

St. Croix

Public School
Parent Coalition



empowerED: equipping parents & schools for success

St. Croix Public School Parent
Coalition Testimony to the
Committee of Education and
Workforce Development

9-9-2024

Presented by: Abdul R. Ali, *St. Croix
Public School Parent Coalition Chair*

Testimony of Abdul R. Ali
Chairperson, St. Croix Public School Parent Coalition
To
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION and WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

September 9th 2024

Good morning, Honorable Senator Marise C. James Chairman of the Committee of Education and Workforce Development and members of this committee. I am Abdul Raheem Ali, Chairperson of the St. Croix Public School Parent Coalition. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the members of the Coalition to discuss the critical issues impacting our public education system and the need to enhance public education and introduce meaningful reforms that would, in the final analysis, be of real help to the students who attend school.

Today I stand before you to focus on some important things that have taken place since I stood before you back in June of this year. Since that time the Coalition has been meeting on a regular basis, it has had a one and a half-hour-long meeting with the Commissioner of Education and her team of officials, participated in a Schools Walkthrough and it has filed a report on that very important initiative. We have, as you are aware, all been touched by 1. the storm Ernesto, 2. Power outages 3. the School Bus Accident where some thirty-two students were injured and 4. Trips made to schools only to find out that students couldn't stay in the buildings and had to be sent home to receive instruction there. School opening on August 5th 2024 was to say the least 'A trying Moment' and one that we all wish that we didn't have to go through. Was there enough preparation for the school opening to take place and to ensure that elements like safety, and the learning process, could take place with a sense of P&P.. Pride and

Productivity? While we have seen some areas where a small number of our priorities for the 2024-2025 school year have been met there is still a lot of work to be done in many of the priority areas. We are still awaiting timelines for the completion of school repairs so that schools could be considered safe, the treatment of mold problems are of importance to us, and so too are some well-defined plans as to just how we will fare during this hurricane season and the power outages that will, more likely than not, be tied to that! Hopefully, plans are in place to purchase generators for each school to deal with the WAPA power outages when they strike. At this point I must take my hat off to the Alfredo Andrews PTA President Janice Jones and her team for organizing a meeting with some community leaders and officials to discuss concerns related to the school to include the AC, and Tiling matters and to ask that these be resolved in an effort to promote safety and the learning process. And still with the schools I must point out here that Lew Muckle Elementary School did get some much-needed help from the VIDOE and, is as ready as it is ever going to be, for learning to take place in a safe setting. Having said all of that we must all continue to look at ways and means of enhancing standard education and setting the scene for building partnerships and the kinds of collaboration that could be of real benefit to students, teachers, parents the DOE and the community in general.

Let me begin this part of the testimony with the meeting with the DOE Commissioner of Education Dr. Hedrington and her top-level staff, to include the then-Acting Superintendent Dr. Carla Bastian-Knight, Deputy Commissioner Victor Somme and several other officials. In attendance from the Coalition's point of view was Roxanne Alexander, who represented Pearl B. Larsen school and I, who represented Lew Muckle Elementary School. After outlining our ten areas of concern (**see Addendum #I**) what

we came away with from that meeting was that things like the 2024-2025 school calendar (**Addendum # II**) and school supply list had been made available, and that plans were being looked at by the Legislature to ensure that EMTs and CMAs and other healthcare professionals could be on hand to handle health matters with the help of regular nurses. It was also mentioned that work at the schools was on-going to get them ready for the opening of schools in August 2024. One of the main problem areas discussed by the DOE Commissioner and her team had to do with the shortage of teaching staff. Added to this was the low bandwidth internet problems and the impact of that on the learning process. The lack of playgrounds at some four schools was also mentioned and, so too, was the kitchen and bathroom, AC and roof repairs needed to keep the rain away.

The next contact with the DOE Commissioner Hedrington and her staff was at the Walkthrough of some eleven schools and this took place on St. Croix on July 23rd and July 24th. After the making of several phone calls and the sending of several emails and notes to the then Acting Supt. Of Schools, Dr. Carla Bastian-Knight, permission was given by the DOE for three Coalition members to participate in the Walkthrough. The three members who participated in the Walkthrough included Dawn O'Bryan, Leslie Greene and myself. Some other individuals who had an interest in the Walkthrough were seemingly authorized by the DOE Commissioner to participate in it as well. The info provided by key DOE staffers like Yauncey Milligan the Maintenance Director, and the on-site views provided during the Walkthrough of the schools and the state of readiness of the schools raised some questions. (**Addendum III**) During the Walkthrough we did learn about the replacement of Central High School (CHS) and we did see some maintenance crews at work at the schools. This left us feeling that some

maintenance work was ongoing to, at least meet some of the ten-point priority listing scale provided by the St. Croix Public School Parent Coalition. Please note the measuring scale (**Addendum IV**) that we used to help us get some clarity with regards to the level of matters such as school safety, internet connectivity, air conditioning matters and how these are tied to the welfare of students, school staff and the learning process. A report regarding the Walkthroughs was sent out to Coalition members, the Commissioner of Education and your office, Senator James. Your response, as I understood it Senator, was that you felt that much needed to be done to bring schools up to date when it comes to prioritizing safety, and in that setting, support the learning process. The Commissioner of the DOE sent me a note thanking me for the report and also advising me that she respectfully disagreed with my assessment of the schools in terms of their readiness for opening on August 5th 2024. There were responses from Coalition members as well about the report indicating that the DOE was not doing enough to get schools ready for the school opening date. With all of that in mind I feel that it is appropriate at this stage to focus on the top priorities for the Coalition and the need for a realistic and meaningful timeline from the VIDOE for the job at hand. The priority listing includes..

1. School repairs to be completed for the bathrooms, kitchens, roof leaks, and toilets
2. A securing of vendors to address mold and drinking water issues
3. The installation of working ACs and fans to address the heat matters around
4. Plans to address the hiring of teachers to provide instruction to students
5. The development of a year-long Reading Program
6. The enhancement of Internet Services in all schools to a level where teachers and students can utilize it properly
7. Repairs and upgrades to all school playgrounds
8. The painting of the schools
9. The Provision of information regarding the use of The Impress Funds and Federal Funds balances for the 2024-2025 period and how these are tied in with the school repairs (**See Addendum**

V) 10. The ensuring that services for children with disabilities are being provided 11. The provision of upgrades to electrical equipment, and the installation of safety measures like smoke detectors, panic doors, and fire extinguishers 12. The provision of an outline regarding summer school repair programs (**See Addendum VI**)13. The preparation of a plan and design to address the Bullying that takes place in schools 14. An interpretation of the role and function of the Bureau of Maintenance Office Manager, and the staff working in that office and 15. Regular and timely meetings with the VIDOE officials to determine deadlines for meeting these priority matters and monitoring them.

I want to at this point, touch on some data that is being provided by the St. Croix Foundation 2023 Kids Count Report which shows that our students are not doing well in Language Arts Proficiency or in the Math Proficiency areas (**See Addendum VII**) and so we must address this problem. (**See Addendum VIII**) We must find solutions otherwise our students will continue to fall behind at the educational level. The solutions may well call for the development of partnerships, collaborative efforts and transparency initiatives that would, with the use of data, help students to see the educational process as something that can help move them forward. I am reminded here that parents, who are themselves teachers, should be recognized as such and should also be encouraged to continue to take part in the educational process as one of the main groups who have been afforded the authority to shape the minds and attitudes of children. Given the current shortage of teachers we really need to work to empower parents by running parenting classes for them and providing them with incentives designed to aid their growth and development. It should be remembered that we are here on earth primarily to 'Pass Things On' and to invest in the future of those who come behind us.

With all of that in mind the St. Croix Public School Parent Coalition wants to remind the VIDOE, the VIBOE, Parents, Students, and the Legislature's Committee on Education that the Coalition remains willing to 'Lend A Hand' (we are all in this together) when it comes to helping to ensure that our students are well prepared for the future in terms of education, foresight and an understanding of their responsibilities and legal rights and the taking of their place on the world's stage.

The Coalition wants to hear some news from the VIDOE regarding the establishment of a curriculum night (**See Addendum XI**) that will take place in September 2024. This would call for the engagement of parents in the Education system and a partnering plan with them, to provide support for the students who are attending schools.

Before I close, I want to offer a word of thanks to the members of the Coalition for their leadership and support. They are Janice Jones (Alfredo Andrews School), Kimberly Moorehead (Pearl B. Larsen School), Tamara McIntosh-George (Eulalie Rivera School), Leslie Greene (Claude O'Markoe School), Jason Henry (John H. Woodson School), Jennifer Joseph (Juanita Gardine School), Jahnella Harvey (Central High School), Maqueda Norhassan (Ricardo Richards School) Roxanne 'Baby' Alexander (Pearl B. Larsen School), Dawn O' Bryan (John H. Woodson School) and Abdul R. Ali (Lew Muckle School). I must also thank the parents and the PTAs from the various schools who provided their commitment to the idea of moving the Educational Process forward for the good of the students. I must mention the VIBOE as well for the development of a parent survey and a student survey that is designed to capture the thoughts of parents and students with regards to their needs. As I understand it the VIBOE is now responsible for the syllabus and so it is our hope that it will, with the help

of the VIDOE, be preparing a syllabus that calls for the teaching of VI and Caribbean History in Schools in 2025 and the healing process attached to that. A call for some reparations from Denmark and other countries should be on the agenda as well. I must also thank the VIDOE for ensuring that the Coalition could participate in the Walkthrough and for meeting with the body.

In general, I think that some progress has been made in terms of the regularity of the meetings between the Coalition members, the holding of the meeting with the Commissioner of Education, The Senate Hearing that was held in June of this year, this hearing today, the renewed focus schools and the new 'Look Ahead' for the Educational Process. At present there is no other choice really but to address the problems we face. Finally, it should also be noted that a weekly radio program for the youths is currently being planned and one that would provide them with opportunities to share their views and to offer solutions to some of the problems that they face.

On behalf of St. Croix Public School Parent Coalition, I offer my thanks to you and your committee, Senator Marise C. James for this opportunity to address the future of our youths in a meaningful kind of way and to address our priorities.

ADDENDUM I...: Comprehensive List of Top Ten Prioritized St. Croix Public School Teacher Instruction and Student Learning Issues & Recommended Solutions

1. **Provide transparent, timely communications:** Develop a comprehensive communications plan / process to include communications on changes in school administration, timelines to announce the school closures at least one hour in advance of school opening, monthly updates on school maintenance projects with a clear schedule and list of next steps, educational accomplishments, programming, processes such as school registration, etc. VI DOE will launch a mass text messaging system and deploy a revised external VI DOE website to announce these communications in a timely manner.
2. **Fill staff shortages:** Teacher shortages in all areas including Special Education, Spanish, Nursing, and Vocation / CTECH should be addressed by deploying a marketing campaign to hire resources from Puerto Rico. Teacher shortages in specialized areas – music, elementary gifted instructors, foreign languages (i.e., Spanish) should be addressed by establishing a rotation schedule of the existing teachers to provide equitable service to all public school facilities. To address gaps in priority areas such as reading / writing and STEAM, after-school program packaging will be identified, and job postings filled to begin after-school programs in reading / writing, math, robotics, and computer programming at the start of the 2024-2025 school year.
3. **Offer reliable school internet connectivity** will be addressed by installing additional router access points for each school and by expanding the system to use browsers other than Chrome to facilitate regular, inter-facility communications. A generator will be installed at St. Croix Curriculum Center; the public-school internet hub, to provide an alternate power source.
4. **Implement a Digital Learning Platform** to provide proper instruction and learning, eliminate manual processes (i.e., registration, school insurance tracking, fees / payments, etc) and support digital learning days, and administer school support processes (i.e., facility maintenance tracking, communications, etc). If the existing services of PowerSchool cannot be expanded to provide a holistic digital learning platform, the VI DOE will launch and close out a RFP by June 15. The digital learning platform is required to be connected seamlessly to any system selected for communications and the external website – number one issue above.
5. **Repair and upgrade playground equipment and surrounding area equipment** to be useable at every public-school facility. Pearl B Larsen and Alfredo Andrews will receive new playground equipment due to condemned playgrounds. Physical activity is fundamental to good mental, emotional, and physical health.
6. **Implement bullying prevention measures** to prevent school violence. Incident reports will be required to be completed by a teacher or school monitor, signed off by a school administrator, and sent home to parents / guardians. If it is reported that a school has failed to report an incident, a parent / guardian may request that a report be completed. Accurate reports will be collected one on one and reflect comments from all parties involved in the incident. The VI DOE will also collect best practices for bullying from other districts and deploy a more comprehensive program beyond

ADDENDUM 1

the incident reports by December 2024. To complement the incident reports, an after-school bullying program will be created and facilitated by school counselors, administration, and other relevant community members for repeat offenders.

7. **Distribute the Impress Fund** timely and with a simplified process that promotes usage / accountability.
8. **Launch a yearlong reading competition** through a district-wide marketing program. Reading can boost a child's IQ up to six points, enhance verbal intelligence, and promote better performance on standardized tests.
9. **Install / repair all bathroom structures / fixtures and kitchen equipment.** Bathroom fixtures include but are not limited to door locks, bathroom stall doors, etc. An explanation for the kitchen equipment installation delay and a status report of the bathroom and kitchen equipment installations will be provided to begin mitigating the impact on the health of students.
10. **Publish publicly a quarterly Air Quality report and a Water Quality report** beginning July 29, 2024, for each school in the St. Croix district. Include a status of air quality issues and water quality issues being addressed.

ADDENDUM
II

2024-2025 PUBLIC SCHOOL CALENDAR

PreK-12 & ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	H	H	5	6						PR PD	3	1	H	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	SS SB	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	SR	24	25	SR	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	RR	TR	TR				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5						H	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	ME	MD	9	10	11	12	3	4	H	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	SX	SX	14
13	H	15	16	17	AFT	19	10	H	12	13	14	15	16	15	SE	SE	MD HTD	SB	SB	21
20	AFT	22	23	24	PC OH	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	SB	SB	SB	SB	SB	28
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	H	SB	30	29	SB	SB				

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			SB	SB	SB	4						1							1	
5	H	CP	MD	9	10	11	2	PD	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	ME	MD	15
19	H	21	22	23	24	25	16	H	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	PC OH	29	
													30	H						

APRIL							MAY							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5					SB	SB	3	1	KSL	KML	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	SX	SX	SE	SB	SB	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	SB	SB	19	11	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE	17	15	16	17	18	H	20	21
20	SB	22	23	24	25	26	18	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	SB	SB	SB				25	H	27	PL	29	BL	31	29	30					

LEGEND

- AD** Administrative Leave
- AL** Administrators' Last Day
- AR** Administrators Return/Report
- AFT** AFT Teach
- CP** Classroom Preparation Day
- GC** Graduation Ceremonies (HS)
- HTD** High School Turnaround Day
- H** Holiday
- KML** Kitchen Managers Last Day
- KSL** Kitchen Staff Last Day
- MB** Marking Period Begins
- ME** Marking Period Ends
- MS** Middle School Exams
- MUD** Makeup Days
- PC** Parental Conference
- OH** Open House
- PD** Professional Development Day
- PE** Promotional Exercises
- PL** Professionals Last Day
- PR** Professionals Return/Report
- SB** Students Return/School Starts
- SB** School Break
- SB** Semester Begins
- SC** School Closes
- SE** Secondary Exams
- SE** Semester Ends
- SL** Staff Last Day
- SR** Staff Return
- SX** Senior Exams
- TL** Teachers Last Day
- TR** Teachers Return
- WK** Workshop/New Professionals

ACCREDITS

Submitted By:
Dionne Wells-Hedington
Commissioner
Dionne Wells-Hedington

Approved By:
Albert Bryan, Jr.
Governor
Albert Bryan, Jr.

Date: May 15, 2024



St. Thomas-St. John Main Office:
1834 Kongens Gade Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas, VI 00802-6746

St. Croix Main Office:
2133 Hospital Street, Christiansted
St. Croix, VI 00820-4665

www.vide.vi
Email: public.relations@vide.vi
Virgin Islands Department of Education
Virgin Islands Department of Education

(340) 774-0100

(340) 773-1095

KDBENBum II

MONTH	OPENING DATES	SCHOOL YEAR OPENING ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPANTS
July 2024	23rd	School Secretarial & Clerical Staff Return	All Districts
	26th	School Kitchen Managers Return	All Districts
	29th	School Kitchen Staff Return	All Districts
	29th	School Bus Drivers Return	All Districts
	29th	School & District Administrators Return	All Districts
	30th	New Teachers	All Districts
	31st	Returning Teachers and Registrars	All Districts
August 2024	1st	School Guidance Counselors & Paraprofessionals Return	All Districts
	1st	Professional Development Day	All Districts
	2nd	Professional Development Day	All Districts

MONTH	DATES	SCHOOL YEAR ACTIVITIES & HOLIDAYS	PARTICIPANTS
August 2024	5th	School Starts/Students Return	All Districts
September 2024	5th	1st Marking Period/1st Semester Begins	All Districts
	2nd	Labor Day	All Districts
October 2024	7th	1st Marking Period Ends	All Districts
	8th	2nd Marking Period Begins	All Districts
	14th	Puerto Rico-Virgin Islands Friendship Day	All Districts
	18th	AFT Teach Conference	STX-District
	21st	AFT Teach Conference	STTJ-District
	25th	Parental Conference/Open House	All Schools
November 2024	1st	David Hamilton Jackson/Liberty Day	All Districts
	5th	General Elections	All Districts
	11th	Veterans Day Observed	All Districts
	28th	Thanksgiving	All Districts
	29th	School Break	All Districts
December 2024	12th-13th	Senior Exams	HS Only
	16th-17th	Secondary Exams	All Districts
	18th	HS Turn Around Day	HS Only
	18th	2nd Marking Period ends/1st Semester Ends	All Districts
	18th	• Makeup Day •	All Districts
	19th	Christmas Break Begins	All Districts
January 2025	6th	Three Kings Day/Christmas Break Ends	All Districts
	7th	Classroom Preparation Day	All Districts
	8th	Students Return & 3rd Marking Period/ 2nd Semester Begins	All Districts
	20th	Martin Luther King Day	All Districts
February 2025	3rd	Professional Development Day	All Districts
	17th	Presidents' Day/VI Agrifest 2025	All Districts
March 2025	13th	3rd Marking Period Ends	All Districts
	14th	4th Marking Period Begins	All Districts
	28th	Parental Conference/Open House	All Schools
	31st	Transfer Day	All Districts
April 2025	17th-21st	Easter Break	All Districts
	28th-30th	Carnival/Spring Break	All Districts
May 2025	1st-2nd	Carnival/Spring Break	All Districts
	5th-6th	Senior Exams	HS Only
	7th-9th	Grades 7-11 Exams	All Districts
	12th-16th	Promotional Exercises	All Districts
	19th-23rd	Graduation Ceremonies	All Districts
	23rd	2nd Semester/SY Ends	All Districts
	26th	Memorial Day	All Districts

MONTH	CLOSING DATES	SCHOOL YEAR CLOSING ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPANTS
May 2025	23rd	Last Day for Teachers	All Districts
	28th	Last Day for School Bus Drivers	All Districts
	28th	Last Day for School & District Administrators	All Districts
	28th	Last Day for School Guidance Counselors & Paraprofessionals	All Districts
	30th	Last Day for School Secretarial & Clerical Staff	All Districts
June 2025	2nd	Last Day for School Kitchen Staff	All Districts
	3rd	Last Day for School Kitchen Managers	All Districts

-Make Up Days are not included in the 180 days required by Virgin Islands statute-

ADDENDUM III

Ulla F. Muller

Cleaning All a/c units
Replacing all outlet covers
Replace missing/mildewed ceiling tiles
Replaced ceiling light bulbs in rooms
Replace/Repair flush valves & faucets in bathrooms
Install missing window operators
Painting bathrooms & specified classroom
Repair to Kindergarten bathroom toilet
Replace girl's bathroom door
School painting

Ivanna Eudora Kean High

Cleaning All a/c units
Replacing all outlet covers
Replace missing/mildewed ceiling tiles
Replaced ceiling light bulbs in rooms
Replace/Repair flush valves & faucets in bathrooms
Install missing window operators
Painting of Selected Classroom
School painting
Bathroom upgrades
Electrical upgrades
Deck painting

Edith Williams Alternative Academy

Fencing
Roof repair
Painting Exterior
Cleaning All a/c units
Bathroom repairs

Alfredo Andrews

Working on Ceiling tile replacement
Replace floor tile throughout the school
Change all door locks
Install ac units 12 ton for Cafeteria

ADDENDUM III

Ricardo Richards

Clean all Ac Units
Replace A/C Units that is not working
Reinforce metal handrailing for the second floor
Playground Installation
Improvements to Dry Storage Area in Kitchen

St. Croix Educational Complex

Ceiling Fan Replacement
Ceiling Tile Replacement
A/C Cleaning for all units
GYM AC-2- 20 Ton
Remove old and Install Auditorium new AC - (2) 25 TON
Auditorium Roof Repairs
Painting Exterior of Campus
Generator Assesment Package-Entire Campus

St. Croix Central High School

Repair leaking walkways
A/C Cleaning for all units
Install 5 ton unit for rooms without AC's – 302, 802, 803, 804, 809, 901,902,903, 907, 908, 909
Ceiling fan for classrooms in wing -200,300,400
Painting Exterior of Campus
CHS Bathroom Repairs
Repair leaking walkways
A/C Cleaning for all units

C- TECH

Clean all A/C Units
Retile auto body classroom 112,113,114
Working door lock for all classrooms
New Water Heater-Cosmetology

Alternative Ed

A/C Cleaning for all units
Change all door locks
Fix A/C Unit for school Registration Building /Electrical Assessment

ADDENDUM III

Lew Muckle

Repair wooden railing for building
Removed metal pole from the basketball court
Replace floor tile for J building 4 Classrooms

Claude O. Markoe

Change Damaged Classroom doors
Replace Damaged window operators
Clean A/C Unit for all Classrooms
Replace bad or missing ceiling tiles
Change door lock for all classrooms
New Playground

Juanita Gardine

Replace Ceiling fan in auditorium
Relocate A/C Unit from front for the classroom to the back of the classroom Office (3), Room (207- 1), Room (206- 1), Room (303-1), Library (3)
Sand & Paint Metal Handrailing in 200 wing
Electrical Upgrade

Eulalie Rivera

Repair leaking walkways
Install working light in classrooms
Install ceiling fan in all classrooms
Guttering repair for all (6) buildings
Repair leaking roof of modular
Ceiling tile replacement
New Windows-ALL Classrooms
Removal, and Installation of new windows; Enclosure of existing decorative Blocks(concrete)
Installation of 52 Window Units in classrooms
Kitchen Upgrade
Removal and Installation of New Floor Tiles-Cafeteria
Generator Assessment-Entire Campus
Electrical Upgrade to Campus for New Units

ADDENDUM IV



Walkthroughs School (WTs) Date.....

VIC Title 17 Section 24 mandates that the DOE provides a safe environment for learning

WTs Grades 1-10 (10) Up to Standard) (1) Below Standard) (5) Somewhere In-between)

Bathroom Structures

Kitchen Equipment/Installation (s)

Airconditioning Units

Internet Connectivity

Playground Area (s)

Roof Leakages

Playgrounds

Classroom Structures

Lighting Around Schools

Work Study Areas

Office Space Access

Painted Crosswalks

Traffic Signs

Speedbumps

Addendum B

Addendum B

Federal Grants Balances

**As of 03/19/23
Expiring 09/30/23**

Grant	Budget	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Pre-Encumbrances	Balance to Spend	Personnel	Operating	Indirect Costs
FY 2020 Consolidated Grant (CGA)	\$ 15,676,155.59	\$ 10,117,477.91	\$ 1,509,612.11	\$ 545,963.42	\$ 3,503,102.15	\$ 2,136,032.27	\$ 1,051,029.24	\$ 315,537.46
FY 2021 Consolidated Grant (CGA)	\$ 16,299,814.00	\$ 7,311,097.95	\$ 1,784,265.57	\$ 100,639.84	\$ 7,103,810.64	\$ 3,680,515.97	\$ 2,858,806.50	\$ 527,471.48
FY 2021 Education Stabilization Fund (CARES II)	\$ 53,234,881.00	\$ 24,012,816.77	\$ 4,253,928.70	\$ 1,208,652.59	\$ 23,759,482.94	\$ 8,675,562.05	\$ 13,326,309.65	\$ 1,757,611.24
FY 2021 Adult Education (AE)	\$ 590,188.00	\$ 336,425.65	\$ 241,001.98	\$ -	\$ 12,760.37	\$ 5,887.72	\$ 6,539.64	\$ 333.01
FY 2021 Special Education (IDEA)	\$ 8,798,265.00	\$ 7,135,627.09	\$ 300,235.68	\$ 618,433.04	\$ 743,969.19	\$ 287,869.78	\$ 342,285.95	\$ 113,813.46
FY 2021 Special Education (IDEA ARP)	\$ 1,756,253.00	\$ 401,529.26	\$ 679,244.64	\$ 374,475.00	\$ 301,004.10	\$ -	\$ 220,960.52	\$ 80,043.58
FY 2021 Shifting Readers	\$ 156,038.00	\$ 85,635.20	\$ 63,900.00	\$ 1,806.00	\$ 4,696.80	\$ -	\$ 276.00	\$ 4,420.80
	\$ 96,511,594.59	\$ 49,400,609.83	\$ 8,832,188.68	\$ 2,849,969.89	\$ 35,428,826.19	\$ 14,785,867.79	\$ 17,806,207.50	\$ 2,799,231.03

As Deal dom 3

STX District - General Maintenance Funds Summer Maintenance '23

#	Facility	Contractor	Scope of Work	Status
1	Ricardo Richards	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Repair and seal roofs. Replace ceiling tiles as required. Demolish and remove non functional modular buildings.	Bid preparation
2	Alfredo Andrews ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Recoat roofs with elastomeric coating. Replace flourescent light bulbs as required. Remove and replace exterior doors.	Bid preparation
3	Claude O. Marko ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Remove and repalce non funtional window operators. Remove and replace termite infested wooden cabinets (upon completion of termite treatment).	Bid preparation
4	Juanita Gardine ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms.	Bid preparation
5	John H. Woodson Jr. H	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Replace non funtional lights in hallways. Install campus security lighting.	Bid preparation
6	Pearl B. Larsen ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Recoat roofs with elastomeric coating. Replace exerior doors.	Bid preparation
7	Eulalie Rivera ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Replace cafeteria doors. Remove classroom shutters and install A/C units. Repair retaining wall on West side of campus.	Bid preparation
8	Central High School	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Replace ceiling tiles as required. Remove and repalce non operable window operators. Repair retaining wall on West side of campus. Inspect and repair cafeteria roof. Prune trees in courtyard.	Bid preparation
9	SCEC	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate locker rooms and restrooms. Replace ceiling tiles as required. Remove and repalce non operable window operators.	Bid preparation
10	Lew Mucke ES	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Remove and replace railings as required.	Bid preparation
11	CTEC	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Replace ceiling tiles as required.	Bid preparation
12	Adult Education	To be determined	Interior and exterior painting as required. Renovate all restrooms. Replace ceiling tiles as required. Replace damaged doors and frames as required.	Bid preparation
13	Alternative Education	To be determined	Interior and exerior painting as required. Replace ceiling tiles as required. Replace perimeter fence as required.	Bid preparation

Education

Academic Performance Assessment

VIDE utilizes the *Smarter Balanced* assessment system for its year-end English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) summative assessment in grades 3rd-8th and 11th. The scores place a student in one of four levels – two levels indicating proficiency (Met Standard and Exceeded Standard) and two levels indicating that students have not met proficiency (Near Standard and Below Standard). The tests were not administered in the Spring of 2020 (for SY 2019-20) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020-21 summative assessments featured lower student participation rates (89%) and modified administration (online-only testing and changes to length and breadth of questions). VIDE administered *Smarter Balanced* in the Spring of 2022 (for SY 2021-22), achieving a 95% participation rate across all students in both districts, allowing for the best window yet into post-pandemic public school student academic performance. Nationally, post pandemic student performance on standardized testing suffered, with results so dire that U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona called the results “appalling and unacceptable.”²⁸ Both Math and ELA scores were down nationally post-COVID.

There was a sharp decline in student scores across the board, with ELA proficiency dropping by 7.3 percentage points and math proficiency decreasing 3.9 percentage points. Overall, the results represent the largest decline in student academic performance since VIDE adopted the more rigorous Smarter Balanced Assessment system based on national standards. Because these assessments are meant to measure a student’s performance in English/Language Arts and Math relative to the expected performance at their specific grade level, and ultimately to gauge student college and career readiness, the decline in student scores means an increasing number of USVI public school students are below national standards at their grade level in those subject areas.

Learning loss was evident throughout the assessment results in the USVI, as proficiency dropped in nearly all tested grades, in both ELA and Math. More concerning, the percentage of students at the lowest level (Below Standard) grew as well, widening the gap between the average student scores and where students should be (Proficient or above). For example, at the earliest tested grade (3rd Grade), 76% of students scored at the lowest level in Math (Below Standard), a 10 percentage point regression compared to the pre-pandemic results. 11th Grade Math scores also showed a 6 percentage point regression in the percentage of students scoring Below Standard (75% vs 81%).

In SY 2021-22:

- 95% of 7th graders were Not Proficient (i.e., tested at Near or Below Standard) in Math.
- 75% of 3rd graders were Not Proficient in ELA.

Student Academic Performance by Grade SY 2021-22			
Grade 3 Language Arts Proficiency		Grade 3 Math Proficiency	
Below Standard	66.9%	Below Standard	75.5%
Near Standard	19.5%	Near Standard	15.9%
Met Standard	9.1%	Met Standard	7.7%
Exceeded Standard	4.6%	Exceeded Standard	0.9%
Grade 5 Language Arts Proficiency		Grade 5 Math Proficiency	
Below Standard	67.0%	Below Standard	83.8%
Near Standard	17.2%	Near Standard	12.5%
Met Standard	12.0%	Met Standard	2.2%
Exceeded Standard	3.8%	Exceeded Standard	1.6%
Grade 7 Language Arts Proficiency		Grade 7 Math Proficiency	
Below Standard	62.2%	Below Standard	76.3%
Near Standard	21.9%	Near Standard	18.9%
Met Standard	14.3%	Met Standard	4.1%
Exceeded Standard	1.7%	Exceeded Standard	0.8%
Grade 11 Language Arts Proficiency		Grade 11 Math Proficiency	
Below Standard	45.1%	Below Standard	81.1%
Near Standard	25.5%	Near Standard	14.2%
Met Standard	21.7%	Met Standard	4.2%
Exceeded Standard	7.7%	Exceeded Standard	0.5%

Student Proficiency Rates on ELA and Math, Selected Grades, SY 2021-22

When comparing the SY 2021-22 assessments with the pre-pandemic SY 2018-19 results, there were also proficiency decreases in key grades, including the following:

- 8th grade ELA proficiency decreased by 6 percentage points.
- 11th grade ELA proficiency decreased by 11 percentage points.

²⁸ Yorio, K. (2022, October 24). *Math and Reading Scores Decline on the "Nation's Report Card."* School Library Journal. <https://www.slj.com/story/More-Alarming-Results-Declining-Scores-in-Math-and-Reading-in-the-Nations-report-Card#:~:text=Education%20Secretary%20Miguel%20Cardona%20called,3%20points%20compared%20to%202019>

Data Systems: Let's Talk Solutions

Since 2020, St. Croix Foundation for Community Development (SCF) has been charged with collecting and reporting credible, current data as Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT grantee for the territory. Under that KIDS COUNT umbrella, SCF is also required to promote data-based advocacy and communications strategies to improve the lives of our children.

In meeting this mandate, our KIDS COUNT Team has faced a succession of challenges that we actually believe represent opportunities for the Virgin Islands to serve as a national model around data collection. Early on, we understood that the primary data source for most states and territories – the American Community Survey – currently does not include data reflecting the USVI. As such, for several decades KIDS COUNT data for the territory has been largely sourced from the VI Community Survey (VICS), conducted by the University of the Virgin Islands Eastern Caribbean Center. The VICS, however, has not been published since 2018, reflecting data collected in 2015.

In the absence of these surveys, we have relied almost exclusively on relevant government data sources, which has been an illuminating exercise. While this strategy has afforded us access to the most current, real-time data, the stark reality is that not every agency has had readily available public data or reports. Some agencies manually collected data from various paper records to produce reports, and many agencies functioned as independent data silos. In some cases, different types of data were collected in the St. Croix District versus the St. Thomas/St. John District even within the same agency, making comparisons between our islands difficult. In other cases, agencies indicated that the data being requested was simply not available.

These challenges evolved over time, and addressing them will require long-term strategic thinking and focus. One solution is to take a more deliberate approach to data collection. This means developing a clear plan for what data needs to be collected, how it will be collected, and how it will be used. It also means investing in the right tools and technologies to support data collection and analysis.

One of the biggest challenges that government organizations, in particular, face is the lack of standardization in data collection. Different departments and agencies often collect data in different ways, making it difficult to compare and analyze data across local government departments. To address this issue, public sector organizations may consider developing clear standards and guidelines for data collection coupled with internal controls to ensure that these standards are followed consistently throughout the organization.

Another key challenge for both the public and civic sectors is the lack of training and expertise in data collection and analysis. To address this issue, investments in training and development programs would be beneficial to ensure that individuals have the skills and knowledge needed to collect, analyze, and report data effectively. Targeted and consistent training in standards and technology would establish a process-oriented approach to data collection, reducing reliance on individual or small-group knowledge within an organization. Additionally, cross-sector transparency around data collection practices (including communication of policies and procedures) would provide researchers with publicly available data and regular updates on data collection activities. Finally, maintaining online portals where data can be viewed and downloaded by stakeholders would encourage greater transparency and nurture public trust.

Strengthening local data systems ultimately requires a strategic commitment and approach to standardization, training, and transparency. By prioritizing these recommendations, the territory can ensure the collection of accurate and complete data which can be used with confidence to inform data-driven policy decisions and programming, as well as support the territory in making a case for both federal and local funding resources, yielding improved outcomes for all residents.

Looking to the future, our KIDS COUNT Team seeks to fully leverage our current efforts. Bolstered by our deep partnerships with nonprofit organizations, and our success in creating comprehensive data sharing MOUs with key Government agencies, we have developed a proposal for an online, visual analytics platform that will differentiate itself from existing siloed governmental systems. Not only is it interoperable between agencies, mobile-friendly, and low-maintenance, but it can provide access to one-click report sharing for rapid dissemination of critical findings. Another unique benefit of this data dashboard is that it could incorporate data from non-governmental service providers, thus providing a richer, more comprehensive picture of the state of child and family well-being. This is just one possible solution to begin improving data collection and reporting territory-wide.

Representing the smallest Community in the KIDS COUNT network, the KIDS COUNT USVI Team is not just collecting and reporting data, but we're also laser-focused on supporting the territory with building more robust and equitable data systems and data solutions.

Saul Santiago, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator, KIDS COUNT USVI



IX
MAY 2021

ADDENDUM II: Curriculum Night Agenda + Representative Curriculum Night Content

Potential Curriculum Night Agenda:

- Overview of Curriculum Framework*
- Curriculum: Math*
- Curriculum: Reading & Writing*
- Curriculum: Science
- Curriculum: Social Studies
- Curriculum: Word Study
- Class Schedule*
- Classroom Expectations
- Library Rules
- School Handbook Policies to Note
- Homework Policy
- Grading Scale
- Attendance

**See screenshots below of sample curriculum night content*

Overview of Curriculum Framework

School Curriculum Framework

- Teachers at <Insert School> ES follow the curriculum calendar which outlines the curriculum to teach each grading period.
- All teachers meet weekly, during common planning time, to collaborate and plan lessons and assessments.
- Teachers work together to create common assessments that are used to measure student progress.