school year!

Overcoming Challenges: Adapting to Heatwaves, Infrastructural Issues, and Innovating School Schedules in St. Croix District

In the month of September, our school community faced an unprecedented challenge as five of our campuses were adversely affected by the intense heatwave. In response, we undertook a thoughtful and collaborative effort to achieve a delicate balance between ensuring educational continuity and prioritizing the physical well-being of our students and staff. The resulting adjusted schedules, that took effect Monday, September 25, 2023, impacted the Juanita Gardine PK-8 School, Eulalie Rivera PK-8 School, John H. Woodson Jr. High School, St. Croix Central High School, St. Croix Educational Complex, and the Career & Technical Education Center.

This decision was made after thoughtful consideration and collaboration with key stakeholders. We recognized the profound impact of extreme heat on concentration and

overall learning outcomes, acknowledging our responsibility as educational leaders extends beyond academics.

As of Monday, October 2, 2023, Juanita Gardine successfully transitioned back to its normal schedule of 8:15 am to 3:15 pm. This change followed the completion of crucial electrical upgrades that now sustain the air conditioning units in each classroom. The lessons learned from the Juanita Gardine Air Conditioning project emphasized the significance of proper electrical work before the installation of AC units. Moving forward, our commitment to prioritizing safety remains unwavering.

In our ongoing efforts to address the challenges posed by extreme heat, we collaborated with the Operations Unit to implement various cooling measures at Eulalie Rivera, St. Croix Central High School, and St. Croix Educational Complex. The measures included the replacement of ceiling fans with high-grade industrial fans, lowering of ceiling fans, and replacement of inoperable window winders.

The Eulalie Rivera PK-8 School's adjusted schedule was from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm to ensure that students were not in school during the hottest point of the day. Recognizing the need to ensure that students could meet or exceed the mandated minimum instructional hours, Eulalie Rivera School will now maintain a 7:30 am start time, concluding at 2:00 pm. This adjustment allows the campus to operate during cooler hours while meeting the required 5.5 instructional hours.

Regrettably, the John H. Woodson Jr. High School campus is currently closed due to environmental concerns after a pipe burst in the wall of the B wing. After the leadership team expressed concerns about adverse reactions in various areas of the campus, a decision was made to transition students to virtual learning. However, the challenges associated with virtual instruction, including a decline in student attendance, drop in student engagement, declining academic performance, and logistical concerns, prompted a reassessment of our approach.

An in-depth analysis of the St. Croix District led us to the decision for John H. Woodson and St. Croix Central High School to share the St. Croix Central High School Campus in a double session format. This decision was not taken lightly and was made after careful consideration of various factors, including the ability to accommodate students, furniture logistics, and the impact on the most vulnerable population of students in PK-3. Both principals met to devise a schedule that works and allows for the sharing of the facilities. To date the issues have been rectified to include space for physical education, counselors, and monitors.

Embracing an open system approach, the initial schedule was developed collaboratively with the school leadership team. The schedule was presented to educators, parents, and stakeholders, and adjustments were made to ensure the minimum instructional hours were met while allowing for in-person time. One major concern addressed was ensuring students' safe return home in the early evening hours as darkness sets in sooner now. To tackle this, we introduced a hybrid schedule, providing 2 hours of virtual instruction in the

morning, with each class period lasting 40 minutes from 8:00 am to 10:10 am. In the afternoon, students enjoy approximately 3.5 hours of in-person instruction, with each class period extended to 1 hour from 12:40 pm to 4:00 pm. This rotation provides students with longer in-person class time, balanced safety, and educational quality.

John H. Woodson Hybrid Schedule

Instructional Mode	A day	B day	Time
	Period	Period	
Virtual	1	4	8:00 am – 8:40 am
	2	5	8:45 am – 9:25 am
	3	6	9:30 am – 10:10 am
Lunch (12:20 pm – 12:50 pm)			
In-Person	4	1	12:50 pm – 1:50 pm
	5	2	1:55 pm – 2:55 pm
	6	3	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

John H. Woodson Weekly Rotation

Week of	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
November 13	A	B	A	B	A
November 20	B	A	Non-Instructional Day/ Thanksgiving Break		
November 27	B	A	B	A	B

To accommodate the double session and align with the Career & Technical Education Center (CTEC) for certification opportunities, additional adjustments were made to the St. Croix Central High School schedule. The lunch period on the adjusted schedule was shifted to the end of the day. While the consideration of reverting the St. Croix Educational Complex and Career & Technical Education Center back to a full-day schedule was considered, it would have impacted the certification opportunities of approximately 100 St. Croix Central High School students. The current Central High School schedule aligns with the adjusted CTEC schedule, except for the 5th period, where 7 students are transported to CTEC, ending their day in their respective CTEC classes.

High School Adjusted Hybrid Schedule

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	Virtual
CHS	7:40 am	8:50 am	10:00 am	11:10 am	Lunch (12:15 pm)	1:15 pm 1:50 pm
CTEC	7:40 am	8:50 am	10:00 am	Lunch (11:10 am)	12:00 pm	2:00 pm
SCEC	7:40 am	8:50 am	10:00 am	Lunch (11:10 am)	12:00 pm	2:00 pm

To ensure high school students receive necessary academic interventions and support while meeting the mandated minimum of 5.5 instructional hours, both Central High School and the Educational Complex have implemented a virtual Flex-intervention block. This block accommodates the missing instructional time, with students following a schedule developed by school leadership teams to receive extra support and supplemental instruction.

Looking forward, once the John H. Woodson Jr. High campus has been remediated and brought back online by the VIDE Operations division, normal operational hours will resume. The St. Croix Central High School, the St. Croix Educational Complex and the Career Technical Educational Center will return to its normal operational hours of 7:40 to 2:30 pm and the John H. Woodson Jr. High School will return on its campus to 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Our commitment to providing students with high-quality instruction and creating a conducive learning environment remains steadfast. We acknowledge the challenges posed by aged buildings, extreme learning loss among students, and the diverse passions of educators. Our students deserve the best possible education, and we are determined to provide it in the least restrictive environment.

St. Croix District Federal Grants American Rescue Plan (ARP) Roadmap

In the dynamic landscape of education, the St. Croix District has recharted an ambitious course guided by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), recognizing the profound impact on students' lives. The St. Croix District has strategically crafted an ARP roadmap to leverage the allocated funds effectively, recognizing the urgent need to address learning loss exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Within the confines of ARP's directive, 20% of the funding is allocated to addressing learning loss, we earmarked a significant portion of the ARP funding to "Learning Acceleration" rather than remediation.

Beyond academics, ARP recognizes the pivotal role of infrastructure and safety. Understanding that a safe and healthy environment is fundamental to effective learning, we allocate funds to critical code upgrades (\$10,197,729.11) and security enhancements. We recognize the extent of the trauma experienced by our students and vast increase in aggressive behaviors outlining the importance of students' mental and emotional well-being. As such we have revised to increase our ARP funding for behavioral health services contracts to \$500,000. Significant allocations prioritize Outdoor Facilities and to a public information system with a two-way alert system (\$723,029.99) ensures timely communication, fostering a sense of security and connection within our educational community. This holistic approach ensures secure and conducive learning environments, where students thrive academically, emotionally, and physically. The estimated total investment in these initiatives amounts to at least \$20,411,459.40.

In essence, the St. Croix District's ARP roadmap embodies a commitment to a comprehensive, inclusive, and transformative education system. Through strategic investments, we navigate the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that every student, in every educational setting, receives the support they need to thrive. Our journey is one of resilience, adaptability, and a shared vision for a brighter future through education.

St. Thomas - St. John District Updates

The St. Thomas - St. John District has embarked on a Year of Instruction, Inquiry, and Innovation for the 2023-2024 School Year. The STTJ District has placed a high priority on strategies to support this endeavor at both the school and district levels, focusing on Quality Schools, Effective Systems, and Stakeholder Engagement. We believe that by prioritizing developing quality schools, engaging families as partners, and garnering the support of the community we will provide students with well-rounded instruction, interventions, and supports that contribute to their success. The current enrollment for students in the PK/12 system is 5,510. There are 196 students enrolled in our adult evening diploma/GED programs. We have 90 pre-k among our 5 classrooms. Our special population groups include special education (395 students), 504 students (76) and English Language Learners (999). With the help of the Human Resources Division, the St. Thomas/St. John district was able to hire Fifty-Three (53) teachers.

In our pursuit of Quality Schools, we emphasize standards-based instruction, which provides clear learning targets and expectations for what students should know and be able to do. This consistent framework enables our teachers to align their instruction with adopted and supplemental curriculum resources and assessments. It ensures that all students have equitable access to high-quality core instruction, as they are held to rigorous standards. Additionally, we emphasize personalized instruction and offer interventions and support to help students meet instructional targets.

Effective Systems are essential for accountability as we continue our journey towards District and School Improvement. We have established collaborative relationships to

support this work, focusing on strengthening staff capacity, strategic and responsible use of funds, and creating conducive learning and working spaces.

Stakeholder Engagement is crucial for building connections and partnerships with families and the community. We are improving communication mechanisms and engagement opportunities to foster parental support and community partnerships that enrich educational experiences and expand learning opportunities for students.

Our school improvement work aligns directly with these priorities, forming a continuous improvement process that involves reviewing, setting goals, implementing, and evaluating actions. School improvement plans are submitted in August of each year through our Indistar database, with updates indicating progress on actions. Mid-year checks are conducted by district staff, and feedback is provided to schools, which is also repeated at the annual submission in May. As we place emphasis on student achievement, we have identified the following goals:

- Goal 1(G1): Students will demonstrate improved academic achievement.
- Goal 2(G2): The STT/STJ District will have made significant improvements in the development of high-quality teachers, leaders, and staff.
- Goal 3(G3): There will be an increase in stakeholder involvement.

Start & End Times of Schools in the St. Thomas/St. John School District Secondary Schools:

- Charlotte Amalie High School & the Ivanna Eudora Kean High School
Start: 7:40 am End: 2:30 pm
- Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School
Start: 7:25 am End: 2:25 pm
- Lockhart K-8
(Primary)
Start 8:15 am End: 2:50 pm
(Intermediate)
Start: 7:45 am End: 2:45 pm)
- Julius E. Sprauve K-8
Start: 8:00 am End: 2:45

Elementary Schools - 8:15 am – 3 pm

- Jane E. Tuitt Elementary
- Yvonne E. Milliner Bowsky Elementary Schedule
- Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School
- Joseph A. Sibilly Elementary School
- Ulla F. Muller Elementary School

St. Thomas-St. John District Federal Grants American Rescue Plan (ARP) Roadmap

The total amount of grant funds received in the St. Thomas-St. John District \$65,367,100.02 American Rescue Plan funding. The district allocation was \$51,390,956.52 and the non-public allocation was \$13,976,143.50. As required through the USDE, the district has allocated 20% of the funding is allocated to addressing learning loss, we earmarked a significant portion of the ARP funding to "Learning Acceleration" rather than remediation.

In addition to the academics, as a district we recognized the critical needs of providing resources to support the much-needed infrastructure and safety challenges. Having a safe and healthy environment is vital to effective learning, we have allocated funding through the ARP grant to address critical code upgrades, generator installations and air quality testing and the installation of much needed air conditioning. We also recognize the importance of having a safe environment for all, funding will be utilized for indoor/outdoor furniture, safety equipment for our monitors, fencing, communication boards, intercom upgrades, camera upgrades and kitchen equipment, installation and upgrades. Our students have expressed on numerous platforms that they need adults to realize that they need social emotional wellness support as well. As such funding has been set aside to partner with the Department of Health to utilize their behavioral health vans and provide services to our employees and students. A two-way alert system has also been budgeted to ensure timely communication, fostering a sense of security and connection within our educational community. The estimated total investment in these initiatives amounts to at least \$29,997,802.50.

Conclusion

Having the opportunity to have multiple streams of revenues that can be used for infrastructure is great for the territory. You have the commitment of the team to utilize these funding opportunities responsibly and prudently to leverage our funding. Thank you for the opportunity to present today to this body. The VIDE is always open to any recommendations from this body as we work together to improve public education in the territory. We stand ready to answer any questions you may have now.

Addendum A Project Updates

The 30-day projects timeline is from October 1st – 31st. The sixty-day projects will run from November 1st -December 31st.

St. Croix Educational Complex

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Secure hanging wires	Assessment	Ceiling tiles and grids
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Electrical Upgrades
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Leaking roof over gym
Electrical Upgrade Assessment	Bidding	Copper Piping/Roof Leaks
Ceiling Fans Installed	Completed	Culinary Class Renovations
Drinking Water	Completed	Outdoor Facilities Renovations
Removal of Debris	Completed	Painting
Intercom System (Started)	PO Acquisition	AC installations/screens
Camera System (Started)	PO Acquisition	Intercom System Continued
		Camera System Continued
		AC installations (Library, Music Suite)

Central High School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Secure hanging wires	Assessment	Ceiling tiles and grids
Bathroom upgrades	Scope secured and contracting	Electrical Upgrades
Window Operators	Completed	Leaking roof hallways
Air Quality testing	Scopes secured and contracting	Roof Leaks
Electrical Upgrade Assessment	Bidding	Library Furniture
Ceiling Fans	Assessed and waiting for vendor supplies	Outdoor Facilities Renovations

Drinking Water	Completed	Painting
AC filters cleaned	Completed	AC installations/Screens
Cafeteria Roof	Scoped and going through solicitation	Sewage (400, 800, Lift station)
Issue Laptops	Completed	Electrical Outlets Installation
Intercom System Started	PO Acquisition	Intercom System Continued
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued

Career and Technical Education Center

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Removal of Lockers	Completed	Ceiling tiles and grids
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Electrical Upgrades
Renovation of Floor Tiles	Completed	Copper lines/roof leaks
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Cosmetology Roof Repair
Electrical Upgrade Assessment	Bidding	Library Furniture
Ceiling Fans Installed	Waiting for Supplies	Outdoor Facilities Renovations
Drinking Water	Completed	Painting
Supplies for Welding	(PO Secured)	Safety equipment
Intercom System Started	PO Acquisition	Intercom System Continued
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued
		AC Installation and Screens

Alfredo Andrews Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Leaking Hallways	Scoped	Bathroom Upgrades
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Electrical Upgrades
Drinking Water	Completed	Painting Bidding
Air Quality testing	No concerns	Roof Leaks
Electrical Upgrade Assessment	Bidding	Sewage
Tree trimming	Contractor selected and working with UVI	Outdoor Facilities Renovations
Closure of Step-Down Transformers	Quotes secured	Replace Exit/Entrance Doors
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	AC installations
		Tree Trimmed
		Camera System Continued
		Kitchen Upgrades
		Installation of step-down transformer

Claude O. Markoe Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Leaking Hallways	Scoped	Sewage
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Electrical Upgrades
Drinking Water	Completed	Painting
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Roof Leaks
Air Condition Installation	Completed	Basketball Resurfacing
Kitchen Upgrades (started)	In progress	Playgrounds Designed
Floor Tiles	Completed	Gym
	PO Acquisition	AC installations
		Camera System Continued

Low Muckle Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Bathroom Upgrades
Drinking Water	Completed	Painting
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Roof Leaks J wing
Window Operators	Completed	Basketball Resurfacing
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued
Debris Removed	Completed	Kitchen Upgrades
Kitchen Upgrades Started	Contracted and in progress	

John Woodson Junior High School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Leaking Hallways	Bidding	Bathroom Upgrades
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Painting Scopes
Drinking Water	Completed	Roof Leaks
Air Quality testing	Contract secured	Basketball Resurfacing
Hallway Lighting	Contracting	Kitchen Upgrades Started
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued
Stage Repairs	Scoping	Stage repairs
Main Office HVAC system cleaning	Work started	Mold remediation and Air Quality Testing

Pearl B. Larson Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Closure of Step-Down Transformers	Quotes Secured	Electrical Upgrades
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Painting
Drinking Water	Completed	Roof Leaks
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Construct Bus shed
Hallway Lighting	Scoping	Gym repairs

Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued
Stage Repairs	Scoping	Playground scoping
		Stage repairs

Ricardo Richards Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Kitchen Upgrades
Kitchen Upgrades (contracted)	DVD contracted	Painting
Hallway Lighting	Scoped and contracting	Intercom System Continued
		Camera System Continued
		Playground renovations
		Bathroom Upgrades
		Demolition of Trailers

Juanita Gardine Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Bathroom upgrades	Scoping and contracting	Painting
Drinking Water	Completed	Fencing
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Demolish walkway by gym
Intercom System Started	PO Acquisition	Gym lighting/roof leak
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Intercom System Continued
Intercom System Started		Camera System Continued
		Kitchen Upgrades
		Outside Lighting
		Bathroom Upgrades

Alternative Academy

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Window Operators	Completed	Bathroom Upgrades
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Painting Scopes
Drinking Water	Completed	Fencing
Air Quality testing	PO Acquisition	AC Installation
Roof Leaks	Scoped for bids	Camera System Continued
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Roof Leaks

Eulalie Riviera Elementary School

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Electrical Upgrades	Scoped and contracting	AC Installations
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Painting
Drinking Water	Completed	Fencing
Air Quality testing	Scoped and contracting	Changing room repairs
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Camera System Continued
Kitchen Upgrades Started	Started – Lightning Construction	Mod II class door installed
		Bathroom Upgrades
		Kitchen Installation

Adult Education

30-day Projects	Status	60-day projects
Bathroom upgrades	Scoped and contracting	Painting
Drinking Water	Completed	Fencing
Air Quality testing	Waiting on PO	Walkway Renovations
AC Installation	Not needed	Camera System Continued
Camera System Started	PO Acquisition	Bathroom Upgrades

St. Thomas – St. John 30-day projects beginning November 1st-30th.

Bertha C. Boschulte

30-day Projects
AC Installations (H101, J209, K202, Band room
Broken lights
Window Operators
Air Quality testing
Ceiling tiles
Electrical Outlets
Camera Installations
Iron Gate replacement
Bathroom repairs

Yvonne Milliner Bowsky

30-day Projects
Air Quality testing
Ceiling fans
Extermination Termites
AC installations
Camera System Started
Bathroom Repairs
Roof leak Modular
Modular classroom renovation

Charlotte Amalie High School

30-day Projects
Band room renovations
AC Installations
Air Quality testing
Roof leaks
Camera System Started
Bathroom repairs
Intercom Installation
Ceiling tiles
Walkway deck repainting
Modular classroom renovations
Transformer removal and replacement

Edith Williams Alternative Academy

30-day Projects
Air quality testing and remediation
AC installation
Window screens
Bathroom repairs
Camera System Started
Removal of Old equipment

Joseph Gomez

30-day Projects
AC installations
Bathroom upgrades
Window screens
Air Quality testing
Camera System Started
Intercom Installations
SPED classroom renovations

Jane E. Tuitt

30-day Projects
Floor tiles
Bathroom upgrades
AC Installations
Camera System Started

Julius E. Sprauve

30-day Projects
Dehumidifiers
Bathroom upgrades
AC Installations
Air Quality testing
Camera System Started
Plumbing repairs
Roof Leaks
Ceiling tiles

Ivanna Eudora Kean High

30-day Projects
AC installations
Bathroom upgrades
Roof Leaks
Air Quality testing
Camera System Started

Lockhart K-8th

30-day Projects
AC Installations
Bathroom upgrades
Modular Floor repairs
Air Quality testing
Camera System Started

Ulla F. Muller

30-day Projects
AC Installations
Bathroom upgrades
Exterminations (rats, termites)
Air Quality testing
Camera System Started
Stairs/Walkways

Joseph Sibilly

30-day Projects
AC Installations
Bathroom upgrades
Leaking roof
Window Operator
Camera System Started
Extermination Termites

Addendum B
Early Start Project Funding Report

EARLY START PROJECT FUNDING REPORT				
FACILITY	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	STATUS	FUNDING SOURCE	CONTRACT AMOUNT
Arthur Richards JHS	Demolition	Completed	FEMA PA	\$3,805,562.00
Evelyn Williams Campus	Demolition	Completed	FEMA PA	2,349,861.00
Charlotte Amalie High School	Demolition	In Progress	Local to be reimbursed by FEMA PA	6,879,158.92
Abraham Modernization	Modernization	In Progress	Local	9,844,797.79
Wheatley Modernization	Modernization	Phase I Completed; Phase II pending funding	FEMA PA	3,450,287.47
Total				\$26,329,667.18

Addendum C
Kitchen and Fencing Funding Report

KITCHEN AND FENCING PROJECTS FUNDING REPORT				
FACILITY	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	STATUS	FUND	AMOUNT
Central	Kitchen Renovations and Equipment Installation	Purchase order issued in September 2023	ARPA	\$1,682,640.00
Gardine				
Muckle				
Ricardo Richards				
Woodson				
Markoe	Kitchen Renovations and Equipment Installation	Construction in progress and on schedule for completion on or before July 2024	ARPA	\$447,328.00
Rivera	Kitchen Equipment Installation	Construction contract pending	ARPA	\$165,500.00
Fencing at Various STX Schools	Construction of fences and perimeter walls	Out for bids.	TBD	-
Fencing at Various STTJ Schools	Construction of fences and perimeter walls	RFP written and waiting to be sent out for bids	TBD	-
			Total	\$2,295,468.00

Addendum D

Additional Information

Instructional Focus: St. Croix District's 100-Day Plan for Transformative Teaching and Learning

In the classrooms of the St. Croix District, our instructional compass is firmly set on the growth and development of our students and community. Our steadfast focus on teaching and learning stands as the cornerstone for the holistic growth of students. Committed to providing equitable access to high-quality education, the district has embarked on a determined journey to align practices and resources. To realize this commitment, my District leadership team and I have identified three pivotal areas: enhancing the quality of core instruction, elevating the district's attendance rate from 89% to 95%, and diminishing the number of infractions in schools. In this crucial implementation year, a meticulously crafted 100-Day Plan has been set into motion, strategically designed to implement and monitor these transformative strategies. These initiatives directly impact the instructional landscape, cultural ethos, and overall climate of our schools, concurrently addressing the social-emotional needs of faculty, staff, and students.

We have embraced non-negotiable principles for the current school year, including district-wide accountability for student success, the collection of clean and timely data to inform daily instruction, instructional planning that places emphasis on student engagement and collaboration, explicit instruction, effective use of the instructional block, and unwavering fidelity to all intervention programs. Recognizing the significant work ahead to meet the diverse needs of our students, the district is actively implementing a spectrum of strategies. These include implementing non-fiction writing across all content areas, effective use of the instructional block, dedicated intervention periods, common planning periods, high dosage tutoring through the FEV program, afterschool programs, homework assistance, Instructional Leadership coaching for principals, and a comprehensive walkthrough/monitoring protocol. Additionally, the district has ventured into an innovative International Baccalaureate Program pilot, collaborating with the St. Croix Montessori School and the Office of the Governor to explore alternative learning models and potentially shape the future of educational practices within the Public School System.

As we navigate our current educational landscape, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the educators of the St. Croix District during this American Education Week. Your unwavering dedication to the children of St. Croix is truly commendable, and I appreciate your continued commitment to excellence in education.

Despite the challenges, our steadfast commitment to delivering high-quality education remains resolute in the St. Croix District. Guided by our 100-Day Plan, we are determined to provide students with optimal opportunities for growth, learning, and success. Nelson Mandela's powerful words, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," deeply resonates with our mission.

We pledge to incorporate data-driven instruction and continuous improvement, integral to our objective of offering a top-tier education for every student in the St. Croix District. Together, we are dedicated to empowering students to unlock their full potential and achieve the success they rightfully deserve. The St. Croix District is poised to not only meet but exceed the goals outlined in the "Give me 10" mantra: a 10-point increase in student achievement, a 10% rise in overall student attendance, and a 10% reduction in behavioral incidents.

I urge both this legislative body and the broader St. Croix community to join us in recognizing the transformative impact of public education on our students' lives and the community as a whole. Together, we can shape a brighter future through the power of education as we transform today's learners into tomorrow's leaders.

Instructional Focus: St. Thomas-St. John District

It is expected that teachers will teach using standards identified for their content areas. An instructional model was introduced during the 2023-2024 school year. The district along with school leadership monitors for implementation of these models as well as for rigor, relevance and engagement in instruction through regular classroom walkthroughs.

Pacing guides have been developed for content areas and disseminated to guide instruction. As part of the intentional focus on instruction, the appropriate use of collaborative planning time is emphasized and monitored. Collaborative planning sessions allow for instructional discourse, the calibration of pacing and the careful planning of standards-based lessons.

Extensive support has also been provided by way of Data Chats. These include ongoing discussions with each school as to their assessment data for their current students, as well as strategies to support students in classrooms based on their personalized needs or based on grade level trends observed. The district is also working to support the efforts of educators to engage with the identified intervention platforms actively and consistently (such as I-ready, Achieve 3000, Edmentum Courseware). The diligent utilization of these platforms by our teachers will allow us to gather meaningful insights into student growth, identify areas for improvement, and make decisions that benefit both students and the overall learning environment. Sessions on IReady data and use also allows for added insight on how to drive instruction during interventions.

Extended Learning Programs

The Extended Learning Opportunities programs provide critically needed services to children and families. These programs are designed to help students improve academic skills and to get access to support so that they are better prepared for the next grade level and show proficiency on state assessments. The various programs offer students the opportunity to reinforce and strengthen essential skills in reading, writing, comprehension, math and other courses. Instruction is delivered through various methods: whole class instructions, small group instructions/tutorial and individual tutorial. The enrichment component will expose students to the arts (music and visual arts), agriculture and other STEM learning opportunities.

The Extended Learning Opportunities programs are scheduled to begin between Oct 23 and November 6, 2023. Classes/sessions will be held Monday-Friday & Saturdays. Start and dates will be communicated by individual schools.

The Literacy and Career Exploration After-school Program, provided by the Division of Special Education is designed to improve students' reading, writing, mathematics and social and emotional skills. The program offers students with unique learning needs the opportunity to participate in literacy development and career exploration social and emotional learning and offers parent training sessions. Students 14 years and older also work on transition skills.

To supplement the core, the secondary schools will also offer Credit and Grade Recovery programs that give students an opportunity to recover grades or credits lost during the first semester. The online Edmentum Platform is the primary instructional mode for the Credit Recovery Program on the secondary level.

Professional Development

Training is continuous for our internal stakeholders. Training has been provided for instructional leadership teams. This included instructional walkthroughs and calibrated feedback sessions. There is a need for ongoing job embedded support in this area.

The New Teacher Development Program has also continued in the district. The program targets first- and second-year teachers in the district for ongoing support. These targeted and timely supports included an ongoing mentoring component. Mentors provided model lessons, guidance on planning and lesson implementation, and additional support for their peers. Both the teacher and his/her mentor also engage in open honest debriefing sessions and address areas for improvement.

As well training is provided for all teachers in content areas. Special Ed training is being procured in the area of mathematics and the Science of Reading in order to work towards improving literacy and numeracy. As well emphasis will be placed on staff preparedness to differentiate instruction, utilize newly adopted curriculum resources, conduct small group lessons, super high order questioning through the quadrants of learning, and support student discourse.

Social and Emotional Learning

As a result of the needs identified, the district will focus on providing access to quality education and effective systems that promote learning environments that are safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free. This includes implementing a multi-tiered comprehensive program to improve schools' conditions for students' learning through increased access to academic supports and intentional behavior interventions and supports.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is one such response. SEL refers to the process of acquiring and applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for understanding and managing emotions, setting, and achieving positive goals, feeling and showing empathy for others, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions. SEL is aimed at supporting the holistic development of our

students. The district has allocated targeted time in schools for students to support the SEL to build self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and encourage responsible decision-making. By promoting a positive and inclusive school climate that supports SEL, we hope to foster a sense of belonging, promote respectful and caring relationships among students and staff, and emphasize social-emotional skills in school policies, practices, and routines.

The Program Manager for Social and Emotional Learning works alongside administrative staff, teaching and support staff, and student services staff such as counselors and attendance counselors, Dean of Students and Student Success Specialists to impart these opportunities for student. In addition, Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) teams have been trained on the tiers of positive interventions as a way of improving positive school climate for the improvement of behavior and reduce disciplinary referrals. The district also currently supports such as mentoring, counseling, vocational or social-emotional skills training, college preparation, supplemental academic service, and monitoring.

The district is also assessing systems in place that support students the transformation we want to see that will sustain long-term impact on student learning and lead to school completion. This assessment will drive the district's Drop Out Prevention Plan and will help to guide the district in systematic planning and monitoring of actions to reduce the rate of dropout.

The state leadership along with both districts' leadership, has recognized a need for targeted interventions for students who engage in adverse behaviors which result in behavioral infractions. This resulted in the preparation of an MTSS School Response Guide to provide interventions and guide as decisions made about student behavior. A district led intervention team also meets to outline an intervention for students once referred to at the district level. S

To improve the social and emotional well-being of students we have been providing student populations with resiliency training in the following areas:

- a) Conflict resolution workshops: Students have been receiving training and support in resolving disputes which includes de-escalation training, prevention of cyberbullying, inappropriate sexual behaviors and other behaviors that promote positive relationships. Sessions on social media literacy started on October 10 and will continue until the end of the month. These sessions will help to educate students on the proper use of social media, improve students' ability to use, manage, understand, and assess the avalanche of content being promulgated on social media sites. We aim to heighten their awareness of the proper use of the Internet.
- b) Sensitivity awareness sessions: Students have been receiving training that will increase their knowledge and sensitivity, as well as foster positive attitudes about people with disabilities. To date 982 students in grades 4th to 6th received training on Disability Awareness from Insight Psychological Services, LLC.

c) College and workplace skills: Sessions are scheduled to begin for students in grades 11 and 12 on college and career ready as they transition from secondary to post-secondary options. Students will be engaged in workshops on Financial Aid, College and Career Readiness Strategies, SAT/ACT preparation, course selection and academic guidance, and additional post-secondary planning and support will be provided. Sessions are scheduled to start within the next weeks. Youth Engagement Leadership Program (YELP) commenced in August 2023 at Edith Williams Alternate Academy as a part AVID class targeting 10 students. YELP is being facilitated by the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands.

The Governor Workforce Summit held on October 13, also provided an opportunity for students to engage in sessions facilitated by industry leaders and local experts as well as representatives from small businesses, the University of the Virgin Islands, training providers and government departments and agencies. Sessions introduced students to 21st century skills needed to be successful, workforce challenges as well as innovative solutions that will ensure that they as Virgin Islanders can be prepared for future employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Over 80 students enrolled in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG program were in attendance) at the two high schools were in attendance.

d) In partnership with Department of Health, Suicide Prevent Posters in English and Spanish with a 998 crisis/suicide have been disseminated to all schools.

We also provide training opportunities for staff that work with students with a focus on SEL. Topics this school have included:

- Identifying the Signs of Students in Crisis was conducted by Jessica B. Whyte, MA. LPC on September 6, 2023.
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Cases - Department of Human Services Support Services Unit Presentations, the state Agency from reporting Child Abuse and Neglect cases.
- Reporting, Identifying and Preventing Acts of Hate, Department of Justice – The United States Attorney's Office. These sessions included Federal and local officials working with community members to discuss effective strategies to prevent and respond to hate crimes and incidents.

The district has also prioritized physical wellness. School staff and students continue to receive CPR/First Aid training. As well tools to monitor and student fitness have been implemented to promote healthy behaviors, as well as to identify trends that may impact on the safety and health of our schools, assist pertains to individual student fitness levels. This will also help to create instructional plans for individual students in the areas of Health and Physical Education.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement in education is of paramount importance as it fosters collaboration, inclusivity, and shared responsibility among all individuals and groups involved in the education system.

- Tutu Park Mall Back-to-School Community Collaboration continued. Students obtained an opportunity to receive community service hours, as well as to socialize and interact with their peers. Parents got a direct link to community resources and services, such as after school and educational programs, advocacy and disability services, and available resources)
- Four hundred backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed to students at Ulla F. Muller School, Julius E. Sprauve, Sprauve School. Ulla F. Muller, Jane E. Tuitt, Charlotte Amalie High School. Special thanks to Virgin Islands Delor Ross who always returns home to contribute to our students and his community.
- College Wise counselors visited our district and had sessions with the seniors of Ivanna Eudora Kean and Charlotte Amalie High School and their parents. They were able to conduct workshops on writing the college entrance essay, building an appropriate portfolio with a focus on grades, co-curricular activities, letters of recommendation, financial aid guidance, and completing an effective college -- entrance essay.
- Mervin Berkeley Back-to-School Event was promoted where families had an opportunity to receive school supplies, enjoy entertainment done by students, students met and interacted with their peers. Students also learned the act of giving as they saw their families donate items to give to the homeless shelters. The district participation included providing books, and guides to families as well as donations for homeless shelters.
- 521 fathers/male caregivers participated in the Dads Bring Your Child to School on the 1st Day event. There was a 6% increase in male participation from last year and schools has seen an increase in the turnout of males on the 1st day of school and at their parent orientation. As a strategic measure, the district as focused on male engagement to assist with students' behaviors, academic achievement, and social emotional learning.
- The first Lights on in the library event for the school year was held on Thursday, September 21, 2023. This is Parent Education Training Series. The Topic was "Identifying the Signs of Children in Crisis" as presented by Jessica B. Whyte, MA, LPC from the JW Behavioral Center. Sessions are from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. The first session was held at Charlotte Amalie High School's Library. There were 88 in attendance.