

BILL NO. 36-0120

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

July 10, 2025

An act appropriating the sum of \$341,460 from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to the Virgin Islands Department of Education in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025 for the purpose of conducting evaluations to determine students' eligibility for special education services

PROPOSED BY: Senators Kurt A. Vialet and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.

WHEREAS, the Virgin Islands Department of Education currently has a backlog of more than 569 student evaluations required to determine eligibility for special education services;

WHEREAS, timely and comprehensive evaluations are essential to identifying students with disabilities and ensuring they receive the appropriate educational intervention and support;

WHEREAS, delays in evaluations—often caused by limited personnel or financial resources—can result in students being denied necessary services, adversely affecting their academic performance and social development;

WHEREAS, additional funding is needed to increase the Department's capacity to conduct evaluations and to ensure students in the territory are assessed timely; and

WHEREAS, dedicating funds specifically for special education evaluations promotes compliance with federal and local laws and furthers educational equity for all Virgin Islands students; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. (a) The sum of \$341,460 is appropriated in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands to the Virgin Islands Department of Education for the purpose of conducting evaluations to determine students' eligibility for special education services. The appropriation must be allocated as follows:

(a) \$161,460 to the St. Croix District; and

(b) \$180,000 to the St. Thomas/St. John District.

(b) The funds appropriated under subsection (a) remain available until expended.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill appropriates the sum of \$341,460 from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to the Virgin Islands Department of Education for the purpose of conducting evaluations to determine students' eligibility for special education services. The appropriation is divided between the St. Croix District and the St. Thomas/St. John District to address the Department's current backlog of evaluations and ensure timely compliance with applicable education laws.

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