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VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION
CALLS FOR ACTION ON UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL BUSSES

St. Thomas, USVI — The Virgin Islands Board of Education is deeply troubled by the recent incidents of unacceptable behavior exhibited by students on school buses, culminating in an alarming assault on a bus driver. This event serves as a stark reminder of the challenges we face in ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all students and staff and demands immediate attention from the Department of Education. Incidents of violence and disrespect not only jeopardize the safety of those directly involved but also create a hostile environment that hinders the learning process for all students. We cannot allow such behavior to become normalized or overlooked.

In recent weeks, our school community has witnessed a series of incidents where students have engaged in disruptive and violent behavior while on school transportation as well as on school campuses. The culmination of these actions was the unfortunate assault on a bus driver, an individual whose primary role is to ensure the safe transit of our children. This incident not only poses immediate concerns for the safety of our bus drivers but also reflects a broader issue of respect and accountability among our students. As educators and community leaders, we are tasked with nurturing an environment where learning can flourish without the fear of violence or disruption. Parents must take responsibility for the child's behavior, ensuring accountability both at home and in school. Active involvement from both sides fosters better development and a respectful learning environment. Students must take responsibility for their behavior in school, understanding that their actions impact both their learning and the school community. Personal accountability is key to their growth and success. It is crucial that we take this moment to pause and reflect on our collective responsibility to instill values of respect, empathy, and cooperation in our students. We cannot allow such behavior to become normalized or dismissed as a minor issue.

In light of these events, the Virgin Islands Board of Education is calling for immediate and effective action from the Department of Education. We believe that a multi-faceted approach is necessary to address the underlying issues contributing to this troubling behavior. The Virgin Islands Board of Education is committed to working alongside the Department of Education, local law enforcement, and community organizations to create a safe and nurturing environment for all students. We understand that these changes will take time and effort, but we believe they are essential for the well-being of our school community. We take this time to sincerely apologize to the bus driver and his family for the poor behavior and judgment of our students. We are committed to addressing this issue and ensuring that such actions are not repeated. Also, we sincerely appreciate the continued support and collaboration of our community as we address these critical educational issues. It is only through collective effort and shared responsibility that we can foster a safer, more respectful, and positive environment for all students in the Virgin Islands. By working together, we ensure a brighter and more secure future for our children and the generations to come.

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MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the Virgin Islands Board of Education is to provide leadership and oversight, set policy and advocate for continuous improvement of the Public Education System of the Virgin Islands of the United States.

VISION STATEMENT
Each child is provided with the best quality education which guarantees academic excellence, promotes our history and culture, and builds strong local and global communities.