

# GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION



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## Virgin Islands Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes – July 19, 2021

### I. Call to Order

The special meeting of the 20th Virgin Islands Board of Education was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Chair Kyza Callwood.

### II. Roll Call

The following were present: Kyza Callwood, Winona Hendricks, Shawna K. Richards, Emmanuella Perez-Cassius, Jeanette Smith-Barry, Angel Bolques, Jr., and Terrence Joseph. Members Nandi Sekou and Judy M. Gomez were absent.

Staff Members Present: Executive Director Stephanie Berry and AED Emmett Hansen

### III. Discussion about School Re-opening with the Virgin Islands Department of Education

Commissioner Berry-Benjamin was in transit and unable to attend the start of the meeting. Dr. Wells-Hedrington represented the Department. Supt. McGregor and Supt. Jurgen would present on behalf of their respective districts.

In her synopsis, Dr. Wells-Hedrington said the schools would be ready and outlined the measures taken by DOE staff to ensure readiness, with a focus on safety and security issues. Various items are on order, to include touchless faucets. The planned air conditioner installations have been outsourced to vendors and will not be ready. The DOE is focusing on low hanging fruit submitted by their principals, to include painting, door replacement, etc. Hand sanitizers, hand washing stations and signage are being installed as they arrive on island. Wells-Hedrington also updated on the disaster related projects.

Supt. McGregor presented the status of the STX District., which is similar to the STTJ District. He said everything that is necessary for safety and security is completed. He said schools are getting a facelift and discussed school-specific projects, such as the expansion of Granny Pre-K at Alfredo Andrews and the completion of the COMS library. The STX team also discussed the distribution of laptops/devices to students, teachers and Paraprofessionals, which would support education in case the Department returns to learning at home and overall delivery of student instruction, including testing.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

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

#### VISION STATEMENT

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

Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions. Topics included:

- Problems at various schools
- School buses (DOE was unable to discuss since they are currently in negotiation) and bus safety protocols
- Water fountains
- Libraries
- PE programs
- Ongoing maintenance costs
- COVID school safety practices/testing
- Data Utilization
- Use of CARES funding and delays in spending
- School lunch
- Staffing and disparities between districts

Follow Up: The Board will do walk throughs of the schools on July 30 (STTJ) and August 2 (STX). Member Perez-Cassius said the Board is expecting the various certifications requested by Code to be provided. The Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup> date does not work for STX VIDE Team. The Board is prepared to do walk throughs on its own if there are scheduling conflicts. The date will be worked out offline.

Chair Callwood thanked all for their participation and asked the VIDE to notify the Board of any hiccups prior to the scheduled tours.

#### IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Member Joseph moved to adjourn.

SECOND: Chair Callwood

So ordered. The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Submitted By:



Shawna K. Richards, PMP  
Secretary

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