



# Virgin Islands Board of Education

## 2025-2026 SMAR

### School Management Accountability Report



*“From Crisis to Clarity:  
Confronting Challenges, Restoring Confidence,  
Rebuilding Schools”*

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## Letter from the Chairman

June 15, 2026

The Honorable Albert Bryan Jr.  
Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands  
Government House  
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, VI 00802

Subject: Advancing Public Education Through Accountability – Submission of the 2026 School Management Report – “From Crisis to Clarity: Confronting Challenges, Restoring Confidence, Rebuilding Schools”

Dear Governor Bryan:

The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) is honored to submit the 2026 School Management Accountability Report, titled “From Crisis to Clarity: Confronting Challenges, Restoring Confidence, Rebuilding Schools.” This report reflects a clear-eyed assessment of the current state of public education, acknowledging persistent structural challenges while setting forth a disciplined, actionable path toward recovery and long-term stability.

Across our education system, we continue to confront interconnected challenges, including uneven academic performance, staffing shortages, aging infrastructure, gaps in student support services, and growing concerns about system-wide consistency and accountability. These are not isolated issues. They are systemic pressures that require coordinated, sustained, and courageous leadership to resolve. This year’s report moves decisively beyond diagnosis. It demands action grounded in urgency, transparency, and measurable outcomes. It calls upon all education stakeholders, including policymakers, administrators, educators, and community partners, to shift from reaction to resolution and from fragmented efforts to unified execution. Contained within the report are critical data insights, trend analyses, and forward-focused recommendations centered on:

- Strengthening school leadership with clear accountability, authority, and performance expectations
- Stabilizing and elevating the educator workforce through recruitment, retention, and professional support systems that address chronic shortages
- Addressing infrastructure deficits and modernizing learning environments to ensure safe, functional, and future-ready schools
- Rebuilding public trust through consistent communication, transparent reporting, and verifiable improvements in student outcomes

Governor Bryan, the time before us, calls for disciplined collaboration across all branches of government and education leadership to confront long-standing issues with resolve. VIBE stands prepared to work in full partnership with your administration, the Virgin Islands Department of Education, and the 36th Legislature to advance the recommendations outlined in this report and translate them into measurable progress. Thank you for your continued commitment to addressing the challenges facing public education in the Virgin Islands. Together, we can move from crisis to clarity and from intention to impact.

With determination and in service,



**Dr. Kyza A. Callwood**  
Chairman  
Virgin Islands Board of Education

## Introduction

The Virgin Islands Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as “The Board”) is one of three agencies responsible for the delivery of Public Education in the Virgin Islands. The other two leading agencies are the Virgin Islands Department of Education and the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance.

The Board of Education is an independent agency of the Executive branch that facilitates overarching school policies, rules, and regulations to guide the operation of all public-school programs, including curriculum, instruction, and guidance. The Board is an advocate for legislation to impact education and the establishment of public schools. The Board certifies educators and other teaching professionals, administers scholarship programs, monitors federal allocations & rulings, and acts as a quasi-judicial appellate authority for student and family complaints.

The School Management Accountability Report (SMAR) is mandated under Virgin Islands Code Annotated> Title 17 Education (Chapter 1-45)> Chapter 3. The Virgin Islands Board of Education (§§ 21-25) requires that a report be generated to ensure public school accountability and improve educational effectiveness.

The 2025-2026 SMAR will share information, practices, and routines observed during school visits by Board of Education members to schools, alternative sites, and the youth rehabilitation site. Individual checklist assessments with feedback will be provided to each school or site. Based on the provisions of the law, our School Management Accountability Report will execute the following:

1. Findings of administrative deficiencies and Board recommendations
2. Findings of guidance deficiencies and Board recommendations
3. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of Smarter Balanced achievement scores with statistics of dropout, attendance rates, college and vocational entrance predictions for graduating seniors 2025-2026 class.
4. Appendix
  - A. Longitudinal Analysis of Prior SMAR Recommendations and Systemic Improvements (2021–2025)
  - B. Virgin Islands Department of Education School Personnel Chart
  - C. Smarter Balanced Territorial Assessment Results 2024-2025
  - D. School Visit Curriculum and Instructional Evaluation Framework
  - E. Teacher Survey of Smart Balanced Assessment
  - F. Literacy and School Libraries

The educational evaluation, conducted pursuant to 17 V.I.C. § 24, Title 17, Virgin Islands Code Annotated, Chapter 3, Virgin Islands Board of Education (School Management Accountability), serves as an essential tool for ensuring public school accountability and improving educational effectiveness throughout the Territory.

## 17 V.I.C. § 24

Statutes current through Act 8703 of the 2023 session of the 35th Legislature, including all code changes through April 24, 2023

*Virgin Islands Code Annotated* > TITLE SEVENTEEN Education (Chs. 1 — 45) > Chapter 3. *Virgin Islands Board of Education (§§ 21 — 25)*

### § 24. School management accountability

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(a) The Board of Education shall:

(1) in consultation with the Department of Education, conduct a thorough annual assessment and evaluation of all public-school curricula and instruction, and school administration in the territory;

(b) [Deleted.]

(c) [Deleted.]

(d) The Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education, shall make recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor through an annual report of its findings and recommendations based on the inspections conducted under the provisions of this section no later than June 15 after the close of the school academic year. The report shall include:

(1) findings of administrative deficiencies and the recommendations for addressing the deficiencies;

(2) findings of guidance and counseling deficiencies and recommendations for addressing the deficiencies; and

(3) identification of strengths and weaknesses of each school to include achievement and standardized test scores and statistics for dropouts, attendance, college entrance and vocation program entrance.

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### History

—Added Aug. 2, 2001, [No. 6421, § 1, Sess. L. 2001](#), p. 106; amended Dec. 2, 2005, [No. 6797, § 4, Sess. L. 2005](#), p. 445; amended Apr. 25, 2023, [No. 8717, § 9\(a\)\(1\), \(2\), \(b\), Sess. L. 2023](#), p. —.

Annotations

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## Notes

### HISTORY

#### Amendments

##### —2023.

Act 8717, § 9(a)(1), substituted “curricula and instruction” for “facilities, school guidance division” in subsection (a)(1).

Act 8717, § 9(a)(2), deleted subsections (a)(2) and (a)(3).

Act 8717, § 9(b), deleted subsections (b) and (c).

##### —2005.

Act 6797, § 4, in subsection (a), redesignated former paragraph (2) as subparagraph (2)(A) and added subparagraph (2)(B).

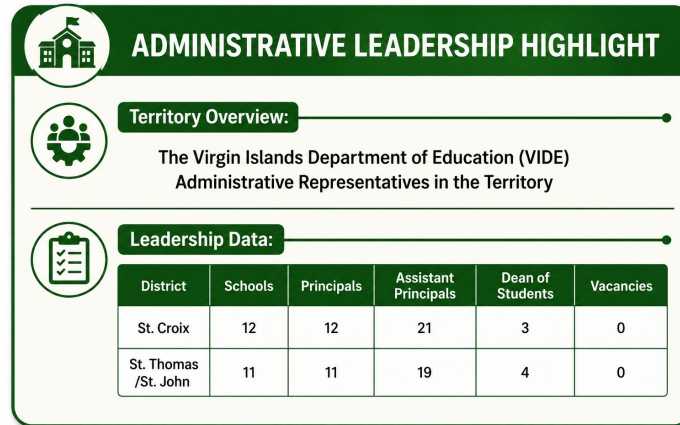
Virgin Islands Code Annotated

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## Administrative Leadership

What is a school administrative leader?

Administrative leaders ensure that school operations, programs, and personnel function cohesively to support instructional quality and organizational effectiveness. They steward resources, uphold compliance, and advance the school’s mission through strategic oversight and stakeholder engagement.



### School Administration: Findings – Data-Driven Decisions

Virgin Islands schools are using data-driven practices, teacher input, and technology to develop school improvement plans, establish benchmarks, implement intervention strategies, and improve performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment. Schools also administer benchmark assessments aligned to curriculum expectations. Benchmark and data-driven goals are set at the beginning of the school year, using prior-year Smarter Balanced results to identify skill gaps and determine the targeted grade levels and content areas.

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes the urgent need to strengthen data-driven decision-making and recommends implementing a standardized, system-wide framework to ensure consistent, high-quality practices across all districts and schools. Administrators should receive comprehensive training in analyzing and applying educational data, including student achievement, attendance, behavior, graduation rates, teacher effectiveness, and school climate metrics, to identify trends, conduct subgroup and root-cause analyses, inform school improvement planning, develop targeted interventions, and monitor outcomes effectively.

School leaders must be held accountable for integrating data-driven strategies into instructional leadership, including supporting teacher planning, identifying at-risk students through early warning indicators, and aligning improvement efforts with measurable goals reflected in leadership evaluations and school performance reviews.

VIBE emphasizes that consistent and effective use of data is essential to improving student outcomes, closing achievement gaps, and ensuring equitable, coherent, and sustained improvement across the territory.

### **School Administration: Findings -Team Collaboration**

Virgin Islands Leadership Teams organized manpower into groups responsible for specific grade levels, based on their expertise in core content areas, intervention strategies, and diagnostic or statistical analysis. Teams frequently “huddle” to review plans and next steps, and weekly meetings focus on instructional leadership, systems execution, coaching, and accountability for student success. Successful programs are celebrated, and sustained efforts to support school morale are evident. Many teams demonstrate strong trust, transparency, investment, and cohesion. Coordinators’ visits are aligned with content requirements, and evidence of these visits is documented through sign-in sheets noting dates and frequency.

### **Vision Pillars**

The Virgin Islands Department of Education requests each school to follow a four-pillar vision, which also serves as a VIDE School Accountability Report Card:

**Pillar #1** – Each student must receive the Multi-tiered System of Support

**Pillar #2** – Staff & students must build a culture of consistent daily presence and engagement

**Pillar #3**- Families are empowered to receive timely data on how the school is performing academically and operationally.

**Pillar#4**- School leadership will have strategic coaching, feedback & professional networks

### **Lesson Plans**

Teachers are required to submit lesson plans to administrators (based on a designated in-school schedule) with the following:

Subject & grade level

Lesson title and high schools-the course title, section number, unit, etc.

Date created                  Modified date                  Plan date

Plans, objectives, and lesson outcomes

**Standards for lessons listed-** (3.NBT.3 use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic. Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range of 10-90(e.g.,  $9 \times 80$ ,  $5 \times 660$ ) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations (a range of algorithms may be used) [example only]

Lesson procedures identify and chronologically list

- a. **I DO-** teacher directed, **WE DO-** whole class, **YOU DO-** independent practice
- b. Target activity- assessment - quiz, test, game, role play, exhibit, etc.
- c. Resources /materials & technology integration
- d. Accommodations and modifications

**Missing in plans: Virgin Islands History connection**

**Missing in plans: Career awareness connection**

Curriculum standards are communicated in the lesson plans, through course syllabi, progress on report cards, and in the school improvement plan outlines.

School teams conduct walkthroughs to observe, guide, model, provide feedback, and hold educators accountable for classroom instruction.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) should prioritize the intentional development of cohesive, high-functioning leadership teams across all schools and districts. This should be accomplished through a structured program of professional learning that includes workshops, seminars, and ongoing coaching focused on strengthening strategic planning, conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, clear communication of expectations, effective feedback practices, and a sustained commitment to public education.

In addition, school and district leadership teams require continuous support in core operational and instructional areas, including instructional leadership and pedagogy, organizational and operational management, data-informed decision-making, effective

communication practices, and relationship-building strategies that promote trust, collaboration, and accountability among staff.

To reinforce these priorities and ensure alignment across the system, the Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) urges the Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Education to deliver a formal public address to all education stakeholders prior to the start of each school year. This address should clearly communicate the Department's strategic priorities, highlight ongoing initiatives, and outline the specific administrative expectations, accountability measures, and standards of collaboration required to ensure consistent and effective teamwork across all schools and districts.

The Virgin Islands Board of Education emphasizes that standardized lesson plan formats are essential instructional tools that support the monitoring of instructional goals, pacing, sequencing, and alignment with unit objectives and academic standards, while also promoting consistency and coherence across classrooms. VIBE recommends incorporating two additional required components into all lesson plans: a Virgin Islands History Connection and a Career Connections component, ensuring that instruction is relevant to students' local culture, civic identity, and future career pathways.

The Board also stresses the importance of consistent classroom walkthroughs as a means of ensuring high-quality instruction, with formally documented feedback capturing instructional practices, classroom environment, student engagement, curriculum alignment, use of resources, and overall classroom climate. Additionally, VIBE strongly encourages the intentional development of student communication skills by requiring students to respond to questions in complete sentences, both orally and in writing, to strengthen comprehension, critical thinking, content retention, and the ability to express ideas through clear and structured academic language.

### **School Administration: Findings MTSS**

VIDE MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) is a proactive, evidence-based framework used by schools to provide targeted academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support to all students. It integrates Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to identify struggling students early and deliver increasing levels of or tiered interventions.

Effective implementation of the Multitiered System of Support (MTSS) requires adequate staffing to meet diverse student needs. Currently, teachers are often expected to deliver tiered academic, behavioral, and socioemotional interventions without sufficient classroom support, limiting the fidelity and effectiveness of MTSS practices.

## **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**


The Virgin Islands Board of Education emphasizes that effective implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) requires strategic recruitment, hiring, and assignment of qualified paraprofessionals to support differentiated instruction, small-group interventions, student progress monitoring, and reduced instructional burdens on teachers. VIBE recommends that schools adopt a systematic MTSS framework that includes comprehensive reviews of student rosters to identify academic and behavioral needs, along with individualized student profiles outlining strengths, areas of need, and targeted intervention goals. Schools should maintain consistent documentation and progress-monitoring systems that track intervention sessions, tutoring hours, measurable skill targets, attendance, and student growth over time to strengthen accountability and inform instructional decisions. The Board also encourages coordinated support efforts involving teachers, parents, instructional coaches, and support staff through before-school, during-school, after-school, and home-based intervention strategies to ensure continuity of support and reinforcement of skills. In addition, designated MTSS coordinators within the Virgin Islands Department of Education should provide clear guidance, structured intervention frameworks, technical assistance, implementation monitoring, and ongoing feedback to ensure fidelity, accountability, and continuous improvement across all schools.

### **School Administration: Findings – School Culture**

The atmosphere of Virgin Islands schools and classrooms is important for students, faculty, and staff. Safety, the appearance of the environment, delivery of services, and perception of job satisfaction are important to the school's ability to create a clear and shared vision that aligns with goals for academic success, emotional wellness, and active community participation. Currently, there are signs of job dissatisfaction, insecurity, disrespect for authority, and concerns about maintenance or environmental issues throughout schools. These critical factors promote less motivation and trust for "A" quality instruction.


Some schools feature vibrant, school-related murals and hallway exhibits that reflect student interests, including popular characters such as Bluey, Peppa Pig, Spiderman, Mickey Mouse, K-pop, and robotics themes. These visual elements contribute to a welcoming and engaging school environment. School libraries also serve as nurturing, comfortable literacy spaces that support reading development and foster a positive learning atmosphere.

Selected schools are using parent climate surveys to gather feedback on school climate, communication, and overall satisfaction from parents and other key stakeholders.




### SAMPLE PARENT CLIMATE SURVEY QUESTIONS

- 1 How would you rate your child's overall experience during the school year thus far?
- 2 How satisfied are you with the communication from the school about the start of the school year?
- 3 How well do you think our intervention program for math & reading works for your child?



### SCHOOL CLIMATE Highlight



**VIWMA** partnered with schools throughout the territory to create cultural murals featuring school logos, positive messaging, and educational themes. These visual enhancements contribute to school pride, student engagement, and a more welcoming learning environment.

## The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

School climate and culture are essential components of school improvement and student success, as positive learning environments, shared vision, and strong community engagement contribute significantly to academic achievement and sustained performance gains. The Virgin Islands Department of Education should implement a systematic process for assessing school climate and culture through surveys, stakeholder feedback, focus groups, and other evaluative tools administered to students, parents, educators, and community members to gain a comprehensive understanding of each school environment. Virgin Island Schools should be welcoming, engaging, and promoting feelings of Belonging and School Identity.

The resulting data should be used to identify strengths, address areas for improvement, inform school improvement planning, and guide targeted interventions that strengthen communication, engagement, and public involvement in the education system. Ongoing evaluation of school climate and culture should remain a core component of accountability and continuous improvement, ensuring that schools are assessed not only by academic performance but also by the quality of their learning environments and relationships with the communities they serve.

## **School Administration: Findings – Support for New and Marginal Teachers**

School leadership supports new and less experienced teachers with referrals to curriculum coordinators, model teachers, and professional development training. Plans in this area are informally structured, with minimal documentation of professional learning goals, noted improvement, or impact on student outcomes. School leaders must take timely and intentional action to identify instructional and personnel-related barriers that may limit students' access to essential skills and learning opportunities.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

School leadership should implement structured corrective processes that emphasize clear communication, accountability, and instructional support through time-bound written improvement plans outlining expectations, responsibilities, support strategies, and measurable outcomes. These plans should be developed collaboratively with curriculum coordinators, mentor teachers, and school leadership to ensure alignment with district standards and instructional priorities.

Additionally, instructional coordinators should provide intensive coaching, guidance, and resource support to help educators meet performance expectations, while schools consistently maintain formal documentation of instructional practices, policies, and performance expectations to promote transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement across all schools.

## **School Administration: Findings – Imprest Funds**

The Virgin Islands Department of Education utilizes fixed allocations to cover emergency, incidental, and recurring expenses that schools need to replenish materials during the year. School leadership expressed strong concerns about the financial constraints, lack of technical personnel, and extended delays in receiving Imprest funding to maintain quality programs and services. The school's Imprest funds historically are not received promptly to assist in the acquisition of necessary resources, infrastructure repairs, and general updates.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

School Imprest funds should be disbursed in a timely and predictable manner to ensure effective school operations. The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) should ensure that Imprest funds are made available at the opening of each school year and, at a minimum, within the first semester to support essential school-based needs without delay.

To strengthen operational efficiency and promote workforce readiness, VIDE is also encouraged to explore structured opportunities for high school students enrolled in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program to assist with minor maintenance and repair tasks. This initiative should be implemented under appropriate supervision and aligned with safety standards, providing students with hands-on technical experience while also supporting schools in addressing minor facility needs in a timely and cost-effective manner.

### **School Administration: Findings –Technology**

All schools have integrated the use of Promethean boards, smartboards, tablets, and other electronic devices to deliver interactive lessons. Technology in the school settings provides benefits such as interactive lessons, boosts learning motivation, and extends communication skills in computer and website knowledge.

Technology repairs or replacements for Promethean boards are not expeditiously resolved. Replacement of retired technology personnel has not been identified, and new or additional smartboards are not readily available. Individual laptops for each student are limited due to damage to devices, theft, and parents' unwillingness to pay for items issued by the school. Schools have designed travel laptop carts that move to classes to give students some exposure to and use of devices.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

Effective teaching in environments with limited digital resources requires intentional instructional strategies that prioritize student engagement, creativity, and adaptability. Educators must be supported by developing approaches that allow for meaningful learning experiences even when access to technology is constrained.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) must conduct a comprehensive assessment of its digital infrastructure, including access to devices, internet connectivity, instructional technology tools, and system-wide reliability. Persistent connectivity challenges and resource gaps must be identified and addressed, as they directly impact students' ability to engage with digital learning platforms, complete assessments, access instructional content, and develop essential technology skills. Ensuring equitable access to digital tools and reliable connectivity is critical to expanding instructional innovation, improving assessment capabilities, and preparing students for future academic and workforce opportunities in an increasingly technology-driven environment.

## **School Administration: Findings – Special Education & English Language Learners**

Virgin Islands school vacancies, especially in the areas of Special Education and English Language Learner- ELL, dangerously border on civil rights violations and discriminatory services. Students who need to be diagnosed for services wait a significant period for testing. Students identified for disability services may not have the teaching personnel or paraprofessional required for the class.

Additionally, students with multi-lingual backgrounds may not have certified teachers or may depend on other classmates for assistance. They are also subject to district assessments without prescriptive programs.

## **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

Students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) continue to encounter significant barriers to accessing equitable, high-quality instruction due to limited personnel, insufficient instructional tools, and inadequate support resources that strain educators' ability to meet diverse learning needs effectively. Federal mandates, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, reinforce the obligation to provide appropriate services, meaningful language access, and equitable educational opportunities for all students.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education must prioritize policy and operational efforts to strengthen special education and ELL programs by expediting student screening and identification processes, increasing qualified personnel, expanding paraprofessional and instructional supports, and providing ongoing professional development for educators serving these populations. Additionally, VIDE should address systemic deficiencies by ensuring schools have the staffing structures, resources, and instructional support necessary to meet federal compliance requirements and deliver effective, inclusive instruction that improves equity and student outcomes across the territory.

## **School Administration: Findings- Adherence to VIBE Policies**

Schools show use of VIBE policies, rules & regulations, and infraction levels to promote better behavior in school. Schools use handbooks, distribute information to parents, provide PBIS (positive behavior incentive support) programs, and recognize students to encourage excellent behaviors. School communication systems & class dojo provide widely used parent conferences, assembly programs, and recognition walls.

Out-of-school suspensions as a punitive method are decreasing, and a noticeable trend in-school suspension is being widely used. There is still intense concern about students' and parents' disrespect and defiance of school procedures and policies.

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

To improve student behavior effectively, schools must implement consistent communication practices, clearly defined expectations, and ongoing relationship-building strategies supported by routine behavioral interventions rather than relying solely on student handbooks distributed at the beginning of the school year. The Virgin Islands Board of Education recommends a multi-tiered approach that actively involves schools, parents, and community agencies in reinforcing behavioral expectations aligned with VIBE standards through continuous engagement and consistent application across all settings.

Schools should also examine and address the root causes of behaviors such as disrespect, frustration, emotional distress, and disengagement by incorporating restorative practices, early intervention and notification systems, due process protections, and structured conflict-resolution training for students and staff. Additionally, schools should strengthen climate and safety measures through visible behavior expectations, clear signage, routine safety drills, active supervision, and consistent reinforcement of school-wide norms as part of a comprehensive climate and culture framework that promotes safe, respectful, and supportive learning environments.

### School Administration: Findings- Virgin Islands History Connections

School leaders are aware of the Virgin Islands' history and expectations. Schools have implemented specific instructional days and times at the elementary level, and high schools create instructional blocks to address Virgin Islands and Caribbean history concepts.

**CURRICULUM STANDARD HIGHLIGHT**

**Topic:** Early Peoples of the U. S. Virgin Islands - Using Natural Resources: Compare & Contrast

**Standard:** VISA.S.S.5.GEO.5  
Chart local and globe; populations and describe how environmental and cultural characteristics influence population distribution in specific places and regions

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

Improved coordination is essential to ensure the effective implementation of lesson plans, instructional observations, classroom activities, and the use of accurate, standards-aligned instructional resources. These components should be systematically monitored and

routinely evaluated by Curriculum and Instruction Coordinators in collaboration with school leadership.

This coordinated oversight should ensure that instructional practices are consistently aligned with curriculum standards, that lesson delivery reflects planned objectives, and that classroom instruction is supported by credible and appropriate instructional materials. Regular monitoring and feedback cycles should be established to promote instructional consistency, support teacher development, and strengthen overall academic outcomes across schools.

### **School Administration: Findings – Environment & Safety Preparation**

During school visits, VIBE saw limited signage, posted requirements, notification of action for bomb threats, earthquake, tsunami, hurricane, active disturbance, fire drill, or any emergency. Alert signs or posters advising school participants of fall risks, stairs, uneven surfaces, hazardous substances, noise, and environmental pollution were not seen. Some areas showed ladders left unattended; wires, debris exposure, and other safety and health risks were unsupervised.

This oversight causes grave concern for safety, readiness, and plans for emergency action at schools. School administrators, secretaries, monitors, groundkeepers, custodians, school nurses, and police units on campus must be EVER READY for chaotic changes at school sites. Schools are too comfortable and miss the importance of environmental stewardship.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**


The Virgin Islands Department of Education and school leadership must conduct regular inspections to identify, address, and mitigate environmental hazards within school facilities to ensure that learning environments remain safe, healthy, and supportive of effective instruction and student well-being. In response to ongoing global and local risks, schools should also maintain a high level of emergency preparedness by routinely reviewing and updating Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) to reflect current best practices and a wide range of potential emergency scenarios.

To strengthen coordination and response efforts, quarterly meetings should be held with local agencies, school administrators, and emergency response partners to clarify roles, responsibilities, and procedures before, during, and after emergencies. These discussions should also include recovery strategies that support the restoration of academic instruction, emotional and psychological services, and the reduction of financial

and operational disruptions, ensuring schools can return to normal operations safely and effectively following emergency situations.


## Emergency Drills for Public School Students

Virgin Islands public schools must regularly conduct emergency preparedness drills for students, faculty, staff, and the community to understand potential crises. These drills should become familiar to participants, so emergency actions are quick and purposeful.




# LISTING OF EXPECTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

— WE PLAN • WE PRACTICE • WE PROTECT —




**1. FIRE DRILL**




- Purpose:** Practice safe and orderly evacuation in case of fire or smoke.
- Key Actions:** Follow designated exit routes, avoid running, and gather at a safe assembly point.

**2. LOCKDOWN DRILL**




- Purpose:** Protect students from threats inside or near the school (e.g., visible or unannounced intruder).
- Key Actions:** Lock doors, turn off lights, stay quiet, and move out of sight.

**3. SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILL**




- Purpose:** Stay indoors during environmental hazards (e.g., chemical spill, poor air quality).
- Key Actions:** Close windows/doors, seal gaps if needed, and wait for an all-clear.

**4. SEVERE WEATHER DRILL**




- Purpose:** Prepare for tornadoes, hurricanes, or severe storms.
- Key Actions:** Move to interior rooms or hallways, crouch low, and protect your head.

**5. EARTHQUAKE DRILL**




- Purpose:** Practice safety during seismic activity.
- Key Actions:** "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" under sturdy furniture until shaking stops.

**6. EVACUATION DRILL (NON-FIRE)**




- Purpose:** Prepare for situations requiring relocation (e.g., gas leak, bomb threat).
- Key Actions:** Follow evacuation routes to a safe location away from the building.

**7. REVERSE EVACUATION DRILL**




- Purpose:** Quickly bring students indoors from outside areas when danger is present outside.
- Key Actions:** Move swiftly inside and secure the building.


**8. BUS EVACUATION DRILL**



- Purpose:** Teach safe exit procedures in case of a bus emergency.
- Key Actions:** Use emergency exits, follow driver instructions, and move to a safe distance.




















**PRACTICE TODAY. BE PREPARED TOMORROW.**  
**SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.**



## The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recommends the implementation of standardized and visually clear emergency preparedness tools to strengthen school-wide safety and emergency response readiness. Schools should post color-coded drill charts throughout buildings, especially near classrooms, hallways, and exit areas, to provide quick and consistent guidance during emergencies. Matching-colored cards or signage should also be used during drills to reinforce immediate recognition of the type of emergency procedure being conducted and the appropriate response actions required from students and staff. In addition, schools should provide brief pre-drill reminders before each exercise to reinforce expectations, clarify procedures, and mentally prepare all participants for appropriate responses. Collectively, these strategies will improve consistency, comprehension, and overall effectiveness of school safety and emergency preparedness protocols.

 <b>EMERGENCY DRILL COLOR CODE CHART</b> 			
<i>Be Prepared. Know the Code. Stay Safe.</i>			
Color	Drill Type	When Used	Key Actions
 <b>Red</b>	<b>Fire Drill</b>	Fire, smoke, or alarm sounding	 Follow exit route, walk calmly, gather at assembly point.
 <b>Blue</b>	<b>Lockdown</b>	Intruder or threat inside/near school	 Lock door, lights off, stay silent, out of sight.
 <b>Green</b>	<b>Shelter-in-Place</b>	Hazard outside (chemical spill, poor air)	 Stay indoors, close windows/doors, wait for all-clear.
 <b>Yellow</b>	<b>Severe Weather</b>	Tornado, hurricane, or severe storm	 Move to safe interior space, crouch low, protect head.
 <b>Orange</b>	<b>Evacuation (Non-Fire)</b>	Gas leak, bomb threat, unsafe building	 Follow evacuation route to designated safe area.
 <b>Purple</b>	<b>Reverse Evacuation</b>	Danger outside while outdoors	 Return indoors quickly, secure building.
 <b>White</b>	<b>Bus Evacuation</b>	Bus accident, fire, or hazard	 Exit via emergency doors, move to safe distance.


**Know the color. Know the drill. Your safety is our priority!**


## School Administration: Findings – Attendance, Truancy & Punctuality

School leadership at every school address poor school attendance and punctuality requirements. Administrators have implemented numerous methods, such as notification slips, incentives, perfect recognition programs, parental conferences, and referrals to the Department of Human Services, to reduce the patterns and practices of absenteeism and late arrival to school.

The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known as the **Every Student Succeeds Act** (ESSA), stipulates that states must assess at least 95 percent of all students, as well as 95 percent of students in each subgroup, including children with disabilities, with federally approved statewide academic content assessments to meet federal accountability requirements.

### Student Attendance Rates in the U.S. Virgin Islands (2024–2025)

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) 2024–2025 Annual School Report Cards, published under the Virgin Islands Students and Teachers Accountability System (VISTAS), identify chronic absenteeism as a key metric in school performance ratings.

#### Territory-Wide Overview

- The average chronic absenteeism rate across all public schools is approximately 13%.

#### St. Croix District

- The average chronic absenteeism rate is 18% across elementary and secondary schools, exceeding the territorial average.
- Some schools performed better than the district average:
  - Ricardo Richards Elementary School reported a 13% chronic absenteeism rate, aligning with the territorial average.
  - St. Croix Educational Complex High School demonstrated moderate attendance outcomes, with absenteeism rates lower than many schools in the district.

## St. Thomas–St. John District

- The average chronic absenteeism rate is 13%, consistent with the territory-wide average.
- Joseph Sibilly Elementary School recorded the lowest rate in the territory at 4%, reflecting exceptionally strong attendance.
- Other schools in the district showed higher absenteeism rates, with some ranging between 17%–18%, indicating variability across schools.

## Key Takeaways

- Joseph Sibilly Elementary School stands out significantly, with a chronic absenteeism rate far below the territorial average.
- St. Croix District generally experiences higher absenteeism compared to the territorial average, although some schools show stronger performance.
- St. Thomas–St. John District demonstrates greater variability, with both high-performing and higher-need schools.

## The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

“Chronic absenteeism is a community-wide concern and therefore must be addressed by the child’s surrounding community.” (2018 NEA Research Brief: Chronic Absenteeism) The Virgin Islands Department of Education must engage community agencies as essential partners in promoting consistent school attendance and punctuality, recognizing that reducing chronic absenteeism requires a coordinated, multi-sector approach involving families, schools, community organizations, and public service agencies.


Chronic absenteeism is commonly defined as missing 10 percent or more of enrolled school days for any reason, including both excused and unexcused absences, and is used as a key indicator because it reflects the cumulative loss of instructional time and its impact on student learning.

Efforts to address absenteeism must begin with ensuring schools are welcoming, safe, and supportive environments where students feel connected and valued, supported by strong school-family relationships and the consistent use of attendance data to guide timely interventions and outreach. Attendance should also be viewed as a leading indicator of broader systemic issues, including student engagement, school culture, social-emotional well-being, infrastructure challenges, and family stressors that may affect a student's ability

to attend school consistently. Additionally, meaningful analysis of attendance patterns should examine factors such as transportation reliability, instructional disruptions, mental health concerns, caregiving responsibilities, and whether students feel a genuine sense of belonging within their school community. In addition, wraparound services such as nutrition programs, after-school and summer enrichment opportunities, and access to health and wellness support are critical for reducing barriers to attendance and improving overall academic achievement.


Community agencies remain vital, but often underutilized partners in this work, and strengthening collaboration among schools, families, and community organizations is essential to building a comprehensive support system that improves attendance, reinforces student engagement, and supports long-term educational outcomes.

This shared responsibility is not only a best practice but also codified in Virgin Islands law, as illustrated below.




## TITLE 17, CHAPTER 9, SUBCHAPTER I

# VIRGIN ISLANDS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS



The Virgin Islands Code, Title 17, Chapter 9, Subchapter I, outlines the general policies and procedures related to school attendance in the Virgin Islands. These include compulsory school attendance, the age of pupils, exceptions, hours of daily attendance, home instruction, and the penalties for truancy. The code also addresses the responsibilities of parents and the manner of dealing with truant pupils.




### CHAPTER 9 – SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

#### SUBCHAPTER I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

**§ 86. Parental responsibility; excuse for absence**  
*Universal Citation: V.I. Code tit. 17, § 86 (2019)*

- (a) Parents and guardians shall be held responsible for the regular and punctual attendance of children at school in clean and decent apparel.
- ((c) The absence or tardiness of children may be excused for reasons acceptable to principals or teachers. Teachers, principals, attendance officers, or other school officials may require that the reasons given as the cause for absence be substantiated by statements of a physician, dentist, nurse, or any other authoritatively informed person before the absence or tardiness be excused.
- (d) Any parent or guardian who contributes to the truancy of any child under his or her care shall, upon conviction, be liable to a fine of not more than \$100.



### SUBCHAPTER I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

**§ 89. Apprehension of, and manner of dealing with, truant**  
*Universal Citation: V.I. Code tit. 17, § 89 (2019)*

- (a) Any child of compulsory school age, who is found anywhere other than on the school's premises in which the child is enrolled, during school hours, without an acceptable excuse having been furnished by a parent or guardian to the appropriate school official, or who is not enrolled in a school as required by law, must be taken into custody by any teacher, principal, attendance officer, or other school official, or by any police officer, peace officer, or truant officer, and must be held until a parent or guardian is summoned or appears and secures the child's release. The child may be released at the request of the Commissioner of Education or placed in school as directed by the Commissioner or the Insular Superintendent.
- (d) At the discretion of the Department of Education, any child demonstrating problems of truancy may be referred to the Department of Human Services for Children, Youth and Families. Pursuant to such referral the Department of Human Services shall provide the necessary social services and make such reports to the Department of Education as may be necessary or helpful to the proper educational and social development of the child. If, as a result of a joint determination by the Department of Human Services and Education, the child appears to be an incorrigible truant, the Department of Education shall file a complaint with the Family Division of the Superior Court of the jurisdiction in which the child resides. For the purposes of this section, an incorrigible truant shall mean a child of compulsory school age who willfully, deliberately, and continuously absents himself from school and who fails to respond in a positive by the Departments of Education and Human Services.

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**g.** notwithstanding any other law, employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands and its semi-autonomous agencies and instrumentalities and those employed by beneficiaries of either the Industrial Development Program (IDC) or the provisions of Act No. 4740, are entitled to a maximum of two hours off from their jobs per month without loss of pay, or any other benefit to enable the employees/parents to visit with their children, teachers, counselors and other school officials.

**i.** Parents and legal guardians who wish to participate in the Parents-Students School Participation Program must submit to their employer documented proof of their participation in a scheduled school activity or visit for which the allotted time off from work was taken. Failure to submit such proof is ground for the employer to dock the employee's pay.

**j.** Employers and employees shall strive to establish mutually acceptable schedules which would permit parents to participate in the program as fully as possible and employers to maintain adequate staffing levels.



## Counseling

What are the roles and responsibilities of a school counselor?

The school counselor is critical to the academic, social, and emotional development of each student. Counselors support student success by providing preparation for ACT & SAT tests, addressing disciplinary problems & action, and monitoring attendance and punctual arrival to school.

School counselors are qualified to appraise, instruct, advise, and support student social -emotional wellness, preventative, and developmental growth. Data-driven information should determine interventions tailored for each student with internal and external providers.

### COUNSELING REPRESENTATIVES HIGHLIGHT

**Territory Overview:**

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE)  
Counseling Representatives in the Territory

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**Territory Staffing Overview:**

District	Schools	Guidance Counselors	School Psychologists	School Social Workers	Vocational Guidance Counselors	Vacancies
St. Croix	12	21	1	1	0	Pending Recruiting Process
St. Thomas /St. John	11	19	0	4	1	Pending Recruiting Process

### School Counselors' Findings- Scheduling Clients

Across the districts, counselors focus on academic achievement, social-emotional changes, and behavior adjustments. At the secondary school level, counselors work towards selection and preparation for college, the military, or workforce development.

Individualized guidance counseling with targeted/tailored goals is a large challenge for counselors based on school schedules, resources, and a lack of updated tools. Some factors that limit counselors' impact are administrative demands, full caseload/size, addressing learning difficulties, identifying numerous issues that fall in the mental health range, and lack of time for meaningful interaction.

## **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

Virgin Islands students are increasingly facing complex family, school, and community-related challenges, including trauma exposure, grief, domestic violence, gang-related influences, lack of childcare, neglect, and elevated anxiety about personal safety and academic success, all of which significantly affect their ability to fully engage in learning and require comprehensive school-based supports. School counselors must be equipped with the appropriate skills, tools, and technologies to support students in building resilience, setting academic and personal goals, and actively working toward success, as their role is critical in addressing the social-emotional and academic barriers that hinder achievement.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education should recognize school counselors as a central component of student support systems and ensure they are fully integrated and utilized within schools, rather than underutilized. To strengthen this structure, an early “Return to School Counselors” program should be implemented before each academic year, providing systematic orientation that includes access to academic resources, student needs assessments, identification of food and housing insecurity, career planning tools, digital learning resources, restorative justice practices, conflict resolution strategies, data-driven counseling systems, and ongoing clinically informed professional development grounded in research-based practices. In addition, the student-to-counselor ratio must be addressed to ensure adequate access to services, with the Virgin Islands Board of Education recommending a target of one counselor for every 300 students at the high school level and one counselor for every 250 students at other applicable grade levels, as reducing caseloads is essential to ensure timely intervention, individualized support, and improved student outcomes.

### **School Counselors’ Findings – Behavioral & Socio-emotional Support**

Counselors are unsung heroes in the system. They create activities for Red Ribbon Week, American Education Week, Child Abuse Prevention Awareness, Developmental Disabilities Awareness, Career Fairs, College Fairs, Bully prevention, personal safety, and developmental and academic progress. Guest speakers were scheduled to attend classes and discuss issues relevant to social behavior adaptations.

VIBE- provided Social & Emotional Learning training for EWAA (Edith L. Williams Alternate Academy), focusing on topics about – Self-awareness, Self-management, Responsible Decision -making, social awareness, and Relationship skills. Other schools have Positive Behavioral Intervention Support initiatives.

## **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes school counselors as essential frontline professionals in addressing the behavioral, social, and emotional needs of students across the territory, particularly in response to increasing levels of behavioral challenges, emotional distress, trauma exposure, and external stressors that affect student engagement, attendance, and academic performance. VIBE recommends the development of a comprehensive, system-wide Behavioral and Socio-Emotional Support Framework led by school counselors in collaboration with administrators, teachers, families, and community-based mental health partners, with an emphasis on early identification of student needs through consistent screening tools, structured referral processes, attendance and behavior monitoring systems, and data-informed counseling practices. School counselors should be provided with expanded training and resources in trauma-informed care, restorative practices, crisis intervention, conflict resolution, and data-driven student support systems to effectively address complex student needs.

The framework should also align with Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), ensuring tiered academic, behavioral, and emotional interventions where counselors play a central role in coordinating support, monitoring progress, and collaborating with instructional staff to promote whole-child development. In addition, reducing counselor caseloads is essential to allow adequate time for direct student support, family engagement, crisis response, and preventive programming. VIBE further recommends strengthening structured partnerships with community mental health providers and social service agencies to expand referral pathways, improve access to services, and ensure continuity of care, ultimately strengthening school climate, improving behavior outcomes, and ensuring that all students receive the emotional and behavioral support needed for academic and personal success.

### **School Counselors' Findings – Wraparound Services**

Wraparound programs and services are designed to reduce non-academic barriers to student participation and learning. These critical programs serve to increase in-school participation and create conditions to address economic instability, trauma, health care, food insecurity, and other urgent needs.

The Virgin Islands Board of Education saw fragmented approaches to address the urgent needs of students and families. Schools with nursing personnel focused on physical health care and nutrition. Schools without nursing or sufficient counselors used attendance officers to facilitate students' attendance and punctuality. Teachers often demonstrated

childcare skills and utilized personal funds to assist students or families. Referrals to social & human services and readily available options were often bureaucratic and delayed.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes that school counselors play a critical role in identifying and addressing non-academic barriers that impact student achievement, including food insecurity, unstable housing, limited access to healthcare, transportation challenges, family stress, and unmet social-emotional needs, all of which require a coordinated system of wraparound services to support student engagement and success.

VIBE recommends the integration of a comprehensive Wraparound Services Model within all schools, led and coordinated in part by school counselors, with structured systems for early identification of student needs through screening tools, counselor referrals, attendance and behavior data, and family engagement processes. School counselors should serve as key coordinators connecting students and families to essential services such as food assistance, housing support, healthcare and mental health services, transportation assistance, and enrichment and summer learning opportunities through a consistent referral network with clear protocols to ensure timely access and follow-through.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education should establish formal partnerships with community agencies, public health organizations, and social service providers, including defined roles, referral pathways, appropriate data-sharing agreements, and accountability measures to ensure coordinated service delivery. Schools should also implement centralized student support teams composed of counselors, administrators, teachers, and support staff to review cases, monitor progress, and adjust interventions through regular meetings that promote proactive and continuous support. Additionally, counselors should receive training and resources in case management systems, data tracking tools, and interdisciplinary collaboration to effectively coordinate services. Through the implementation of a structured wraparound system, the Virgin Islands education system can reduce barriers to learning, improve attendance and engagement, and strengthen overall academic outcomes by ensuring students' holistic needs are met in a timely and coordinated manner.

### **School Counselors' Findings – Promotion or Graduation Transition Planning**

Trips and meetings with Kg. -8th grade feeder schools are provided to discuss testing for special programs like AVID, MAGNET program, early admissions to college, pre-registration for courses, and expectations for junior high or high school. Students are excited,

frightened, nervous, and worried about how they will fit in, survive, or adapt to changes. School counselors must expose and address these Awesome life changes ahead of time so students can manage the changes and reduce frustrations.

At the high school level, counselors schedule meetings with parents & students to review course credits, preparation for college /technical or trade school, and military service. Coping skills must be developed so students can respond to delays, defeats, and options by seeking appropriate support and life skills. Junior high school students must prioritize beneficial habits like balance routines – sleep, academic, social life, and expressing their feelings.

Schools focus on school visits and tours as a major part of transitional efforts. This approach is deficient because it does not significantly prepare students for the responsibility and accountability of their academic progress, student leadership, career approach, relationship building, and life adaptations.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes that effective promotion and graduation transition planning is essential to improving student readiness, reducing dropout rates, and strengthening long-term academic and career outcomes, and that current conditions require more structured, proactive, and consistent systems led by school counselors.

VIBE recommends the utilization of the VIBE Graduation Exit Plan Policy, which requires a yearly in-person meeting of student–parent–counselor to review, update clearly defined academic pathway from (the middle grades) through high school completion. School counselors should develop and maintain individualized academic and transition plans that outline credit requirements, promotion benchmarks, course sequencing, and post-secondary goals, with regular updates to reflect student progress and changing academic needs.

Early identification systems should be implemented using attendance data, academic performance, behavioral indicators, and course completion records to identify students at risk of non-promotion or delayed graduation, allowing counselors to coordinate targeted interventions such as tutoring, credit recovery, mentoring, and family engagement. The framework should also strengthen career and college readiness by ensuring students are exposed early to career pathways, technical education, military and workforce options, and post-secondary planning beginning no later than middle school.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education should ensure access to structured credit recovery programs, flexible scheduling, and summer learning opportunities aligned with counselor-led transition plans to support on-time promotion and graduation. Additionally, data-driven monitoring systems and regular review meetings should be used by counselors and administrators to track progress, identify barriers, and implement timely interventions. Through this structured and proactive approach, the education system can improve promotion and graduation rates while ensuring students are prepared for post-secondary success and workforce readiness.

### **School Counselor’s Findings- Student Leadership Opportunities**

School leadership is the opportunity for students to influence, guide, and inspire others to meet the school’s social, achievement, and learning goals. Students represent the student body by developing skills in decision-making, problem-solving, and accountability. Students become more confident through leadership roles and develop a sense of civic and community responsibility.

Many schools have assemblies that incorporate counseling goals for student recognition as leaders. Bulletin boards and school walls celebrate student achievement for academics and honor awards. More schools need to include programs that identify skills for excellence in planning, execution, and community service.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes student leadership development as a vital component of student engagement, school connectedness, and long-term academic success, and emphasizes the need for expanded, structured, and intentionally supported opportunities that build confidence, responsibility, communication skills, and civic awareness.

VIBE recommends counselors identify school roles and responsibilities, such as, but not limited to, class representatives, student council, club or team captains, and programs in leadership electives, leadership camps, community service projects to ensure leadership opportunities are embedded within school culture and accessible to a diverse range of students beyond traditional extracurricular participation. Supporting students in leadership pathways such as student government, peer mentoring, service learning, academic leadership roles, and school-based advisory committees also ensures equitable access for underrepresented or disengaged students.

Schools should implement structured programs that provide training in communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, decision-making, and community

engagement, aligned with character education and career readiness goals to support both personal development and workforce preparation. Leadership opportunities should also be integrated into academic experiences through classroom projects, restorative leadership roles, peer support systems, and school-wide initiatives that elevate student voice in decision-making and school climate improvement. Counselors should maintain systems to track student participation and outcomes in leadership activities, using data on attendance, behavior, academic performance, and engagement to refine programming and ensure continuous improvement.

### **School Counselor’s Findings- Mental Health Initiatives**

School counselors are referring students to programs such as Island Therapy, Bright Path Wellness Center, and school psychologists to improve early identification of issues associated with trauma, food insecurity, anxiety, school apathy, failure, and victimization. Wellness skills and resources are offered to support mental health. Research indicates that approximately one in five children in the United States experience a mental, emotional, or behavioral health condition, yet many do not receive the services they need, underscoring a significant gap in mental health support for students in public education (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2025; Weir, 2020).

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations**

The Virgin Islands Board of Education recognizes student mental health as a foundational element of academic success, school safety, and overall student well-being, particularly in response to rising levels of stress, anxiety, trauma exposure, depression, and emotional dysregulation among students. VIBE recommends the establishment of a comprehensive, system-wide Mental Health Support Framework led in coordination with school counselors and supported by the Virgin Islands Department of Education, school leadership, and community mental health partners, with a focus on early identification, prevention, intervention, and ongoing support.

School counselors' resources should include MH (mental health) cards with contact information for licensed professionals and immediate help, which can be distributed by school nurses and educational personnel. MH (mental health) posters should be noticeable in hallways, nurses' offices, & main offices. Virtual links for counselors and the school's website should provide accurate details for procedures and mental health care. Schools should include information about MH screening online, free, confidential, anonymous, and scientifically validated to identify depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), postpartum depression, alcohol, substance use, and psychosis.

School counselors should be equipped with standardized screening tools and referral protocols integrated with attendance, behavior, and academic data to ensure timely and holistic identification of student needs. The framework should also strengthen partnerships with licensed mental health professionals, healthcare providers, and community agencies through clearly defined referral pathways, communication protocols, and follow-up procedures to ensure continuity of care.

In addition, schools should implement tiered mental health supports aligned with Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), including universal prevention, targeted interventions, and intensive services, with school counselors playing a central coordinating role in promoting trauma-informed and supportive learning environments. Professional development for counselors and staff should include trauma-informed care, crisis response, suicide prevention, conflict resolution, and restorative practices to strengthen the capacity to support students in distress.

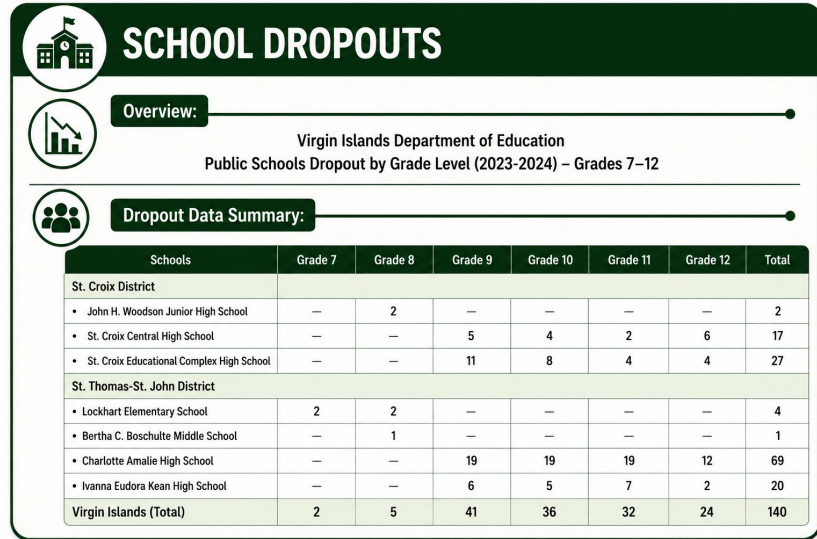
VIBE also recommends school-wide awareness initiatives to reduce stigma, encourage help-seeking behavior, and promote emotional wellness through student, parent, and community engagement efforts. Through sustained investment in mental health supports, the education system can improve student resilience, academic outcomes, behavior, and overall well-being while ensuring all students have access to the emotional and psychological support necessary for success.

### **School Dropouts Findings**

Students drop out of school for a range of distinct reasons, including poor academic performance, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and ongoing socioeconomic challenges. Male students from minority groups are particularly affected by factors such as suspensions, the risk of partner pregnancy, low levels of parental education, and the presence of a disability. Over time, these disparities contribute to increasing disengagement and, ultimately, withdrawal from school.

Communities characterized by high levels of crime, poverty, unemployment, poor health outcomes, and negative school climates often become “dropout factories,” where fewer than 60% of students earn a high school diploma. Key early warning signs and indicators of potential dropouts include academic performance and attendance patterns, as well as systemic racial, ethnic, and demographic challenges.

While dropout patterns are not evident from pre-kindergarten through seventh grade, a noticeable increase begins in eighth grade.



This trend is observed across both the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John districts, where dropout rates begin to rise significantly.

Based on the high school dropout rates 2023-2024, (for 16 – 24-year-olds who did not earn a high school diploma or equivalent credential certificate), incrementally increased from eighth grade through twelfth grade.

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) must proactively use early warning indicators to identify and support at-risk students. School counselors should play a central role in delivering personalized academic support, implementing evidence-based interventions, and closely monitoring student progress over time.

In addition, schools should provide individualized support systems, offer engaging and culturally relevant curriculum and instruction, and connect at-risk students with strong mentors who can positively influence their academic and personal development. It is equally important to incorporate real-world scenarios into instruction, helping students understand career pathways and the long-term value of education.

Clear and consistent communication is essential: students must understand that dropping out of school significantly limits future opportunities. Individuals who do not earn a high school diploma are far more likely to experience lower *lifetime* earnings and reduced access to stable, well-paid careers.

VIBE recommends incorporating a School Dropout Survey into the student withdrawal process. As part of this process, students should be asked to identify their reasons for leaving school by selecting all applicable factors.

## SAMPLE SCHOOL DROPOUT SURVEY

Please check all factors that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Academic difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Dislike of school experience
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended absences
<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive suspensions	<input type="checkbox"/> Family care duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of appropriate curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of school interest	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Problems
<input type="checkbox"/> Needed at Home	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & marriage
<input type="checkbox"/> Parental influence	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical illness or disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor student /staff relationship
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor peer relationship	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Transgender & Gender issues
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation problems		
<input type="checkbox"/> Expelled with option to return	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Comments

### College Entrance & Vocational Programs

The Virgin Islands has established multiple pathways to prepare students for life after high school, recognizing that success may include college enrollment, technical certification, apprenticeships, military service, entrepreneurship, or direct entry into the workforce. Through partnerships among the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), the Department of Labor, and local industry partners, students have access to dual credit courses, early admissions programs, career and technical education (CTE), workforce development initiatives, and industry-recognized certifications.

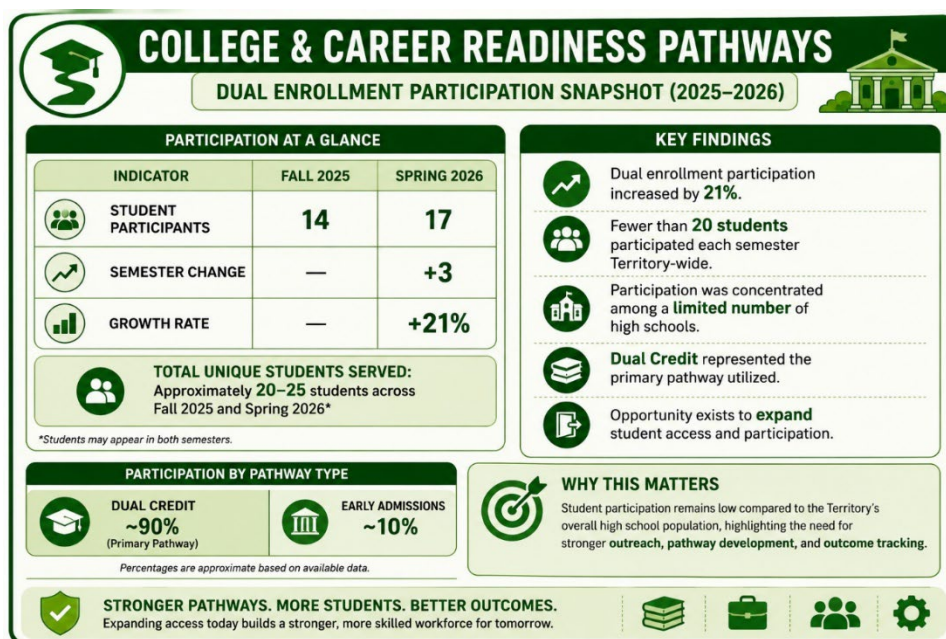
Under Title 17, Section 41d of the Virgin Islands Code, eligible high school students may enroll in college-level courses through UVI while simultaneously earning both high school and college credit. During the Fall 2025 semester, 14 students participated in UVI's Dual Credit and Early Admissions programs. Participation increased to 17 students during the Spring 2026 semester, representing both public and private schools across the Territory. The St. Croix Educational Complex accounted for approximately 59% of Spring 2026 dual credit enrollment, demonstrating strong participation but also highlighting opportunities to expand access across additional schools and districts.

## College Entrance & Vocational Programs Findings

The Territory has created valuable college and career pathways; however, participation remains limited when compared to the overall high school population. While dual credit enrollment increased by approximately 21% between Fall 2025 and Spring 2026, fewer than 20 students Territory-wide participated during each semester. This suggests that barriers related to awareness, academic readiness, scheduling, transportation, staffing, or program availability may still be limiting student access.

The Virgin Islands Board of Education conducts annual school visits and monitors academic performance, yet there is no comprehensive framework to evaluate the effectiveness of career and technical education programs, dual enrollment opportunities, apprenticeships, workforce certifications, or post-secondary outcomes. As a result, stakeholders have limited data to determine whether students are completing programs, earning credentials, entering high-demand careers, or meeting the workforce needs of the Territory.

This gap is particularly significant as employers continue to report shortages in skilled trades, healthcare, construction, hospitality, technology, and other critical sectors. Despite ongoing investments in workforce development, there is no formal mechanism that consistently aligns educational programming with labor market demands and economic development priorities.



Bridging this gap requires stronger coordination, accountability, and outcome tracking. The Territory should establish a College and Career Readiness Framework that measures enrollment, credential attainment, apprenticeship participation, workforce placement, and post-secondary success. Additionally, education leaders, workforce agencies, employers, and economic development partners should regularly collaborate to align student pathways with emerging industry needs.

The Virgin Islands have already invested in many of the building blocks necessary for student success. The next step is ensuring those investments translate into measurable outcomes by connecting education, workforce development, and economic growth into a single, coordinated strategy that prepares students for the opportunities of tomorrow while strengthening the Territory's long-term economic stability.

## V.I. CODE TIT. 17, § 41D (2019)

**§ 41d. Dual Credit program authorized; definition; eligibility; costs and fees; rules; evaluation**

**a** (a) The Department of Education and the University of the Virgin Islands are authorized to establish a Dual Credit program. As used in this section, "Dual Credit Program" means a program that allows high school students to enroll in college-level courses offered by the University of the Virgin Islands that may be academic or career-technical but not remedial or developmental, and simultaneously to earn credit toward high school graduation and a post-secondary degree or certificate.

**b** (b) To be eligible to participate in the Dual Credit program, the student shall:

- 1** except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, be enrolled in high school in one-half or more of the minimum course requirements approved by the Department of Education and/or the Board of Education for high school students; and
- 2** obtain permission from a school counselor and the school principal and shall meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the University of the Virgin Islands prior to enrolling in a dual credit course.

**c** (c) A student who has met the eligibility criteria provided for in subsection (b) of this section in a fall or spring semester, and who has not graduated or earned a general equivalency diploma (G.E.D.), or its equivalent, may take courses for dual credit during the immediately succeeding semester.

**d** (d) The school that the student attends shall pay the costs of the required textbooks and other course supplies for the post-secondary course that the student is enrolled in through purchase arrangements with the bookstore at the University of the Virgin Islands or other cost-efficient methods. The student shall return the textbooks and unused course supplies to the school when the student completes the course or withdraws from the course. However, nothing in this subsection prevents a parent or guardian of a student from paying the costs associated with the program when funds are not available.

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations

College and career readiness, along with vocational education, require formalized discussions among the Virgin Islands Department of Education, the Virgin Islands Board of Education, the Virgin Islands Career and Technical Board, and the University of the Virgin Islands. These discussions should include, but not be limited to:

- Aligned strategies and educational priorities to improve effective instruction

- Student support and supplemental instruction for struggling students
- Methods to measure growth and progress
- Frequent reporting and accountability measures
- Clear communication, planning, and commitment to goals

Dual admissions enrollment is a legislative mandate designed to support college- and career-ready students by providing opportunities to attend post-secondary institutions, earn industry-recognized certificates or licensure, and pursue degrees for successful employment.

School counselors and post-secondary advisors should conduct comprehensive reviews of the vision, strategies, benefits, challenges, and issues associated with early admissions, dual credit options, and academic programs by offering:

- College and online options
- Expanded investigation into online availability for vocational students

A written articulation of the Credit Agreement should be developed to document pathway requirements, credentials, courses, and curriculum design.

All counselors should support students in developing:

- a. Individualized strategic plans
- b. Pathway and career requirements
- c. Course identification, requirements, entrance tests, activities, and possible internships
- d. Preparation for standardized tests
- e. Written essays and application completion
- f. Scholarship applications and financial aid



## **Smarter Balanced Assessment**

The Virgin Islands administers the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment to students in Grades 3 through 8 and Grades 10 and 11 in English Language Arts and Mathematics. In addition, a Science Summative Assessment is administered to students in Grades 5, 8, and 11.

These statewide assessments are designed to measure student performance in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, while also evaluating readiness for college and careers, critical thinking skills, and the application of knowledge to real-world problem solving. Student performance is reported using scaled scores and achievement levels categorized as below standard, near standard, met standard, or exceeded standard. Achievement levels provide important indicators of whether students are on track for college-level coursework and postsecondary success.

### **VIBE Smarter Balanced Data Analysis**

#### English Language Arts/Literacy

The English Language Arts/Literacy data across schools from 2022–2023 through 2024–2025 reflect a system that is making incremental progress but lacks consistency and sustainability in instructional outcomes. While several schools demonstrate year-to-year gains, many are unable to maintain momentum, suggesting that improvements are not yet embedded into stable, systemwide instructional practices. From an educational theory perspective, this pattern aligns with research on school improvement, which emphasizes that short-term gains often occur when initiatives are introduced, but long-term improvement requires coherence, fidelity of implementation, and continuous monitoring. The variability across years indicates that instructional practices may be unevenly applied or insufficiently aligned across grade levels.

At the elementary level, persistently low proficiency rates point to foundational literacy challenges. Best practices grounded in the Science of Reading and Scarborough’s Reading Rope emphasize the importance of systematic phonics, language development, and early comprehension skills. Schools that show stronger and sustained growth have more consistent Tier 1 instruction and effective intervention structures, while those with stagnation or regression may lack robust progress monitoring or targeted support. According to cumulative learning theory, early literacy gaps tend to widen over time, which helps explain why weak elementary outcomes continue to surface in middle and high school performance.

Middle and K–8 schools show particularly unstable trends, with noticeable gains in one year followed by declines the next. This pattern reflects a breakdown in vertical alignment and skill transfer, a concern highlighted in adolescent literacy research. As students transition to more complex texts, they require explicit instruction in academic vocabulary, comprehension strategies, and text structures. When these supports are inconsistent, students struggle to apply prior knowledge, resulting in fluctuating achievement levels rather than sustained growth.

High schools generally post higher proficiency rates, but the data reveal uneven trajectories, including sharp declines at some sites. Constructivist and disciplinary literacy theories suggest that secondary students succeed when literacy instruction is integrated across content areas and intentionally builds on earlier learning. Declines at the high school level may indicate that students are entering without adequate literacy foundations, or that literacy instruction is treated as remediation rather than embedded practice across disciplines.

Overall, the data suggests that the primary challenge is not student ability but system coherence. Schools demonstrating stronger outcomes benefit from effective instructional leadership, consistent use of data to inform teaching, and elevated expectations supported by evidence-based practices. To achieve sustained improvement, the system must prioritize early literacy, strengthen vertical alignment from elementary through high school, and ensure that professional learning and instructional supports are focused on consistent, research-based literacy practices.

### Mathematics

The mathematics data from 2022–2023 through 2024–2025 reveal a system experiencing gradual improvement but continuing to struggle with extremely low overall performance levels. Across most schools, proficiency rates remain in the single digits or low teens, indicating deep, systemic challenges in mathematics instruction rather than isolated school-level issues. From the perspective of standards-based education and opportunity-to-learn theory, these outcomes suggest that many students are not consistently accessing rigorous, grade-level mathematics aligned to instructional standards, resulting in limited conceptual understanding and weak procedural fluency.

At the elementary level, the data points to significant gaps in foundational numeracy. Best practices grounded in learning progressions and cognitive development theory emphasize the importance of early mastery of number sense, place value, and basic operations. While some schools, such as Joseph Sibilly Elementary and Ricardo Richards Elementary, show strong and sustained growth, most elementary schools demonstrate

either minimal gains or volatility across years. This pattern suggests inconsistent implementation of high-quality Tier 1 instruction and limited use of formative assessment to identify and address misconceptions early. Without strong foundational skills, students are less able to engage in increasingly complex mathematical reasoning as they advance through grade levels.

Middle and K–8 schools display modest upward trends, but overall performance remains critically low. According to constructivist learning theory, students must actively build mathematical understanding through problem-solving, discourse, and conceptual connections. The incremental gains observed at schools such as Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School and John H. Woodson Junior High School may reflect increased exposure to content, but the low proficiency rates indicate that instruction may still emphasize procedural tasks without sufficient depth of understanding. Inconsistent year-to-year results also point to challenges in vertical alignment and coherence across grade spans.

High school mathematics outcomes highlight both progress and concern. Although some schools show slight improvement over time, proficiency levels remain among the lowest across all grade spans. This aligns with research on cumulative learning loss, which shows that unresolved gaps from earlier grades significantly hinder students' ability to access algebraic reasoning, functions, and higher-level problem-solving. The data suggests that high school mathematics instruction may be functioning in a remedial mode, focusing on skill recovery rather than engaging students in grade-level mathematical thinking supported by strategic scaffolding.

Overall, the mathematics data underscore the need for a comprehensive, systemwide approach to instructional improvement. Effective mathematics education research emphasizes coherence, consistency, and a balance between conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and application. Sustained improvement will require strengthening early numeracy instruction, ensuring alignment of curriculum and instruction across grade levels, and providing professional learning that supports teachers in delivering high-quality, standards-aligned mathematics instruction. Without these systemic shifts, gains are likely to remain incremental and uneven rather than transformative.

## Science

The science data from 2022–2023 through 2024–2025 present a more positive overall picture than English Language Arts and mathematics, yet they still reveal inconsistencies that point to systemic instructional challenges. Across many schools, proficiency rates are notably higher, particularly at the elementary level, suggesting that students may be more consistently engaged in science instruction that emphasizes exploration and conceptual understanding. From the perspective of constructivist learning theory and inquiry-based science education, these outcomes indicate that hands-on, experiential learning approaches are supporting student learning, though the lack of sustained growth at some schools signals uneven implementation.

At the elementary level, several schools demonstrate strong and, in some cases, sustained performance. Schools such as Joseph Sibilly Elementary and Ricardo Richards Elementary show consistently high and improving proficiency rates, reflecting alignment with best practices outlined in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), including phenomenon-based instruction, student discourse, and integration of science and engineering practices. Other elementary schools, however, display volatility or regression, which suggests that instructional practices may not be fully embedded, or that access to consistent instructional time and resources varies across sites. The presence of “ND” data for some schools also limits the ability to monitor trends and underscores the importance of consistent assessment practices for continuous improvement.

Middle and K–8 schools show mixed results, with some schools experiencing gains followed by declines. According to learning progression theory, science understanding develops cumulatively as students revisit core ideas with increasing sophistication. Fluctuating performance at this level suggests gaps in vertical alignment and inconsistent reinforcement of core concepts. When instructional focus shifts away from inquiry and toward coverage, students may struggle to apply scientific reasoning skills across contexts, resulting in unstable achievement patterns.

High school science performance remains moderate but uneven, with several schools experiencing declines in the most recent year. Research on disciplinary literacy and scientific reasoning indicates that secondary students require explicit instruction in data analysis, argumentation from evidence, and scientific writing. Declines at the high school level may indicate that students are entering without sufficient mastery of these skills or that instruction is not consistently integrating literacy and mathematics within science coursework. This misalignment can hinder students’ ability to demonstrate proficiency in standardized assessments, even when content knowledge is present.

Overall, the science data suggest that where inquiry-based, standards-aligned instruction is consistently implemented; students perform at higher levels. However, inconsistent growth across schools and years indicates a need for greater coherence in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Sustained improvement in science achievement will require strengthening vertical alignment, ensuring consistent access to high-quality instructional materials, and supporting teachers through professional learning focused on NGSS-aligned practices. Without this systemic support, gains in science are likely to remain uneven and dependent on individual school capacity rather than systemwide effectiveness.

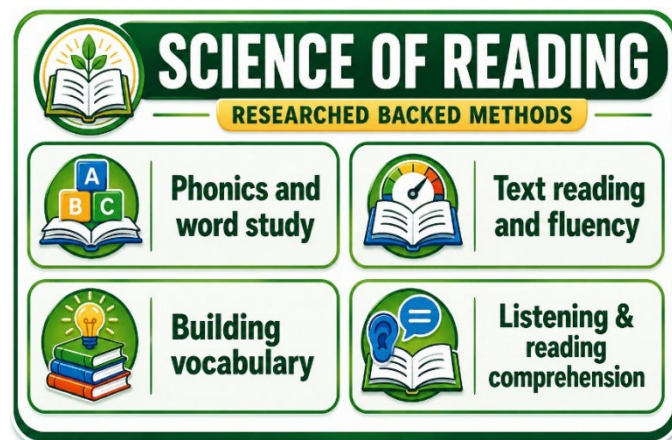
### Final Thoughts

Across English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, the immediate trends point to uneven growth, persistent foundational gaps, and inconsistent sustainability of gains across schools and grade spans. While there are pockets of improvement, particularly in Science and select elementary and high school sites, the overall pattern reflects a system in which progress is fragile and not yet institutionalized. The most urgent trend is the widening disparity between subjects: Science performance is comparatively stronger and more stable, English shows modest gains with frequent regression, and Mathematics remains critically low across nearly all schools. This imbalance suggests that instructional practices, curriculum coherence, and teacher capacity vary significantly by content area.

In English Language Arts, the data show incremental improvement at some schools, but gains are often lost in subsequent years, especially at the elementary and middle levels. This trend indicates unresolved foundational literacy gaps, particularly in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing stamina.

### **The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendations- ELA**

VIBE must provide research-backed methods for implementing the “Science of Reading,” which includes:








Students must be screened early to identify reading deficiencies or dyslexia. Without consistent, explicit instruction aligned to evidence-based literacy practices; students struggle to transfer skills as texts become more complex. To curtail these gaps, immediate attention must be given to strengthening Tier 1 literacy instruction, ensuring systematic phonics and language development in the early grades, and reinforcing comprehension and writing across content areas in the upper grades. Vertical alignment and consistent progress monitoring are critical to sustaining gains.

### The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendation- Math

Mathematics differs from other subject areas because it requires strong foundational skills, an understanding of steps and sequential order, as well as reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Math lessons should include:

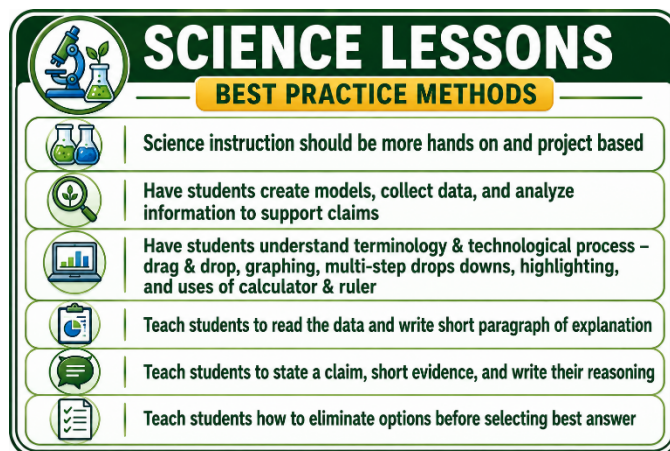
**MATH LESSONS**  
**BEST PRACTICE METHODS**

-  Introduction of math vocabulary – key terms
-  New lessons should begin with concrete tools, manipulatives, or hands-on examples
-  Show students how to organize information into details needed; procedure, math operation/s to be used
-  Have student verbally explain how answer was obtained
-  Practice math facts regularly for struggling students

Mathematics presents the most urgent concern. Proficiency rates remain extremely low systemwide, despite small year-over-year increases at some schools. This trend reflects deep deficits in foundational numeracy and conceptual understanding that accumulate over time. Instructional practices may be overly procedural, fragmented, or misaligned with grade-level standards. To address these gaps, the system must prioritize early numeracy, emphasize conceptual understanding alongside procedural fluency, and ensure that students are regularly engaged in problem-solving and mathematical discourse. Immediate intervention structures, coupled with high-quality Tier 1 instruction and coherent learning progressions, are essential to prevent further widening of achievement gaps.

## The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) Recommendation- Science

To strengthen science outcomes and deepen student understanding, instruction must emphasize hands-on, inquiry-driven approaches that engage students in data analysis, model development, and evidence-based reasoning, including:



Science outcomes are comparatively stronger, particularly at the elementary level, where inquiry-based and hands-on instruction is more consistently implemented. However, the data still reveal volatility and declines at some middle and high school sites, suggesting weak vertical alignment and inconsistent integration of scientific reasoning skills. To sustain and expand gains in science, instructional practices must remain aligned with NGSS principles, with greater emphasis on data analysis, evidence-based argumentation, and cross-disciplinary integration of literacy and mathematics, especially at the secondary level.

Collectively, the data points to the need for a coordinated, systemwide response rather than isolated school-level interventions. Immediate actions should focus on aligning curriculum and instruction across grade spans, strengthening foundational literacy and mathematics, and ensuring consistent implementation of evidence-based practices across all three content areas. Targeted professional learning, ongoing coaching, and regular use of formative data to inform instruction are essential to curtail achievement gaps and move from inconsistent outcomes to sustained, systemwide improvement in student achievement.

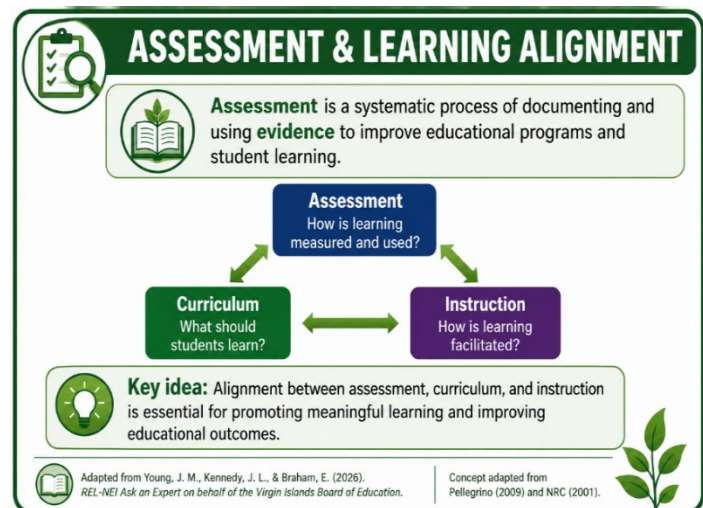
### Overview of Assessments

Assessment plays a critical role in measuring student learning, informing instruction, and evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs. A well-designed assessment system provides educators, school leaders, families, policymakers, and students with meaningful information about academic progress and achievement. Beyond measuring outcomes, assessments serve as tools for identifying strengths, addressing learning gaps, guiding instructional decisions, and supporting continuous improvement efforts across schools and districts.






The information presented in this section is adapted from resources provided by the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI) through its *Ask an Expert* engagement on behalf of the Virgin Islands Board of Education. Drawing on this work, the section offers a foundational understanding of assessment and its role within an aligned educational system.


Specifically, this section introduces key concepts related to assessment and learning alignment, compares different assessment approaches and types, outlines the varied purposes assessments serve for different stakeholders, and highlights the essential characteristics of balanced assessment systems. Together, these components are intended to provide a clear framework for understanding how assessment systems can be designed and used to support high-quality instruction, improve student outcomes, and promote educational equity.

Effective assessment is not a standalone activity. It is most impactful when fully aligned with curriculum and instruction. When these three elements work together, educators can ensure that what is taught, what is assessed, and how students learn are all connected to meaningful outcomes.




## ASSESSMENTS: DIFFERENT PURPOSES FOR DIFFERENT PARTNERS






















 <b>STUDENTS</b> <hr/> To understand their strengths and areas for improvement	 <b>TEACHERS</b> <hr/> To adjust instruction and individualize support for learning	 <b>SCHOOL LEADERS</b> <hr/> To evaluate programs and allocate resources	 <b>STATE LEADERS</b> <hr/> To monitor system performance and close equity gaps	 <b>FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES</b> <hr/> To understand progress and advocate for their children
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 Adapted from Young, J. M., Kennedy, J. L., & Braham, E. (2026).  
 REL-NEI Ask an Expert on behalf of the Virgin Islands Board of Education.

Assessment information serves multiple audiences, each with unique needs and responsibilities. Recognizing how different stakeholders use assessment results helps ensure that data is communicated clearly and used effectively to support student success.

## BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS


 A balanced assessment system uses **multiple assessment types** working together across classroom, district, and state levels and is designed for **different decisions**.

WHAT IS A BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM?	CHARACTERISTICS OF A BALANCED SYSTEM																		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Uses <b>multiple assessment types</b> working together.</li> <li> Operates <b>across</b> classroom, district, and state levels.</li> <li> Designed for <b>different decisions</b> and information needs.</li> </ul>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>COHERENCE</b></td> <td>Aligned with standards and instruction</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>CONTINUITY</b></td> <td>Tracks progress over time</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>COMPREHENSIVENESS</b></td> <td>Uses multiple measures</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>UTILITY</b></td> <td>Useful for decision-making</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>EFFICIENCY</b></td> <td>No redundancy in testing</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>FAIRNESS</b></td> <td>Equitable for all students</td> </tr> </table>		<b>COHERENCE</b>	Aligned with standards and instruction		<b>CONTINUITY</b>	Tracks progress over time		<b>COMPREHENSIVENESS</b>	Uses multiple measures		<b>UTILITY</b>	Useful for decision-making		<b>EFFICIENCY</b>	No redundancy in testing		<b>FAIRNESS</b>	Equitable for all students
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	<b>EFFICIENCY</b>	No redundancy in testing																	
	<b>FAIRNESS</b>	Equitable for all students																	


















**KEY TAKEAWAY:** A balanced assessment system ensures the right information is available at the right time to support learning, improve instruction, and promote equity for all students.

Adapted from Young, J. M., Kennedy, J. L., & Braham, E. (2026). REL-NEI Ask an Expert on behalf of the Virgin Islands Board of Education.
 Characteristics adapted from Wylie, C., & Landl, K. (2024). Establishing balanced assessment systems. Solution Tree.

A balanced assessment system integrates multiple measures to provide timely, relevant, and actionable information. When designed intentionally, such systems support better decision-making at every level.

## COMPARING TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

A balanced assessment system uses **different types of assessments**, each with unique strengths and limitations to support effective decision-making.










TYPE OF ASSESSMENT	WHO USES IT	STRENGTH	PRIMARY USE	LIMITATION
 <b>SUMMATIVE</b>	State Leaders, Policymakers, Public	 Comparability	 Accountability	 Too late to inform teaching
 <b>INTERIM</b>	School and District leaders, Teachers	 Progress monitoring	 Program decisions	 Less timely for instruction
 <b>FORMATIVE</b>	Teachers, Students	 Immediate feedback	 Instruction	 Not standardized
 <b>DIAGNOSTIC</b>	Teachers, Students	 Deep insight on skills	 Targeted support	 Narrow scope

Adapted from Young, J. M., Kennedy, J. L., & Braham, E. (2026). REL-NEI Ask an Expert on behalf of the Virgin Islands Board of Education.

A combination of assessment types provides a more complete picture of student learning, allowing educators to respond appropriately at different points in the learning process.

## COMPARISON OF ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

Different assessment approaches offer **unique structures, benefits, and tradeoffs**. Understanding these differences helps inform effective assessment system design and use.

APPROACH	STRUCTURE	EXAMPLES	BENEFITS	TRADEOFFS
 <b>CONSORTIUM-BASED</b>	Multi-state consortium to develop and administer shared assessments	Smarter Balanced; PARCC; WIDA for English learners	 Cost sharing, technical quality, comparability	 Less state customization, slower innovation cycles
 <b>STATE-DEVELOPED</b>	States design or contract their own end-of-year assessments	Texas – STAAR; South Carolina – Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS)	 Strong alignment, flexibility, and customization	 Higher cost, less cross-state comparability
 <b>THROUGH-YEAR MODELS</b>	Multiple shorter assessments across the year that inform the summative score.	Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST)	 More timely data, more potential instructional value	 Complex design, higher cost, unclear comparability

Adapted from Young, J. M., Kennedy, J. L., & Braham, E. (2026). REL-NEI Ask an Expert on behalf of the Virgin Islands Board of Education.

States and systems use different approaches to design and implement assessments, each offering distinct advantages and challenges. Understanding these differences helps inform decisions about how assessment systems can best balance quality, flexibility, cost, and comparability.

## Conclusion

The Board recognizes that improving educational outcomes requires a shared commitment among all stakeholders. While the Board, the Department of Education, school administrators, educators, parents, students, policymakers, and community partners each have distinct responsibilities, lasting progress depends upon collaboration, accountability, and a collective focus on student success. Strengthening public education requires not only effective policies and oversight, but also meaningful engagement from the broader community in support of every student's academic and personal development.

The School Management Accountability Report (SMAR) serves as an important component of that shared responsibility framework. Through school visits, stakeholder engagement, and the review of instructional, operational, and student performance data, the Board fulfills its statutory responsibility to monitor educational conditions, identify areas of success, and provide recommendations that support continuous improvement across the Territory's public schools. The Smarter Balanced test results provided an examination of curriculum alignment and instructional expectations for school programs by districts, quality of instructional practice, and areas for improvement. Smarter Balanced results help guide interventions, establish benchmarks, and inform corrective action. Collectively, these findings highlight both progress and persistent deficiencies, providing an urgent call to action for coordinated leadership, evidence-based decision-making, and sustained system-wide improvement.

The findings in this report are presented to inform decision-making, promote accountability, and support continuous improvement throughout the public education system. They reflect both the progress being made across our schools and the challenges that continue to affect student achievement, school climate, instructional quality, family engagement, workforce readiness, and equitable access to educational opportunities. The Board recognizes that educational outcomes are shaped by a complex set of academic, social, economic, and institutional factors, and believes these findings provide a foundation for meaningful dialogue, thoughtful policymaking, and collaborative action to improve outcomes for all students.

To advance these efforts, the Virgin Islands Board of Education invites the Commissioner of Education to present the Department of Education's territorial goals, strategic priorities, performance measures, and expected outcomes for the 2026–2027 school year. The Board likewise invites the District Superintendents to present their respective district goals, implementation plans, and accountability measures, including how those efforts address the findings and recommendations outlined in this report. These

presentations will provide an opportunity for transparent dialogue regarding progress, challenges, resource needs, and performance expectations, while strengthening alignment among policy, practice, accountability, and student outcomes across the Territory.

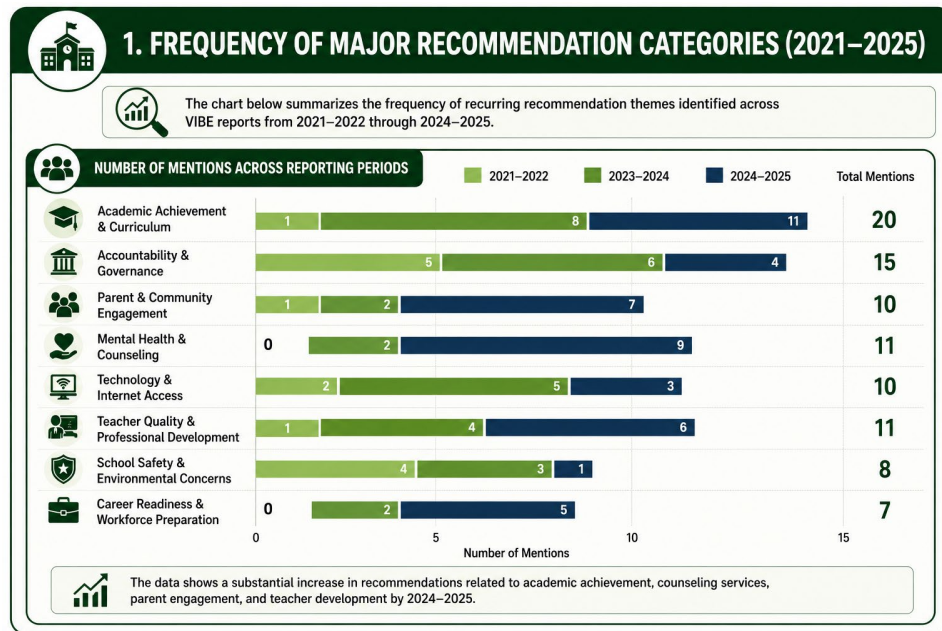
The Board further encourages policymakers, educators, families, and community stakeholders to review the report and participate in ongoing efforts to strengthen public education throughout the Territory. By embracing the shared responsibility envisioned under Title 17, the Virgin Islands can continue building a stronger, more responsive, and more effective public education system that prepares every student for success in college, career, citizenship, and life.

Together, we can transform accountability into action, collaboration into progress, and educational opportunity into lasting student achievement for generations to come.

## APPENDIX

### (A) Longitudinal Analysis of Prior SMAR Recommendations and Systemic Improvements (2021–2025)

A comparative analysis of the Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) recommendations from 2021–2022 through 2024–2025 reveals recurring institutional deficiencies alongside gradual advancement in strategic educational planning. Across the three reporting cycles, recommendations increasingly evolved from operational and governance concerns toward data-driven instructional reform, student-centered counseling services, and accountability-based academic interventions. However, the recurrence of similar recommendations over multiple years indicates that implementation rates remained limited, and that measurable systemic improvement was inconsistent.

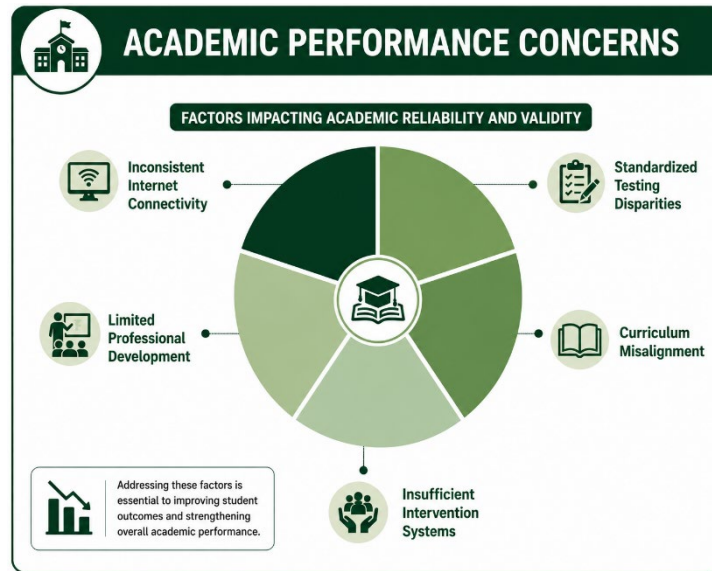


The statistical trend demonstrates a substantial increase in recommendations tied to instructional quality, counseling services, and community engagement by 2024–2025. Earlier reports focused heavily on governance structures and operational stability, while later reports shifted toward improving educational outcomes and student support systems. Also, educational leadership increasingly prioritized instructional reform and student-support frameworks after 2023. Counseling and mental health recommendations showed the largest proportional increase, reflecting growing awareness of social-emotional barriers affecting student achievement after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Academic Performance Concerns

The 2023–2024 report identified continued low student performance in English Language Arts and Mathematics despite “small incremental growth.” Although exact proficiency percentages were not consistently provided, the reports repeatedly referenced below-standard performance territory-wide. Science achievement was identified as the only area demonstrating measurable promise.

The reports also identified several factors affecting academic reliability and validity, including:



These concerns remained present in subsequent recommendations, suggesting that corrective measures had not produced substantial territorial gains.

Progress VS. Persistent Challenges

## 2. COMPARATIVE IMPROVEMENT MATRIX

EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS VS. PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

This matrix evaluates whether key recommendation areas showed evidence of improvement over time or remain areas of continued deficiency across the 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 reports.

AREA OF CONCERN	EVIDENCE OF IMPROVEMENT	EVIDENCE OF CONTINUED DEFICIENCY
Curriculum Alignment	Moderate	Continued repeated recommendations
Parent Communication	Significant increase in policy detail	Limited evidence of implementation
Counseling Services	Expanded staffing recommendations	Caseload concerns unresolved
Technology Access	Greater acknowledgment of digital inequity	Internet reliability still problematic
Governance Accountability	Increased reporting recommendations	Legislative authority unresolved
Academic Achievement	Minor incremental growth reported	Territory-wide proficiency remains low
Career Readiness	Increased internship and workforce planning	Limited measurable outcomes

While progress is evident in several areas, recurring deficiencies across reports indicate that implementation and measurable outcomes remain limited and inconsistent.

Counseling and Student Support Expansion

The 2024–2025 report introduced measurable staffing ratios aligned with national standards:

## 3. COUNSELING AND STUDENT SUPPORT EXPANSION

Addressing Mental Health Needs Through Staffing Standards and Resource Allocation

One of the most significant shifts in recommendations occurred between 2023–2024 and 2024–2025, with a strong emphasis on expanding counseling and student-support services.

RECOMMENDED COUNSELOR-TO-STUDENT RATIOS Aligned with National Standards	CURRENT SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST AVAILABILITY Documented Shortages Across the Territory						
<p><b>ELEMENTARY COUNSELORS</b>   1: 250 STUDENTS</p> <p><b>SECONDARY COUNSELORS</b>   1: 300 STUDENTS</p> <p>These ratios reflect national professional standards for effective student support, guidance, and college/career readiness.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>POSITION</th> <th>STT/STJ</th> <th>STX</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>School Psychologists</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>SIGNIFICANT STAFFING GAPS</b> Despite increasing behavioral, emotional, and academic needs among students, psychological support personnel remain critically insufficient.</p>	POSITION	STT/STJ	STX	School Psychologists	0	1
POSITION	STT/STJ	STX					
School Psychologists	0	1					

**IMPLICATION** | Strengthening mental health infrastructure and improving counselor-to-student ratios are essential steps toward removing barriers to learning and improving overall student well-being and achievement.



## Legislative and Structural Continuity

Several legislative concerns appeared consistently over all reporting periods, indicating little structural resolution. These included:

- Authority regarding school openings and closures
- Federal funding oversight
- Mandatory “State of Education” reporting
- Environmental monitoring
- School safety enhancements
- Teacher recruitment and retention

The repeated appearance of these concerns over several years suggests institutional persistence rather than successful policy resolution.

## Summary

From a research and statistical perspective, the VIBE recommendations between 2021 and 2025 demonstrate increasing sophistication in educational planning and diagnostic analysis. The recommendations evolved from operational stabilization toward comprehensive educational reform, emphasizing instructional rigor, stakeholder collaboration, mental health support, and data-informed decision-making. Quantitatively, the largest growth areas involved academic intervention strategies, counseling frameworks, and parent-community engagement systems.

However, the longitudinal recurrence of nearly identical concerns across reporting cycles strongly suggests that implementation effectiveness remained limited. While strategic recommendations became more evidence-based and comprehensive, measurable educational transformation appeared incremental rather than systemic. Persistent deficiencies in academic proficiency, technology access, staffing capacity, and governance accountability indicate that structural barriers continued to impede large-scale educational improvement throughout the reporting period.

**(B) Chart of VIDE School Personnel**

<b>Position</b>	<b>STTJ</b>	<b>STX</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
ACCOUNTANT I	1	6	7
ACCOUNTANT II	1		1
ACCOUNTANT III	1		1
ADMIN OFFICER I	4	5	9
ADMIN OFFICER II	4	1	5
ADMIN OFFICER III	3	1	4
ADMIN SECRETARY I	9	16	25
ADMIN SECRETARY II	2	2	4
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY II		1	1
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	19	21	40
ATTENDANCE COUNSELOR	2		2
BILINGUAL AIDE		5	5
BILINGUAL RES TEACHER		1	1
BILINGUAL TEACHER	1		1
CAREER SPECIALIST	4	4	8
COMPUTER OPER III	1		1
COMPUTER OPERATOR I		1	1
COMPUTER OPERATOR II	1		1
COMPUTER TECHNICIAN	2		2
COOK I	10	12	22
COOK II	3	4	7
CUSTODIAL WORKER	9		9
CUSTODIAL WORKER I	10	16	26
CUSTODIAL WORKER II	24	31	55
DEAN OF STUDENTs	4	3	7
DIR OF ALTER ED	1	1	2
ELEMENTARY TEACHER	154	180	334
FOOD SERVICE WORKER	38	45	83
GUIDANCE COUNSELOR	19	21	40
JROTC INSTRUCTOR	8	3	11
KITCHEN MANAGER I	7	9	16
KITCHEN MANAGER II		1	1
LIBRARIAN	7	10	17
PARAPROFESSIONAL	106	138	244
PBX OPERATOR		1	1
PHYSICAL ED TEACHER	23	16	39
PRINCIPAL	11	12	23
PROGRAM ASSISTANT		2	2
REGISTRAR	7	2	9

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE COUNSELOR	4	2	6
SCHOOL MONITOR	45	58	103
SCHOOL NURSE	5	7	12
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST		1	1
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER	2		2
SECONDARY TEACHER	136	131	267
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERP		1	1
SPECIAL ED TEACHER	42	40	82
SPEECH THERAPIST	2		2
STUDENT SUCCESS SPECIALIST		2	2
SYSTEM ANALYST I		5	5
VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR	1		1
VOCATIONAL TEACHER	45	39	84
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>1635</b>

(C) 2024-2025 Assessment Results Territorial



# Virgin Islands Department of Education

2024-2025 Assessment Proficiency Rate  
 Smarter Balanced and the National Center the Multi-State Alternate Assessment  
 Saint Thomas - Saint John School District: All Schools



GRADES	English Language Arts/Literacy									
	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level						Percentage of Proficient students			
	Participation Rate	Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	99.5 364	362	63.0 228	21.3 77	10.8 39	5.0 18	10.9	12.8	14.9	15.7 57
04	99.2 387	384	65.4 251	18.2 70	9.9 38	6.5 25	12.9	12.4	15.5	16.4 63
05	99.7 361	360	57.5 207	18.9 68	17.8 64	5.8 21	12.4	14.2	16.3	23.6 85
06	98.9 362	358	66.8 239	23.2 83	9.8 35	0.3 1	12.8	14.2	14.8	10.1 36
07	97.5 400	390	57.7 225	22.6 88	13.3 52	6.4 25	13.2	13.2	17.9	19.7 77
08	93.7 381	357	56.0 200	25.2 90	16.5 59	2.2 8	16.6	13.2	17.0	18.8 67
11	99.5 405	403	36.5 147	29.5 119	23.3 94	10.7 43	27.6	32.3	34.3	34.0 137
All Grades	98.3 2,660	2,614	57.3 1,497	22.8 895	14.6 381	5.4 141	15.1	16.1	18.7	20.0 522

GRADES	Mathematics									
	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level						Percentage of Proficient students			
	Participation Rate	Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	100.0 364	364	60.4 220	24.2 88	12.9 47	2.5 9	6.4	6.8	12.0	15.4 56
04	100.0 388	388	53.4 207	30.9 120	12.9 50	2.8 11	5.9	6.6	10.9	15.7 61
05	99.4 362	360	64.7 233	23.1 83	7.2 26	5.0 18	4.7	6.3	6.8	12.2 44
06	96.7 363	351	76.6 269	18.2 64	3.7 13	1.4 5	7.1	7.6	9.1	5.1 18
07	93.3 404	377	70.3 265	18.3 69	8.8 33	2.7 10	4.0	4.9	6.9	11.4 43
08	97.1 383	372	78.5 292	12.6 47	5.9 22	3.0 11	4.0	0.9	5.0	8.9 33
11	99.8 405	404	81.4 329	13.1 53	4.7 19	0.7 3	4.8	5.3	4.7	5.4 22
All Grades	98.0 2,669	2,616	69.4 1,815	20.0 824	8.0 210	2.6 67	5.3	5.4	7.9	10.6 277

GRADES	Science									
	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level						Percentage of Proficient students			
	Participation Rate	Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
05	100.0 362	362	30.7 111	22.7 82	25.1 91	21.5 78	27.8	34.6	39.2	46.7 169
08	100.0 373	373	52.3 195	22.3 83	13.1 49	12.3 46	26.8	24.9	28.3	25.5 95
11	100.0 403	403	29.0 117	33.7 136	26.1 105	11.2 45	27.5	40.3	40.5	37.2 150
All Grades	100.0 1,138	1,138	37.2 423	26.4 301	21.5 245	14.9 169	27.4	33.1	36.2	36.4 414





# Virgin Islands Department of Education

## 2024-2025 Assessment Proficiency Rate

Smarter Balanced and the National Center the Multi-State Alternate Assessment  
Saint Croix School District: All Schools



GRADES	English Language Arts/Literacy									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	99.2 360	357	58.3 208	23.2 83	10.6 38	7.8 28	16.6	13.7	21.9	18.5 66
04	97.0 404	392	60.7 238	18.4 72	12.2 48	8.7 34	14.1	16.3	23.4	20.9 82
05	99.4 361	359	57.7 207	17.5 63	17.0 61	7.8 28	19.6	16.4	27.7	24.8 99
06	99.5 384	382	43.7 163	28.0 107	22.0 84	7.3 28	21.6	22.3	24.0	29.3 112
07	98.7 399	394	56.9 224	24.6 97	12.9 51	5.6 22	18.3	16.1	29.4	18.5 73
08	100.0 334	334	45.8 153	32.3 108	19.5 65	2.4 8	20.5	13.9	29.9	21.9 73
11	98.5 336	331	34.1 113	29.3 97	23.6 78	13.0 43	31.4	29.8	43.8	36.6 121
All Grades	98.9 2,578	2,549	51.2 1,306	24.6 627	16.7 425	7.5 191	19.8	17.8	28.3	24.2 616

GRADES	Mathematics									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	99.2 358	355	64.8 230	21.4 76	10.1 36	3.7 13	11.3	8.4	14.8	13.8 49
04	98.3 403	396	63.1 250	27.3 108	8.6 34	1.0 4	5.6	7.9	13.1	9.6 38
05	99.2 361	358	73.7 264	15.4 55	5.6 20	5.3 19	3.8	6.1	7.7	10.9 39
06	99.2 384	381	69.0 263	19.9 76	7.3 28	3.7 14	7.5	7.3	12.0	11.0 42
07	99.2 398	395	79.2 313	13.9 55	4.3 17	2.5 10	6.1	5.1	6.2	6.8 27
08	99.4 335	333	76.6 255	15.9 53	4.8 16	2.7 9	8.7	4.3	6.1	7.5 25
11	96.7 332	321	77.9 250	14.6 47	5.6 18	1.9 6	4.5	5.5	4.7	7.5 24
All Grades	98.8 2,571	2,539	71.9 1,825	18.5 470	6.7 169	3.0 75	6.9	6.3	9.4	9.6 244

GRADES	Science									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
05	100.0 349	349	41.0 143	15.2 53	23.5 82	20.3 71	33.0	34.9	47.3	43.8 153
08	100.0 329	329	49.5 163	23.4 77	16.7 55	10.3 34	23.1	25.7	27.1	27.1 89
11	100.0 262	262	33.2 87	37.4 98	17.9 47	11.5 30	24.5	34.4	36.7	29.4 77
All Grades	100.0 940	940	41.8 393	24.3 228	19.6 184	14.4 135	27.1	31.3	37.0	33.9 319



# Virgin Islands Department of Education

## 2024-2025 Assessment Proficiency Rate

Smarter Balanced and the National Center the Multi-State Alternate Assessment  
Virgin Islands: All Schools



GRADES	English Language Arts/Literacy									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	99.3 724	719	60.6 436	22.3 160	10.7 77	6.4 46	13.8	13.3	18.5	17.1 123
04	98.1 791	776	63.0 489	18.3 142	11.1 86	7.6 59	13.4	14.3	19.5	18.7 145
05	99.6 722	719	57.6 414	18.2 131	17.4 125	6.8 49	16.0	15.2	22.0	24.2 174
06	99.2 746	740	54.3 402	25.7 190	16.1 119	3.9 29	17.8	18.1	19.4	20.0 148
07	98.1 799	784	57.3 449	23.6 185	13.1 103	6.0 47	16.2	14.7	23.0	19.1 150
08	96.6 715	691	51.1 353	28.7 198	17.9 124	2.3 16	18.7	13.5	23.7	20.3 140
11	99.1 741	734	35.4 260	29.4 216	23.4 172	11.7 86	29.2	31.3	38.8	35.1 258
All Grades	98.6 5,238	5,163	54.3 2,803	23.7 1,222	15.6 806	6.4 332	17.5	16.9	23.4	22.0 1,138

GRADES	Mathematics									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
03	99.6 722	719	62.6 450	22.8 164	11.5 83	3.1 22	8.9	7.6	13.5	14.6 105
04	99.1 791	784	58.3 457	29.1 228	10.7 84	1.9 15	5.7	7.2	12.0	12.6 99
05	99.3 723	718	69.2 497	19.2 138	6.4 46	5.2 37	4.3	6.2	7.3	11.6 83
06	98.0 747	732	72.7 532	19.1 140	5.6 41	2.6 19	7.4	7.5	10.5	8.2 60
07	96.3 802	772	74.9 578	16.1 124	6.5 50	2.6 20	5.2	5.0	6.6	9.1 70
08	98.2 718	705	77.6 547	14.2 100	5.4 38	2.8 20	6.6	2.6	5.6	8.2 58
11	98.4 737	725	79.9 579	13.8 100	5.1 37	1.2 9	4.7	5.3	4.7	6.3 46
All Grades	98.4 5,240	5,155	70.6 3,640	19.3 994	7.4 379	2.8 142	6.1	5.9	8.6	10.1 521

GRADES	Science									
	Participation Rate	Percent of Students tested who scored in each performance level					Percentage of Proficient students			
		Students Tested	Below Standard	Near Standard	Met Standard	Exceeded Standard	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
05	100.0 711	711	35.7 254	19.0 135	24.3 173	21.0 149	30.4	34.8	43.2	45.3 322
08	100.0 702	702	51.0 358	22.8 160	14.8 104	11.4 80	24.9	25.3	27.7	26.2 184
11	100.0 665	665	30.7 204	35.2 234	22.9 152	11.3 75	26.2	37.8	38.7	34.1 227
All Grades	100.0 2,078	2,078	39.3 816	25.5 529	20.6 429	14.6 304	27.3	32.2	36.6	35.3 733



## **(D) School Visit Curriculum and Instructional Evaluation Framework**

The Curriculum and Instructional Checklist is a structured monitoring tool used during school visits to assess the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of teaching and learning practices across schools. This tool guides reviewers in examining key components of academic delivery, including instructional rigor, student support systems, leadership effectiveness, and the overall learning environment.

### **Objective 1: Academic Learning Plans**

The school maintains academic learning plans for all students that outline individual learning goals, instructional strategies, and progress monitoring to support student achievement.

### **Objective 2: Comprehensive and Rigorous Curriculum**

The school provides evidence that instructional programs are comprehensive and rigorous across all curriculum areas, ensuring alignment with academic standards and promoting high-level thinking and student engagement.

### **Objective 3: Career Pathways and Global Exposure**

The school integrates career pathways, including college, workforce, military, and career and technical education (CTE), while also providing opportunities for students to be exposed to world languages and global competencies.

### **Objective 4: Stakeholder Engagement**

The school actively engages stakeholders—including students, parents, staff, and the broader community—in meaningful ways to support student success and school improvement efforts.

### **Objective 5: Classroom Environment and Instructional Quality**

The school demonstrates effective classroom environments and high-quality instructional practices that foster student engagement, differentiation, and a positive learning culture.

### **Objective 6: Leadership Effectiveness**

School leadership effectively facilitates the school's mission and vision, promotes a culture of high expectations, and motivates students and staff to achieve academic success and continuous improvement.

### **Objective 7: Counseling and Student Support Services**

Counselors provide comprehensive support for students' academic, social, and emotional development, including interventions and guidance to address risks or challenges that may impact student motivation and performance.



### **Teacher Input Questionnaire / Smarter Balanced Assessment**

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire. The Virgin Islands Board of Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Learning Environment Committee is seeking teacher input to better understand instructional practices and experiences related to the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Your feedback will help inform findings and recommendations for the Virgin Islands Board of Education School Management Accountability Report (SMAR). Please respond based on your professional experience. There are no right or wrong answers, and all responses will be kept confidential. Individual names will not be included in any reports.

Thank you for your time and commitment to student learning.

- 
1. To what extent do you believe the Smarter Balanced Assessment is a valid and reliable measure of Virgin Islands public school students' achievement and growth in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science?
  2. What lesson planning expectations are in place at your school, and how do they support effective instruction across grade levels or content areas?
  3. How are new, developing, and experienced teachers supported in meeting lesson planning expectations and aligning instruction with the Virgin Islands Standards and Assessment (VISA)? Additionally, what systems are in place to ensure teachers receive meaningful feedback and instructional support to strengthen alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessment expectations?
  4. Based on district expectations, how does the classroom environment in your grade level or subject area support student engagement, behavior, and learning? What instructional practices are used to maintain a positive and focused learning environment?
  5. What alternative or complementary measures would you recommend to more accurately assess annual student growth and performance in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science?



### Teacher Input Questionnaire / Smarter Balanced Assessment

6. Given that the Smarter Balanced Assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science require students to demonstrate grade-level mastery, critical thinking, and problem-solving within specific test formats, what resources and professional development are provided to teachers to support building student familiarity with test structures and question types and integrating assessment expectations into daily instruction?
7. Based on Smarter Balanced Assessment data, how are students identified for additional instructional support in your grade level or subject area? What intervention strategies are implemented at your site, and how is student progress monitored over time?
8. How is professional development differentiated to address the needs of new, developing, and veteran teachers in the areas of effective instructional strategies, student engagement and confidence-building, classroom management, and use of assessment data to inform instruction?
9. What strategies are currently in place to ensure all students, particularly those with learning gaps, are adequately prepared to meet the cognitive and performance demands of the Smarter Balanced Assessment? How is equity addressed in access to instructional resources and test preparation support?
10. How do you engage parents or guardians regarding the Smarter Balanced Assessment? This may include communication before testing, such as preparation or study support at home, and follow-up after testing to help families understand student scores and performance results.
11. Is there any additional information, insight, or perspective related to instruction, assessment, or student learning that you would like to share that may not have been captured in the questions above?

## **Literacy & Libraries**

### **(F) Analysis of Public-School Library Access in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI)**

The public-school systems in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) are administered by the Virgin Islands Department of Education, which oversees public education across the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John districts. Library and media services remain important components of literacy development, digital learning, research instruction, and student academic support throughout the territory.

In support of literacy and educational outreach initiatives, the Virgin Islands Department of Education recently received funding to acquire two bookmobiles, one assigned to the St. Croix District and one assigned to the St. Thomas District, to expand access to books, educational materials, and literacy programming throughout the territory. The St. Thomas District bookmobile was featured as an entry in the 2026 St. Thomas Carnival Children’s Parade, highlighting the territory’s continued investment in reading and literacy initiatives.

The Department of Education is also working on a broader plan to expand district bookmobile services to improve literacy outreach, increase equitable access to educational resources, and provide supplemental library services to schools and communities that currently have limited or no permanent library access.

### **1. Overview of School Library Access**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total Schools Reviewed</b>	20	100%
<b>Schools With Library or Librarian Services</b>	16	80%
<b>Schools Without Library or Librarian Services</b>	4	20%

Although students and community members increasingly use the internet to conduct research, access digital databases, locate books, and retrieve information electronically, physical libraries and librarian services continue to play an essential educational role.

Libraries provide:

- Guided research assistance
- Information literacy instruction
- Access to print and digital materials
- Academic support services
- Technology access
- Quiet study environments
- Literacy enrichment opportunities

The continued availability of school and community libraries remains especially important in the USVI, where equitable access to educational resources and public infrastructure varies across islands and communities.

## 2. St. Croix District Analysis

**Schools Reviewed** - 10 schools

School	Library & Librarian Services
Claude O. Markoe Elementary School	No
Alfredo Andrews Elementary School	Yes
Juanita Gardine K-8 School	Yes
John H. Woodson Junior High School	Yes
Ricardo Richards Elementary School	Yes
Pearl B. Larsen PreK-8 School	Yes
Lew Muckle PreK-6 School	Yes
St. Croix Central High School	Yes
St. Croix Educational Complex High School	Yes
Eulalie Rivera K-8 School	No

### District Summary

- 8 of 10 schools (80%) provide library or librarian services.
- 2 schools (20%) do not currently provide such services.

### Observations

- Middle schools and high schools demonstrate the strongest continuity of library access.
- Schools lacking services are concentrated primarily at the elementary and K-8 levels.
- The St. Croix District bookmobile initiative may help supplement literacy access for schools without permanent library infrastructure.

## 3. St. Thomas/St. John District Analysis

**Schools Reviewed** - 10 schools

School	Library & Librarian Services
Ivanna Eudora Kean High School	Yes
Charlotte Amalie High School	Yes
Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School	Yes
Joseph Gomez Elementary School	Yes
Lockhart Elementary School	Yes

<b>Ulla F. Muller Elementary School</b>	Yes
<b>Joseph Sibilly Elementary School</b>	No
<b>Yvonne E. Milliner Bowsky Elementary School</b>	Yes
<b>Julius E. Sprauve School</b>	No
<b>Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School</b>	No

### District Summary

- 7 of 10 schools (70%) provide library or librarian services.
- 3 schools (30%) do not currently provide such services.

### Observations

- Secondary schools maintain stronger access to library services.
- Elementary schools experience greater disparities in staffing and resource availability.
- The St. Thomas District bookmobile may help extend reading and literacy access to underserved schools and communities, including St. John.

### 4. Status of Public Libraries Across the Territory

Public library access in the USVI continues to be affected by facility closures, infrastructure challenges, and ongoing capital repair projects.

<b>Public Library</b>	<b>Island</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<b>Charles W. Turnbull Regional Public Library</b>	St. Thomas	Closed due to capital repairs
<b>Elaine Ione Sprauve Public Library</b>	St. John	Closed
<b>Florence Williams Public Library</b>	St. Croix	Open
<b>Athalie McFarlane Petersen Public Library</b>	St. Croix	Closed

### Impact on Educational Access

The limited availability of public libraries throughout the territory increases reliance upon:

- School library services
- Mobile literacy programs
- Digital learning resources
- Community literacy initiatives
- District bookmobile outreach

With public library facilities currently closed on St. Thomas and St. John, many students and residents may rely heavily on school-based libraries as their primary access point for books, internet connectivity, research assistance, and literacy programming.

The Florence Williams Public Library on St. Croix currently serves as one of the few fully operational public library facilities in the territory, making it an important educational and community resource.

### 5. Higher Education Library Services

The University of the Virgin Islands continues to maintain academic library and librarian services on both of its principal campuses:

UVI Campus	Island	Library Services
Orville E. Kean Campus	St. Thomas	Library and librarian services available
Albert A. Sheen Campus	St. Croix	Library and librarian services available

These university libraries provide:

- Academic research assistance
- Professional librarian support
- Access to scholarly databases and archives
- Technology and study spaces
- Educational resources for higher education students and faculty

The UVI libraries contribute significantly to the broader educational infrastructure of the territory.

### 6. Major Findings

- Secondary schools maintain the most reliable library access.
- Elementary schools remain more vulnerable to service gaps.
- Public library closures have reduced territory-wide community access to literacy resources.
- Physical libraries continue to serve an essential role despite increased digital access.
- The University of the Virgin Islands maintains important higher education library services on both St. Thomas and St. Croix.
- District bookmobiles may help offset disparities in literacy and resource access.
- The Virgin Islands Department of Education is developing plans to expand district bookmobile services territory-wide.

#### Strongest Areas of Access

The following school categories demonstrate the most consistent library access:

- High schools
- Junior high and middle schools
- Larger K-8 campuses

## Areas of Concern

Schools lacking services are primarily:

- Elementary schools
- Smaller campuses
- Schools with limited staffing or infrastructure capacity

Professional librarian services continue to provide important instructional support that cannot be fully replaced by online access.

## 7. Recommendations

The USVI public school system demonstrates relatively strong overall school library coverage, with approximately 80% of reviewed schools reporting some level of library or librarian service. However, notable disparities remain, particularly among elementary schools and communities affected by public library closures.

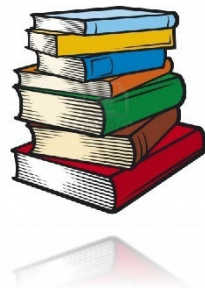
1. Expand certified librarian staffing at elementary schools.
2. Utilize and expand district bookmobile services to support schools and communities lacking permanent library access.
3. Accelerate repairs and reopening of public library facilities.
4. Increase digital literacy and mobile library programming.
5. Strengthen partnerships between public schools, public libraries, and the University of the Virgin Islands.
6. Improve transparency and consistency in reporting school library staffing and services.

## School Library Highlights

School libraries play a vital role in developing students' reading skills and fostering a lifelong love of literacy. During VIBE walkthroughs, several school libraries clearly demonstrated their value as dynamic learning spaces that support literacy development beyond the classroom. These “learning hubs” offer diverse programs and resources while cultivating inclusive environments that celebrate culture, creativity, and curiosity—benefiting students, educators, and the broader school community.



“The more you **read**  
the more **things** you know.  
The more that you **learn**  
the more **places** you'll go.”  
-Dr. Seuss

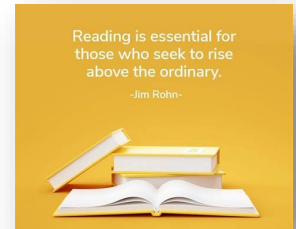


## School Library Highlights



# LEW MUCKLE

PreK-6 School

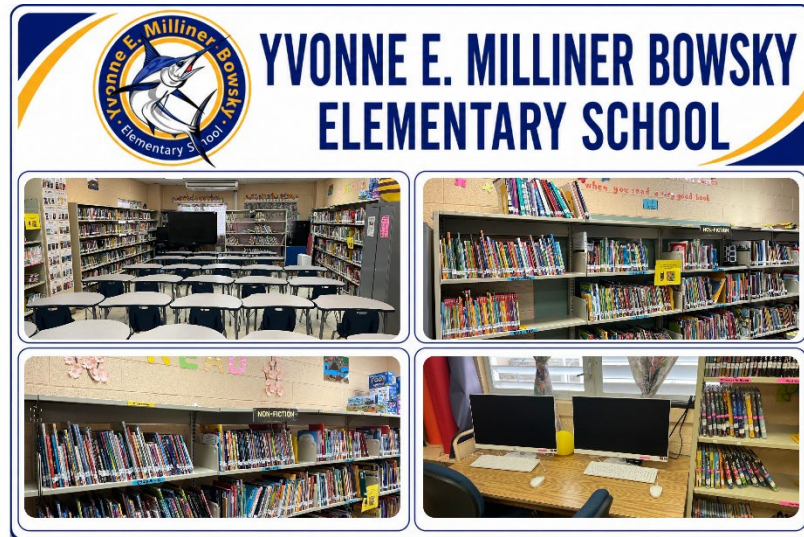
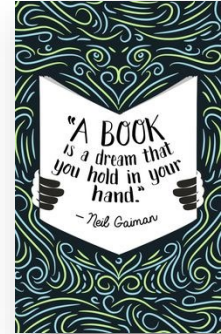
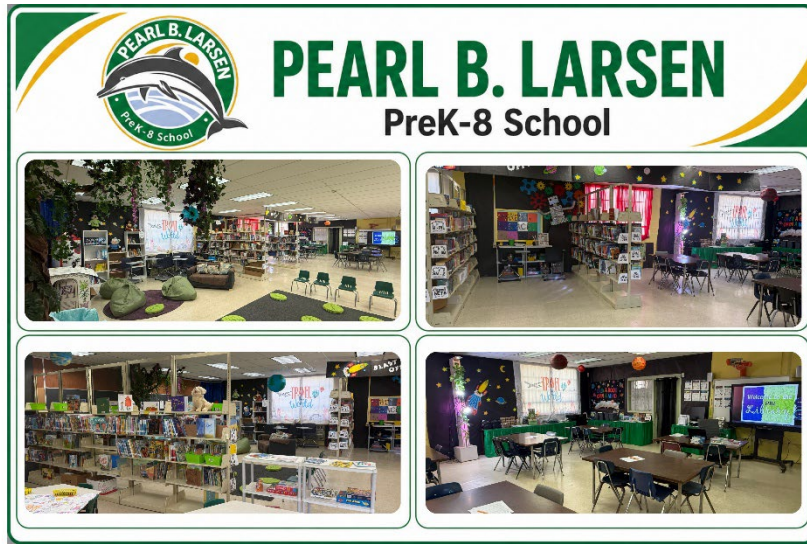


# RICARDO RICHARDS

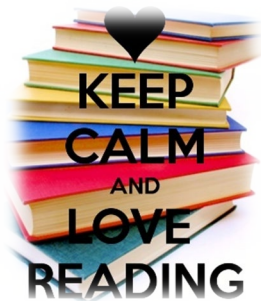
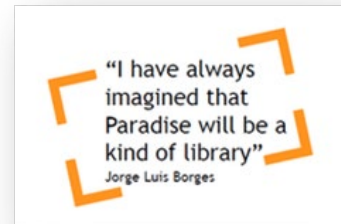
PreK-6 School



School Library Highlights



## School Library Highlights





The Virgin Islands Board of Education provides a variety of services and resources to support students, educators, families, and the broader community, including:

- Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Information
- Educator Licensure, Professional Certification, and Renewal Services
- Development, Review, and Oversight of Public-School Policies
- Complaint Filing, Investigation, and Resolution Support
- Advocacy for Educational Equity, Accountability, and Student Achievement
- Public Meetings, Board Actions, and Community Engagement Opportunities
- Information on Student Rights, Parent Resources, and Educational Programs
- Access to Educational Reports, Regulations, and Other Resources

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