

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SEPTEMBER 2, 2026



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Introduction

Good day, Honorable Kurt Vialet, Chairman; Honorable Avery Lewis, Assistant Chair; members of the Committee on Education and Workforce; fellow testifiers; members of the Legislature; and the listening and viewing public.

I am Craig Benjamin, Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance (BSCM). Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on Education and Workforce to provide an update on the Bureau's school-readiness initiatives, maintenance activities, facility conditions, and ongoing plans to address the needs of public school facilities throughout the Virgin Islands.

Joining me today are members of the BSCM leadership team: Mr. Paul Harrigan, Assistant Director of School Maintenance; Ms. Cynthia Allen, Assistant Director of School Construction; Dr. Charmaine Mayers, Chief Financial Officer; and Mr. Jayson Parrilla, Deputy Director of School Construction, along with other members of the BSCM team.

Preparing and maintaining the Territory's public school facilities requires a coordinated effort involving BSCM's in-house personnel, contractors, the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), school administrators, and other government partners. During the summer, BSCM focused its available personnel and financial resources on critical repairs, planned maintenance, health and safety concerns, and other facility deficiencies across the St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Districts.

The Bureau's summer work program included projects and facility needs identified by VIDE for completion or advancement in preparation for the 2026–2027 academic year. However, funding challenges affected the timing and commencement of several planned projects. Previously available funding sources had been substantially utilized, limiting BSCM's ability to immediately advance certain contracted maintenance and repair activities.

While awaiting additional funding, BSCM continued its school-readiness efforts through available in-house personnel and resources. The Bureau performed work that could be completed internally, continued assessing facility conditions, prioritized health and safety concerns, developed scopes of work and procurement packages, and positioned additional projects to proceed once funding became available.

Once additional funding became available, BSCM moved to advance procurement and initiate identified maintenance and repair work.

The Bureau's overall school-readiness effort therefore involved a combination of in-house maintenance, competitively procured contractor services, emergency repairs, and larger facility

improvement projects. Work performed included air-conditioning repairs, plumbing and restroom improvements, electrical work, roofing, painting, deep cleaning, grounds maintenance, doors and windows, kitchen and cafeteria repairs, and other facility-related activities.

Despite the work completed, BSCM continues to operate within the realities of aging school infrastructure, limited skilled-trade capacity, recurring equipment failures, and constrained financial resources. Several projects remain in progress, and additional facility deficiencies will require continued attention throughout the 2026–2027 academic year.

Today's testimony will provide the Committee with:

- an update on summer maintenance and repair activities by school;
- the current condition and outstanding needs of school facilities;
- BSCM's maintenance staffing levels and vacancies;
- the Bureau's available maintenance funding and expenditures;
- the status of facility-related service contracts; and
- BSCM's plans for addressing ongoing facility needs throughout the academic year.

BSCM remains committed to working collaboratively with the Legislature, VIDE, school administrators, contractors, and other government partners to improve the condition, reliability, and long-term sustainability of the Territory's public school facilities.

Fiscal Year 2026 Summer Maintenance and School Readiness Status

During the summer of 2026, the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance implemented maintenance, repair, and facility-improvement activities across the St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Districts in preparation for the 2026–2027 academic year.

BSCM utilized a combination of in-house maintenance staff, summer workers, competitively procured contractors, and available financial resources to address identified facility deficiencies and priority needs. The specific work performed varied by school based on facility conditions, operational priorities, health and safety considerations, and available resources.

Summer activities included air-conditioning repairs and servicing, restroom renovations, roofing repairs, painting, electrical and plumbing work, power washing, flooring and wall repairs, playground work, kitchen equipment repairs, and general maintenance activities.

The school-by-school status presented below provides both an overview of work performed during the summer and the reported operational condition of major facility systems at the time of assessment.

It is important to distinguish the operational percentages reported in this testimony from the completion status of individual maintenance projects. Operational percentages represent the reported condition of major facility systems at the time of assessment and should not be interpreted as project-completion percentages or as an indication that all remaining deficiencies resulted from the summer maintenance program.

Many of the outstanding conditions identified at individual schools involve aging infrastructure, equipment that has exceeded or is approaching its expected service life, major capital needs, recurring equipment failures, or projects requiring additional funding, procurement, materials, or specialized contracted services.

Accordingly, while the summer maintenance program addressed numerous immediate and priority needs, the school-by-school assessments also identify longer-term facility conditions that will require continued attention beyond the summer period.

[St. Thomas/St. John District](#)

[Lockhart K-8 School](#)

Significant maintenance and rehabilitation work was undertaken at Lockhart K-8 School during the summer, with particular attention given to the school's modular facilities.

LEBG LLC was contracted to perform rehabilitation work across eight modular buildings. The scope included the removal and replacement of flooring and walls, painting, application of silicone roof coating, modifications to air-conditioning ductwork, replacement of AC registers, and repairs to air-conditioning systems.

Of the eight modular buildings included in the project, seven were completed during the summer. Rehabilitation of the remaining modular is scheduled for the 2026 Christmas break to allow the work to be performed with minimal disruption to school operations.

BSCM also replaced soiled ceiling tiles in the library, library hallway, and storage room and purchased and installed a main breaker for the school's Main Distribution Panel.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **90% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **95% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**
- Doors and windows: **generally functional, with minor repairs needed**

Despite the work completed, Lockhart K-8 continues to have several significant longer-term facility needs. The school's modular facilities have exceeded their intended service life, and some

of the existing Bard air-conditioning systems are no longer functioning, with replacement parts becoming increasingly difficult to obtain locally.

Portions of the school's roofing system also require major rehabilitation, and several aging air-conditioning systems will ultimately require replacement. Additionally, the school currently lacks an adequate athletic facility.

BSCM will continue to address immediate maintenance needs at Lockhart while evaluating and prioritizing the larger rehabilitation and capital improvements required for the facility.

Charlotte Amalie High School

During the summer, BSCM advanced several maintenance and repair activities at Charlotte Amalie High School, with work focused on modular facilities, air-conditioning systems, kitchen equipment, and other priority facility needs.

MCE Contracting was engaged to perform repairs within the school's modular facilities, including wall repairs and replacement, air-conditioning system repairs, replacement of AC registers, and replacement of soiled ceiling tiles. BSCM also utilized summer workers to repair decking associated with the modular facilities.

In addition, Central Air repaired the air-conditioning system serving the school's Sprung structure. OTL Mechanical was engaged to install a new kitchen hot-water heater and repair the kitchen air-conditioning system, utilizing additional funding provided through Government House.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **90% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **90% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **90% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **80% functional**

Despite the work completed, Charlotte Amalie High School continues to have several significant facility needs. The school's aging modular facilities require continued attention, and roof leaks remain within the shop area and certain modular buildings. Several modular windows also require repair or replacement.

The school's auditorium represents a more significant capital need. The existing package air-conditioning equipment is aging and will require substantial investment, including the replacement of two 40-ton package air-conditioning units.

Additionally, the school's automotive shop requires substantial modernization to better support the facility's long-term instructional and operational needs.

BSCM will continue to prioritize immediate maintenance and repair requirements at Charlotte Amalie High School while identifying the funding and resources necessary to address the school's larger rehabilitation and capital needs.

Ulla F. Muller Elementary School

Summer maintenance activities at Ulla F. Muller Elementary School included roofing repairs, painting, cleaning, air-conditioning maintenance, and kitchen-related improvements.

Coastal Renovation was engaged to replace galvanized sheeting over a portion of the library roof. BSCM personnel also completed several in-house maintenance activities, including painting portions of the school's kitchen, administrative offices, classrooms, and exterior areas; power washing high-traffic areas; repairing a roof leak above a kindergarten classroom; and cleaning portions of the school's air-conditioning systems.

BSCM also installed a new kitchen water heater.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **85% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **65% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **90% functional**

The library roof repair was completed during the summer of 2026.

Several facility needs remain outstanding. The school continues to have plumbing deficiencies and substantial window needs, and the kitchen exhaust hood and ice machine are currently non-functional.

The school also requires installation of a new playground. The replacement playground is currently being held in storage pending funding, and BSCM is coordinating the removal of the existing playground.

BSCM will continue to prioritize the school's outstanding plumbing and facility needs while identifying the resources necessary to advance the remaining repairs and improvements.

Ivanna Eudora Kean High School

BSCM advanced several maintenance and facility-improvement activities at Ivanna Eudora Kean High School during the summer, including a significant restroom rehabilitation project.

MCE Contracting was engaged to renovate 12 upper-level restrooms. The scope of work includes replacement of tile, reconfiguration of restroom layouts, installation of phenolic partitions, upgrades to water-supply and drain lines, replacement of ceiling grids and tiles, lighting improvements, and installation of restroom accessories.

At the time of reporting, five of the 12 restrooms were actively under renovation, with completion of the project anticipated by September 30, 2026.

BSCM personnel and summer workers also performed general school-readiness activities, including power washing high-traffic areas and cleaning portions of the school's air-conditioning systems.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **75% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **65% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **50% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **85% functional**

In addition to the ongoing maintenance and repair work, Ivanna Eudora Kean High School has several significant longer-term capital needs.

The gymnasium requires major rehabilitation, including replacement of aging HVAC equipment, improvements to locker rooms and restrooms, and roof and gutter repairs. The gymnasium's existing air-handling equipment dates to approximately 1995 and has significantly exceeded typical service-life expectations.

Additional facility needs include a new kitchen cooler/freezer, improvements to address energy loss and condensation within classrooms, and major rehabilitation of the school's athletic field.

BSCM will continue addressing immediate operational needs at Ivanna Eudora Kean High School while advancing the restroom project and prioritizing the larger capital improvements required for the campus.

Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM advanced several maintenance and facility-improvement activities at Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School, including restroom renovations, roofing and electrical repairs, painting, air-conditioning maintenance, and general school-readiness activities.

J&P Construction was engaged to renovate the school's girls' and boys' restrooms. MCE Contracting also performed walkway roof repairs and replaced and rewired damaged electrical outlets within the cafeteria.

BSCM personnel supplemented the contracted work by painting portions of the school's interior and exterior, cleaning air-conditioning systems, and power washing high-traffic areas.

Additionally, two air-conditioning units purchased using school funds were fully installed on August 22, 2026, further supporting the school's air-conditioning needs.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **80% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **95% functional**

While the school is generally in strong operational condition, several facility needs remain. The kitchen exhaust hood is currently non-functional, and minor repairs to roof spouting and guttering are still required.

BSCM will continue to address these remaining deficiencies as part of its ongoing maintenance activities.

Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM personnel and summer workers performed a range of maintenance and school-readiness activities at Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School.

Work included power washing high-traffic areas, cleaning portions of the school's air-conditioning systems, and painting the cafeteria, administrative offices, and classrooms. Classrooms were also treated for subterranean termites as part of the facility-maintenance activities.

Additionally, the school's deteriorated playground was demolished and removed on August 25, 2026.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **85% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **95% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **90% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **90% functional**

Several facility needs remain outstanding. These include construction of a replacement playground, replacement of the non-functional kitchen exhaust hood, additional air-conditioning repairs, repair of an upstairs restroom leak, and repairs to roof guttering and spouting.

BSCM will continue to address these outstanding maintenance needs while identifying the resources necessary to advance the replacement playground and other facility improvements.

Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM advanced several maintenance and repair activities at Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School, with work focused on air-conditioning systems, drainage, flooring, painting, and the school's water system.

LAF Maintenance was contracted to address air-conditioning systems serving the kindergarten classrooms. Due to difficulties obtaining replacement control boards for certain existing equipment, the contractor worked in coordination with BSCM and another vendor to identify appropriate repair solutions.

Additional air-conditioning improvements were completed utilizing funding provided through the Office of the Governor, including the installation by OTL Mechanical of two new condensing units serving the cafeteria.

BSCM also repaired a stormwater drain, partially tiled approximately five classrooms, installed a refurbished five-horsepower water pump, and purchased a new Cutler Hammer breaker for the pump. When the refurbished pump subsequently failed, OTL Mechanical installed a 2.5-horsepower replacement pump, utilizing funding provided through the Office of the Governor.

At the time of assessment:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **60% functional**, with contractors continuing repairs
- Plumbing: **100% functional**

Several significant longer-term facility needs remain. These include addressing moisture intrusion affecting flooring, continued repair and modernization of aging classroom air-conditioning systems, improvements to the administrative office area, replacement of the wastewater-treatment system, treatment of structural-steel corrosion, and replacement of the playground.

BSCM will continue to address immediate operational and maintenance needs at the school while prioritizing the larger rehabilitation and capital improvements required for the facility.

Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School

During the summer, BSCM advanced several maintenance and repair activities at Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, including restroom repairs, life-safety improvements, and air-conditioning repairs.

BSCM repaired restrooms serving the gymnasium and anticipated shelter areas **and installed** emergency exit signs at the school.

Comfort Aire was subsequently contracted to address air-conditioning issues within the C Wing. OTL Mechanical was also engaged to perform air-conditioning repairs within the administrative

office area and address kitchen hot-water equipment, utilizing funding provided through the Office of the Governor.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **85% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **80% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**

Despite the maintenance and repair work completed, Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School continues to have several significant capital needs.

The existing TPO/PVC roof membranes affecting the gymnasium, kitchen, administrative office, library, and auditorium are compromised and require substantial replacement.

The auditorium also requires replacement of aging air-conditioning equipment, including six 15-ton package air-conditioning units.

Additionally, the gymnasium locker rooms and restrooms require major rehabilitation. Other identified facility needs include water-heater improvements, additional restroom upgrades, treatment of structural-steel corrosion, and improvements to classroom ventilation and air-conditioning systems.

BSCM will continue to address immediate operational and maintenance needs at Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School while prioritizing the larger roofing, HVAC, and rehabilitation projects requiring additional capital investment.

Joseph Sibilly Elementary School and Monroe Annex

At Joseph Sibilly Elementary School and Monroe Annex, BSCM continues to address air-conditioning and other facility-related needs.

Approximately six classroom air-conditioning units have been identified for replacement. As of August 27, 2026, the air-conditioning system serving the kitchen/cafeteria was also non-functional, and BSCM refrigeration personnel were scheduled to assess and perform necessary repairs.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **99% functional**
- Roofing: **reported leak-free**
- Doors and windows: approximately **95% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**

The school's standby generator was recently donated and is currently operational.

Several facility needs remain outstanding. The school requires an appropriate playground, replacement of portions of the walkway roofing, and rehabilitation of the Building B cistern.

BSCM has identified the need to clean, seal, and recommission the Building B cistern. If collected rainwater is to be utilized, an appropriate water-testing program will also be required prior to and during its use to ensure that the water is appropriately managed for its intended purpose.

BSCM will continue to address the school's immediate air-conditioning and maintenance needs while advancing the longer-term playground, walkway-roofing, and cistern improvements.

Ralph O. Wheatley Skill Center

The Ralph O. Wheatley Skill Center was reported to be in generally strong operational condition at the time of assessment.

During the summer, BSCM replaced charcoal filters in air-conditioning systems serving two shop classrooms as part of its maintenance activities.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: **100% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **90% functional**
- Roofing: **reported 100% leak-free at the time of assessment**
- Doors and windows: **100% functional**

Subsequent to the initial assessment, a **restroom roof leak** was brought to BSCM's attention and will require follow-up.

Additionally, on August 27, 2026, a sewage backup associated with a Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority manhole was reported. Waste Management was contacted for assistance in addressing the matter.

BSCM will continue to monitor and address the outstanding facility issues at the Ralph O. Wheatley Skill Center in coordination with the appropriate agencies where necessary.

Julius E. Sprauve School

During the summer, BSCM completed several maintenance and facility-improvement activities at Julius E. Sprauve School.

Work included repairs to railings and decking, flooring and wall repairs within the modular facilities, power washing, painting of portions of the school, and minor electrical repairs.

Additionally, six ARPA-funded split air-conditioning units were installed during the summer, providing additional cooling capacity at the school.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **90% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **90% functional**
- Roofing: **reported leak-free**
- Doors and windows: approximately **95% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**

As part of BSCM's efforts to address facility conditions, the school's existing playground was demolished and removed.

The kitchen exhaust hood remains non-functional and will require additional attention.

BSCM will continue to address the remaining maintenance and facility needs at Julius E. Sprauve School as part of its ongoing maintenance program.

[Edith Williams Alternative Academy](#)

During the summer, BSCM completed several maintenance and facility-improvement activities at Edith Williams Alternative Academy.

Work included painting and general facility repairs, replacement of restroom flush valves, repairs to pumps, and installation of new guttering and spouting.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **90% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **95% functional**

Overall, the facility was reported to be in generally strong operational condition. Remaining needs include **replacement of the gazebo roof and minor repairs to the gazebo stairs and decking**.

BSCM will continue to address these remaining facility needs through its ongoing maintenance activities.

St. Croix District

Pearl B. Larsen PreK-8 School

During the summer, BSCM advanced a significant **restroom rehabilitation project** at Pearl B. Larsen PreK-8 School.

Tidemark was contracted to rehabilitate the school's existing restrooms. The scope of work includes plumbing repairs, replacement of fixtures and drains, tile and wall repairs, ceiling and door improvements, lighting, ventilation, restroom accessories, painting, cleaning, and testing.

At the time of reporting, the restroom rehabilitation project was approximately **50% complete**.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **85% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **90% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **95% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**
- Standby generator: **fully operational**

Several facility needs remain outstanding. The air-conditioning systems serving the auditorium and cafeteria are currently non-functional and require two 20-ton package HVAC units.

The required HVAC equipment has already been procured; however, installation remains pending funding.

Additional facility needs include repairs to the music room and restoration of the kitchen cooler and freezer.

BSCM will continue to advance the restroom rehabilitation project while prioritizing the funding and resources necessary to install the procured HVAC equipment and address the school's remaining facility needs.

Lew Muckle Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM advanced a significant restroom rehabilitation project at Lew Muckle Elementary School.

J.P. Construction was contracted to rehabilitate the school's restrooms. At the time of reporting, the project was approximately 98% complete, with work remaining on one girls' restroom.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: **100% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **95% functional**

- Roofing: approximately **75% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **90% functional**

While the school was generally operational, several facility needs remain outstanding. These include completion of the remaining girls' restroom, repairs to a deteriorated railing at Building M, and roof leaks affecting Buildings K, J, F, and the library.

The school also requires improvements to kitchen ventilation and cooling, as well as replacement of the deteriorating playground.

Roof repairs have been procured but remain pending funding and Purchase Order availability.

BSCM will continue to advance the remaining restroom work and prioritize the school's roofing and other outstanding facility needs as funding becomes available.

Ricardo Richards Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM completed a significant roof rehabilitation project at Ricardo Richards Elementary School.

C&N Painting & More was contracted to perform the roof rehabilitation. The scope of work included pressure washing the roof, sealing damaged areas and joints, repairing identified leaks, and applying two coats of silicone roof coating.

The roof rehabilitation project was reported 100% complete.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: **100% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **95% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **98% functional**

While the school was reported to be in generally strong operational condition, several facility needs remain. These include impact-absorbing playground surfacing, cafeteria window screens, repairs to three cafeteria air-conditioning units, and an under-slab water leak.

BSCM will continue to address these remaining facility needs through its ongoing maintenance and repair activities.

Alfredo Andrews Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM completed a significant restroom rehabilitation project at Alfredo Andrews Elementary School.

Tidemark was contracted to rehabilitate the school's restrooms. The scope of work included plumbing and fixture repairs, tile and wall work, ceiling and door improvements, lighting, ventilation, restroom accessories, painting, cleaning, and testing.

The restroom rehabilitation project was reported 100% complete.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **85% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**

Several facility needs remain outstanding. The air-conditioning systems serving the auditorium and cafeteria require two 20-ton package HVAC units. The required equipment has already been procured; however, installation remains pending funding.

Additionally, several exterior doors require replacement, and BSCM continues to address a broken kitchen kettle drain.

BSCM will continue to prioritize these remaining facility needs, including securing the resources necessary to install the procured HVAC equipment.

St. Croix Central High School

During the summer, BSCM advanced a significant rehabilitation project within the Music Room at St. Croix Central High School.

B20 was contracted to perform the work, which included repairs to spalling concrete, doors and frames, shelving, replacement of ceiling tiles, painting, removal of damaged carpeting, and installation of new vinyl flooring.

At the time of reporting, the Music Room rehabilitation project was approximately 95% complete, with the remaining flooring work delayed due to the availability of required materials.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **80% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **95% functional**

Several facility needs remain outstanding. A gymnasium HVAC unit has already been procured; however, installation remains pending funding.

Additionally, three window air-conditioning units remain non-functional and require repair. Minor roof and spouting repairs are also needed, along with repair of a boys' restroom door.

BSCM will continue to advance the remaining Music Room work and address the school's outstanding maintenance needs while prioritizing the resources necessary to install the procured gymnasium HVAC equipment.

Juanita Gardine Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM advanced facility improvements at Juanita Gardine Elementary School, including work to improve ventilation and safety within the school's auditorium.

Bobby V Construction was contracted to replace the existing industrial/commercial ceiling fans with school-appropriate units, improving ventilation while addressing safety concerns associated with the existing equipment.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **80% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **95% functional**

Several facility needs remain outstanding. These include window screens within the 200 Wing; repairs to the gymnasium walls and areas of spalling concrete; electrical upgrades necessary to support auditorium HVAC equipment; replacement of kitchen ceiling fans; and repairs to roof leaks affecting several rooms.

The school also requires development of an appropriate playground.

BSCM will continue to address the school's immediate maintenance needs while prioritizing the electrical, HVAC, roofing, gymnasium, and playground improvements requiring additional resources.

Eulalie R. Rivera PreK-8 School

During the summer, BSCM completed a roof-rehabilitation project at Eulalie R. Rivera PreK-8 School.

C&N Painting & More was contracted to perform the roof rehabilitation. The scope of work included repairing identified leaks, pressure washing the roof, sealing damaged areas and joints, and applying two coats of silicone roof coating.

The contracted roof-rehabilitation project was completed during the summer.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **70% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **95% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **80% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**
- Playground: **operational**

Several additional facility needs remain outstanding. Air-conditioning systems serving Rooms 205 and 207 have refrigerant leaks requiring repair. The school also requires door repairs, installation of wall panels in Modular Classroom TE107, guttering repairs, and repair or replacement of the non-functional kitchen exhaust hood.

Although the summer roof-rehabilitation project was completed, additional roof leaks have been identified in other areas of the campus, including the **600 Wing**, library, and main offices. **Certain additional roof repairs have already been procured but remain pending funding.**

BSCM will continue to address the school's air-conditioning and other maintenance needs while prioritizing the funding necessary to advance the additional procured roof repairs.

Claude O. Markoe Elementary School

During the summer, BSCM completed several significant facility improvements at Claude O. Markoe Elementary School, with particular attention given to the cafeteria and auditorium area.

J.P. Construction completed improvements to the cafeteria/auditorium area, including repairing and refinishing the stage, completing interior painting, repairing windows and screens, and installing vinyl flooring.

Additional facility improvements included replacement of a deteriorated gas line and repairs to the school's ice machine and dishwasher.

At the time of assessment, the school was reported to be in generally strong operational condition, with its major facility systems reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **98% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **98% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional**

The remaining identified deficiencies are limited and include an electrical issue affecting Room 601 and an electrical issue associated with the air-conditioning unit serving Room 902.

BSCM will continue to address these remaining electrical issues through its ongoing maintenance activities.

St. Croix Educational Complex / Career and Technical Education Center

During the summer, BSCM advanced a combination of general maintenance and facility-improvement activities at the St. Croix Educational Complex and Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC).

Summer maintenance activities included cleaning and servicing air-conditioning units and filters, interior and exterior painting, pressure washing, minor plumbing and electrical repairs, and general facility upkeep.

In addition to these maintenance activities, MCN Build was contracted to renovate Building 1, with the objective of improving the building's safety, appearance, functionality, and overall condition.

At the time of assessment, the school's major facility systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **70% functional**
- Electrical: approximately **85% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **85% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **70% functional**
- Standby generator: **operational**

Several significant facility needs remain outstanding. The J Wing requires electrical upgrades necessary to properly support its HVAC equipment. This work is important because the performance and reliability of the HVAC systems are dependent upon adequate supporting electrical infrastructure.

Roof leaks also remain among the facility's principal outstanding needs.

The required HVAC-related electrical upgrades and additional roofing work continue to be affected by funding limitations.

BSCM will continue to address immediate operational and maintenance needs at the St. Croix Educational Complex/CTEC while prioritizing the funding and resources necessary to advance the outstanding electrical, HVAC, and roofing improvements.

Adult Education

During the summer, BSCM completed a **roof-rehabilitation project** at the Adult Education facility.

The work included pressure washing the roof, sealing damaged areas and joints, and applying two coats of silicone roof coating. Following completion of the work, the roofing system was reported to be leak-free at the time of assessment.

The facility's major systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: **100% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: approximately **85% functional**
- Roofing: **100% functional and reported leak-free**
- Doors and windows: **100% functional**

The remaining identified facility needs include restoration of water service to the principal and counselor bathrooms and repairs to parking-lot potholes.

BSCM will continue to address these remaining facility needs through its ongoing maintenance activities.

Alternative Education

During the summer, BSCM completed several maintenance and school-readiness activities at the Alternative Education facility.

Work included cleaning and servicing air-conditioning units and filters, interior and exterior painting, pressure washing, minor plumbing and electrical repairs, and general facility upkeep.

At the time of assessment, the facility's major systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **95% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**
- Roofing: approximately **90% functional**

Two additional air-conditioning units remain to be installed. BSCM also continues to complete painting and other minor maintenance activities at the facility.

Overall, the facility was reported to be in generally strong operational condition, and BSCM will continue to address the remaining maintenance items through its ongoing maintenance activities.

WRC

During the summer, BSCM completed several maintenance and school-readiness activities at WRC.

Work included cleaning and servicing air-conditioning units and filters, interior and exterior painting, pressure washing, minor plumbing and electrical repairs, and general facility upkeep.

At the time of assessment, the facility's major systems were reported as follows:

- Air-conditioning: approximately **95% functional**
- Electrical: **100% functional**
- Plumbing: **100% functional**

- Roofing: approximately **95% functional**
- Doors and windows: approximately **90% functional**

One additional air-conditioning unit remains to be installed, and minor repairs to doors and windows remain outstanding.

Overall, the facility was reported to be in generally strong operational condition. BSCM will continue to address the remaining maintenance items through its ongoing maintenance activities.

Overall Assessment

The Fiscal Year 2026 Summer Maintenance and School Readiness Program resulted in substantial maintenance, repair, and facility-improvement work being completed across both the St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Districts. The full listing of projects can be found in **Attachment A**.

Through a combination of in-house personnel, summer workers, competitively procured contractors, and available financial resources, BSCM addressed a broad range of facility needs, including restroom rehabilitation, roofing deficiencies, air-conditioning failures, electrical and plumbing issues, painting, flooring, drainage, playground conditions, kitchen equipment, and other general maintenance and repair needs.

The school-by-school assessments also demonstrate, however, that many of the Territory's remaining facility challenges extend beyond routine maintenance. A number of the outstanding conditions involve aging infrastructure and equipment, major roofing and HVAC systems, electrical infrastructure, deteriorated modular facilities, wastewater systems, playgrounds, and other improvements that require more substantial rehabilitation or capital investment.

Additionally, several projects and repairs remain in progress or are awaiting funding, materials, installation, procurement completion, or other necessary resources. In certain instances, equipment has already been procured, but additional funding is required to complete the associated installation or supporting infrastructure work.

Accordingly, the completion of the summer maintenance program should not be viewed as the completion of BSCM's facility responsibilities for the year. School maintenance is an ongoing operational requirement, and BSCM must continue responding to both existing deficiencies and new conditions that arise throughout the academic year.

The Bureau will continue to prioritize conditions affecting the health, safety, and continued operation of school facilities, while advancing routine and preventive maintenance and identifying the resources necessary to address larger rehabilitation and capital needs.

The ability to sustain these efforts is directly connected to the availability of adequate and timely financial resources. The following section therefore provides an overview of BSCM's principal maintenance funding discussed in this testimony, including the Settlement Fund and Project S4009, and the extent to which those resources have been expended or committed.

Fiscal Year 2026 Maintenance Funding and Expenditures

The facility conditions and outstanding needs identified throughout this testimony must also be considered within the context of the financial resources available to BSCM. During Fiscal Year 2026, the Bureau relied on multiple funding sources to support maintenance, repairs, supplies, equipment, and other facility-related needs.

For purposes of this testimony, two of the principal funding sources are the Settlement Fund and Project S4009. These are separate funding sources and are accounted for independently.

Settlement Fund

The total amount budgeted for the **Settlement Fund** is **\$10,000,000**.

During **Fiscal Year 2025**, BSCM recorded **\$4,572,733.70** in actual expenditures from the Settlement Fund.

During **Fiscal Year 2026**, BSCM recorded \$4,294,092.04 in actual expenditures, consisting of:

FY2026 Line Item	Actual Expenditures
Other	\$3,625,134.22
Supplies	\$301,427.82
Capital Outlay	\$367,530.00
Total FY2026 Actual Expenditures \$4,294,092.04	

In addition to the FY2026 actual expenditures, the Settlement Fund **has** \$1,099,243.36 in encumbrances and \$23,814.63 in requisitions.

Accordingly, total FY2026 Settlement Fund expenditures and commitments are \$5,417,150.03.

When Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026 are combined, BSCM has recorded \$8,866,825.74 in actual expenditures from the Settlement Fund. Including FY2026 encumbrances and requisitions, \$9,989,883.73 of the \$10 million Settlement Fund has been expended or committed, leaving an uncommitted balance of \$10,116.27.

Settlement Fund Financial Status	Amount
Total Settlement Fund Budget	\$10,000,000.00

FY2025 Actual Expenditures	\$4,572,733.70
FY2026 Actual Expenditures	\$4,294,092.04
Total Actual Expenditures	\$8,866,825.74
FY2026 Encumbrances	\$1,099,243.36
FY2026 Requisitions	\$23,814.63
Total Expended or Committed	\$9,989,883.73
Remaining Uncommitted Balance	\$10,116.27

Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance Capital Fund

The Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance (Project S4009) is a separate funding source from the Settlement Fund and is accounted for independently.

For Fiscal Year 2025, the total budget for Project S4009 was \$9,576,832.02.

For Fiscal Year 2026, the total budget authority reflected under Project S4009 is \$5,736,615.28.

It is important to clarify that only \$3,000,000 was appropriated to Project S4009 for Fiscal Year 2026. The amount reflected above the \$3 million FY2026 appropriation represents prior-year funding and encumbrances carried forward from Fiscal Year 2025 into Fiscal Year 2026.

Accordingly, the \$5,736,615.28 reflected as available under Project S4009 in FY2026 should not be interpreted as a \$5.7 million new appropriation for Fiscal Year 2026.

FY2026 Project S4009 expenditures and commitments are distributed between the two districts as follows:

St. Croix District

For the **St. Croix District**, actual expenditures total **\$2,888,235.46**, consisting of:

Category	Actual Expenditures
Supplies	\$167,137.92
Other	\$2,602,409.30
Capital Outlay	\$118,688.24
Total Actual Expenditures – STX	\$2,888,235.46

The St. Croix District also has **\$125,680.57 in encumbrances**, consisting of \$1,500.00 in Supplies and \$124,180.57 in Other expenditures.

Accordingly, total actual expenditures and encumbered commitments for the St. Croix District are **\$3,013,916.03**.

St. Thomas/St. John District

For the **St. Thomas/St. John District**, actual expenditures total **\$1,919,467.66**, consisting of:

Category	Actual Expenditures
Supplies	\$129,058.61
Other	\$1,790,409.05
Total Actual Expenditures – STTJ \$1,919,467.66	

The St. Thomas/St. John District also has **\$785,649.57 in encumbrances**, consisting of:

Category	Encumbrances
Supplies	\$8,956.81
Other	\$710,932.76
Capital Outlay	\$65,760.00
Total Encumbrances – STTJ \$785,649.57	

Accordingly, total actual expenditures and encumbered commitments for the St. Thomas/St. John District are **\$2,705,117.23**.

In addition to the district actuals and encumbrances, Project S4009 has **\$14,639.52 in requisitions**.

Project S4009 FY2026 Financial Summary

Financial Status	Amount
FY2026 Appropriation	\$3,000,000.00
FY2025 Funds/Encumbrances Carried Forward	\$2,736,615.28
Total FY2026 Budget Authority	\$5,736,615.28

Total Actual Expenditures	\$4,807,703.12
Total Encumbrances	\$911,330.14
Total Requisitions	\$14,639.52
Total Expended or Committed	\$5,733,672.78
Remaining Uncommitted Balance	\$2,942.50

Of the \$5,736,615.28 available under Project S4009 in FY2026, \$5,733,672.78 has been expended or committed, leaving an uncommitted balance of approximately \$2,942.50.

Overall Funding Position

For clarity, the Settlement Fund and Project S4009 are separate funding sources. The following combined figures are presented solely to provide the Committee with an overall view of BSCM's financial activity across these two funding sources.

Funding Source	Actual Expenditures	Encumbrances & Requisitions	Total Expended or Committed	Remaining
Settlement Fund	\$8,866,825.74	\$1,123,057.99	\$9,989,883.73	\$10,116.27
Project S4009 – FY2026	\$4,807,703.12	\$925,969.66	\$5,733,672.78	\$2,942.50
Combined	\$13,674,528.86	\$2,049,027.65	\$15,723,556.51	\$13,058.77

Across these two separate funding sources, BSCM has recorded \$13,674,528.86 in actual expenditures. Including encumbrances and requisitions, a total of \$15,723,556.51 has been expended or committed.

The remaining uncommitted balances are approximately \$10,116.27 in the Settlement Fund and \$2,942.50 under Project S4009, for a combined uncommitted balance of \$13,058.77 across these two funding sources.

These figures demonstrate that the financial resources currently available under these funding sources are substantially committed, while BSCM continues to face outstanding maintenance, repair, and capital needs across the Territory's public school facilities. Full listing of expenditures by school can be found in **Attachment B**.

Current Maintenance and Custodial Staffing Levels and Vacancies

The Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance's Maintenance Division currently has 52 filled positions territory-wide, consisting of 24 employees in the St. Thomas/St. John District and 28 employees in the St. Croix District.

The Division currently has one vacant position—the School Facilities Maintenance Manager for the St. Croix District. Accordingly, the Maintenance Division has a total staffing complement of 53 positions, of which 52 are filled and one is vacant.

It is important to clarify that custodial workers are not employees of BSCM and, therefore, are not included in the Bureau's Maintenance Division staffing figures. Custodial staffing levels and vacancies fall under the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE).

BSCM's Maintenance Division workforce includes maintenance coordinators, laborers, general maintenance workers, maintenance mechanics, refrigeration engineers/AC technicians, painters, environmental officers, school project managers, school facilities assistant managers, school facilities maintenance managers, a school wastewater manager, and a warehouse manager.

While the Maintenance Division has a relatively low overall vacancy rate, the Bureau's operational capacity is affected not only by the number of vacancies, but also by the number and distribution of employees within critical skilled-trade and operational classifications.

For example, one of the most significant staffing imbalances exists within the laborer classification. The St. Thomas/St. John District currently has one laborer, compared with nine laborers in the St. Croix District.

The Bureau also has only three refrigeration engineers/AC technicians territory-wide—two assigned to the St. Thomas/St. John District and one assigned to the St. Croix District. Of the two assigned to the St. Thomas/St. John District, one is currently on leave, leaving only one refrigeration engineer presently available to respond to the District's air-conditioning maintenance and repair needs.

This significantly limits BSCM's current in-house capacity to address air-conditioning failures in the St. Thomas/St. John District, particularly given the number, age, and condition of HVAC systems throughout the public school facilities and the frequency of AC-related work orders and emergency service calls.

As a result, BSCM must prioritize the most critical air-conditioning failures and, when necessary and when funding is available, supplement its internal workforce through specialized contracted services.

BSCM also has only seven maintenance mechanics territory-wide, with three assigned to the St. Thomas/St. John District and four assigned to the St. Croix District. These employees are responsible for addressing routine maintenance needs while also responding to emergency repairs, equipment failures, and immediate health and safety concerns.

Because the same workforce must respond to both planned and unplanned maintenance needs, BSCM must continuously prioritize its workload. Conditions affecting health, safety, or the continued operation of a school receive priority.

When emergency conditions arise, maintenance personnel may have to be redirected from scheduled preventive or routine maintenance activities. This can extend the time required to complete lower-priority work orders and contribute to the accumulation of outstanding routine maintenance needs.

The vacant School Facilities Maintenance Manager position in the St. Croix District also creates a supervisory and operational gap within that district.

BSCM continues to maximize its available personnel, redistribute workloads where feasible, and utilize contracted services when specialized expertise, additional manpower, or accelerated completion is necessary.

Staffing Alone Will Not Resolve Maintenance Challenges

While maintaining an appropriately staffed Maintenance Division is critical to BSCM's operations, additional staffing alone will not resolve the Bureau's maintenance challenges.

Maintenance personnel must also have timely access to the materials, equipment, tools, replacement parts, and supplies necessary to complete assigned work.

Even when qualified personnel are available, a work order cannot be completed if the required materials or replacement components are unavailable or if sufficient funding is not available to procure them. This challenge is particularly significant within the Territory's aging school facilities, where repairs frequently require specialized or replacement plumbing and electrical components, air-conditioning parts and equipment, roofing materials, doors and hardware, paint, tools, and other maintenance supplies.

The age and condition of many existing building systems also mean that some repairs cannot be resolved through routine maintenance alone. Certain equipment has exceeded or is approaching its expected service life, replacement parts may be difficult to obtain, and some deficiencies require specialized contracted services or more substantial rehabilitation.

Accordingly, BSCM's ability to reduce outstanding work orders and strengthen its preventive maintenance program depends on the appropriate combination of qualified personnel and adequate, timely operating resources.

Increasing staffing without simultaneously providing sufficient resources for materials, equipment, supplies, replacement components, and necessary contracted services would not, by itself, eliminate the maintenance backlog or significantly improve completion times.

A sustainable school maintenance program requires the appropriate combination of:

- qualified maintenance personnel;
- adequate and timely maintenance funding;
- readily available materials and replacement parts;
- appropriate tools and equipment;
- preventive maintenance resources; and
- specialized contracted support when necessary.

Providing these resources together will better position BSCM to transition from a maintenance model that must frequently prioritize urgent facility failures toward a more proactive and preventive maintenance approach across the Territory's public school facilities.

BSCM Maintenance Division Staffing by District

The following table provides the current distribution of BSCM Maintenance Division personnel by position and district. As reflected below, the Division has 53 funded positions, of which 52 are currently filled and one is vacant.

Position	STT/STJ Filled	STX Filled	Vacant	Total Positions
Maintenance Coordinators	6	6	0	12
Laborers	1	9	0	10
General Maintenance Workers	3	4	0	7
Maintenance Mechanics	3	4	0	7
Refrigeration Engineers / AC Technicians	2	1	0	3
Painters	2	0	0	2
Environmental Officers	1	1	0	2
School Wastewater Manager	1	0	0	1
Warehouse Manager	0	1	0	1
School Project Managers	3	1	0	4
School Facilities Assistant Managers	1	1	0	2

School Facilities Maintenance Managers	1	0	1 – STX	2
TOTAL	24	28	1	53

The staffing distribution demonstrates that BSCM's maintenance capacity varies not only by the overall number of employees, but also by district and skilled-trade classification. This is particularly significant for laborers, maintenance mechanics, and refrigeration engineers/AC technicians, whose availability directly affects the Bureau's ability to respond to routine, preventive, corrective, and emergency maintenance needs.

Status of Facility-Related Contracts

BSCM continues to manage and procure facility-related service contracts necessary to support the maintenance and operation of public school facilities throughout the Territory.

The Bureau's procurement approach for Fiscal Year 2027 differs by district based on the expiration dates, renewal provisions, existing service coverage, and identified operational needs associated with the current contracts.

BSCM's objective is to maintain continuity of essential facility services while ensuring that contracts are competitively procured, appropriately scoped, and structured to support the operational needs of the schools.

St. Thomas/St. John District

For the St. Thomas/St. John District, the existing facility-related service contracts are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2026.

In anticipation of these expirations, BSCM initiated competitive procurement activities for the upcoming contract period. Invitations for Bid have been issued for several essential facility services, including:

- Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance;
- Deep Cleaning Services;
- Trash Removal and Dumpster Rental; and
- Pest Control Services.

These procurements are intended to establish the necessary service contracts for Fiscal Year 2027 and support continuity of essential facility operations throughout the St. Thomas/St. John District.

The new solicitations also provide BSCM an opportunity to establish clearly defined scopes of work, service frequencies, performance requirements, pricing structures, and accountability measures based on the Bureau's current operational needs.

St. Croix District

For the St. Croix District, Fiscal Year 2027 represents the renewal period for several existing facility-related service contracts.

These contracts are completing their initial one-year terms and include provisions for an additional one-year renewal. Where appropriate and consistent with the terms of the existing agreements, BSCM intends to utilize the available renewal options to maintain continuity of essential services.

At the same time, BSCM identified service areas in the St. Croix District where additional procurement was necessary.

Certain St. Croix schools are not presently covered under an existing landscaping contract. To address these service gaps and provide more consistent landscaping and grounds-maintenance coverage, BSCM issued a new Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Invitation for Bid for the St. Croix District.

BSCM also issued a Deep Cleaning Services Invitation for Bid for the St. Croix District.

Historically, the St. Croix District did not have a dedicated deep-cleaning contract. During Fiscal Year 2026, BSCM expended a significant amount of funding procuring individual deep-cleaning services as needs arose at various schools.

Based on these expenditures and the recurring need for more intensive cleaning services, the Bureau determined that establishing a dedicated contract would provide a more structured, predictable, and proactive mechanism for obtaining these services.

The need for dedicated deep-cleaning services was also driven, in part, by concerns at several schools involving suspected microbial growth and other environmental conditions requiring cleaning beyond routine custodial services.

Establishing a dedicated contract will allow BSCM to obtain deep-cleaning services when necessary, improve oversight and cost predictability, and respond more efficiently to facility conditions without relying primarily on individual or emergency procurements.

Emergency Air-Conditioning Repair and Maintenance – Territory-Wide

For Fiscal Year 2027, BSCM also introduced a new Emergency Air-Conditioning Repair and Maintenance procurement covering both the St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Districts.

The Bureau initiated this procurement in response to the recurring air-conditioning challenges experienced throughout the Territory's public school facilities. Many schools contain aging or heavily utilized HVAC equipment, and unexpected equipment failures can significantly affect classroom conditions and school operations.

As demonstrated in the school-by-school assessments presented in this testimony, BSCM's air-conditioning responsibilities range from routine repairs and servicing to the repair or replacement of larger and more complex HVAC equipment.

The Emergency Air-Conditioning Repair and Maintenance contract is intended to provide BSCM with an additional mechanism to respond to urgent air-conditioning failures, obtain specialized contractor support when internal resources are insufficient, perform necessary repairs and emergency installations, and minimize disruptions to students and school operations.

This contract is particularly important given BSCM's limited internal refrigeration staffing. As previously noted, the Bureau currently has only three refrigeration engineers/AC technicians territory-wide—two assigned to the St. Thomas/St. John District and one assigned to the St. Croix District. One of the two refrigeration engineers assigned to the St. Thomas/St. John District is presently on leave, further reducing the Bureau's current in-house capacity.

The new contract is therefore intended to supplement—not replace—BSCM's internal maintenance personnel. BSCM refrigeration personnel will continue to perform work within their capabilities, while the contract will provide additional capacity when specialized expertise, additional manpower, or an accelerated response is necessary.

Services under the contract will be utilized based on identified need and available funding, providing BSCM with a mechanism to obtain contractor support when required without replacing the work performed by the Bureau's existing maintenance workforce.

Overall Contract Status

BSCM's facility-related solicitations are currently progressing through the competitive procurement process. The Bureau's objective is to complete the procurement and award process in a timely manner while maintaining continuity of essential facility services throughout both districts.

As BSCM prepares for Fiscal Year 2027, the Bureau's overall contracting approach is to:

- utilize existing renewal options where appropriate and consistent with the terms of current contracts;
- competitively procure services where existing contracts are expiring;
- establish new procurements where gaps in service coverage have been identified; and
- develop dedicated contracts where recurring facility needs demonstrate that a more structured and responsive contracting mechanism is necessary.

This approach is intended to improve service continuity, accountability, cost predictability, and BSCM's ability to respond to recurring facility needs throughout the Territory.

At the same time, the existence of a competitively awarded contract does not, by itself, constitute authorization for unlimited work or expenditures. Services are utilized based on identified

facility needs, the terms of the applicable contract, appropriate authorization, and the availability of funding.

BSCM will continue to monitor contractor performance, facility conditions, and service requirements throughout the contract period and make adjustments, where appropriate and permissible, to support the operational needs of the Territory's public school facilities.

A detailed listing of BSCM's facility-related contracts, including the service type, current contractor, contract expiration date, renewal status, and procurement status, is included as **Attachment C** to this testimony.

Closing Statement

In closing, the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance recognizes that maintaining the Territory's public school facilities is an ongoing responsibility that extends well beyond the summer school-readiness period.

During the summer of 2026, BSCM completed and advanced numerous maintenance, repair, and facility-improvement projects throughout the St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Districts. These efforts addressed critical needs involving air-conditioning, roofing, plumbing, electrical systems, restrooms, painting, flooring, kitchens, playgrounds, and other components necessary to support the continued operation of our public schools.

At the same time, the school-by-school assessments presented today demonstrate that significant facility needs remain. Many of these conditions involve aging infrastructure and equipment, major roofing and HVAC systems, electrical upgrades, deteriorated modular facilities, wastewater systems, playgrounds, and other improvements that extend beyond routine maintenance and require more substantial rehabilitation or capital investment.

BSCM also recognizes that addressing these challenges requires more than responding to individual work orders as they arise. A sustainable maintenance program requires the appropriate combination of qualified personnel, adequate and timely funding, materials and replacement parts, tools and equipment, preventive maintenance resources, and specialized contractor support when necessary.

Our goal is to continue strengthening BSCM's ability to move from a primarily reactive maintenance environment toward a more structured and preventive maintenance approach. The Fiscal Year 2027 procurements discussed in this testimony, together with the continued work of our in-house maintenance personnel, are intended to strengthen the Bureau's ability to respond to recurring facility needs and maintain continuity of essential services.

BSCM remains committed to prioritizing conditions affecting the health, safety, and continued operation of our schools, while responsibly utilizing the financial and operational resources entrusted to the Bureau. We also recognize the importance of transparency and accountability and will continue to provide the Legislature, the Virgin Islands Department of Education, school

administrators, and the public with accurate information regarding facility conditions, ongoing projects, expenditures, and outstanding needs.

The challenges facing the Territory's aging school infrastructure cannot be resolved in a single summer or fiscal year. However, BSCM remains committed to addressing these conditions systematically, prioritizing available resources where they are most needed, and working collaboratively with the Legislature, VIDE, our government partners, contractors, school administrators, and employees to improve the condition and reliability of our public school facilities.

On behalf of the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance, I thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide this update and for its continued attention to the facility needs of the Territory's public schools.

Chairman Violet and members of the Committee, this concludes my testimony. My team and I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.