

**THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION CERTIFYING THE RE-OPENING OF ST. THOMAS DISTRICT
SCHOOLS PURSUANT TO VIRGIN ISLANDS CODE, TITLE 17, SECTION 24**

WHEREAS, the Virgin Islands Board of Education ("Board") was established as an independent agency of the executive branch of the Government of the USVI by Act No. 2252; and

WHEREAS, the Board has been given authority pursuant to Virgin Islands Code, Title 17, Section 24(a)(2)(B) to certify, upon consultation with the Commissioner of Education, the Department of Labor, Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), that all schools inspected by the Board pursuant to Section 24(a)(1) are environmentally safe;

WHEREAS, environmental reports are obligatory in order to assess the safety and health of school environments and are critical determining factors related to the certification of the reopening of schools;

WHEREAS, the Board's School Plants and Facilities Committee ("SPFC") conducted inspections within the St. Thomas District, which inspections are a pre-condition to reopening of schools and the reinstatement of in-person instruction;

WHEREAS, the SPFC inspected the following schools on February 27, 2021:

- 1) Ulla F. Muller Elementary School (K-5)
- 2) Jane E. Tuitt Primary School (K-5)
- 3) Lockhart Elementary School (K-3)
- 4) Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School (Pre-K-5)
- 5) Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School (K-5)
- 6) Joseph Sibilly Elementary School (K-6)

WHEREAS, the SPFC raised issues and concerns during the inspections with the Virgin Islands Department of Education ("VIDE") regarding minor discrepancies and challenges in most of the schools inspected in the district.

WHEREAS, based on a review of the VIDE's reopening plan and SPFC's inspections, the committee made the following observations:

- 1) All schools have safety and distancing instruction signage placed visibly around campus interior and exterior.
- 2) All schools are equipped with hand sanitizer and soap dispensers in restrooms.
- 3) Outdoor wash stations were installed and operable.
- 4) Hand washing stations were found in some Kindergarten class rooms and inside hallways.

- 5) All school plans included "grab & go" lunch pickup, in-class eating, and were limited as to no scheduled supervised recess.
- 6) All school plans included specific on-boarding and dismissal protocols unique to each school's needs and resources;
- 7) All schools have a secured isolation area.
- 8) All schools have site- based nurses on site.
- 9) Based on 8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. instructional scheduling, individual school site instruction methods vary;
- 10) As per the VIDE rollout plan, each school's first two week re-opening will entail modified instruction classes, Kindergarten classes, followed by the incorporation of 1st-3rd grades in week three.
- 11) All teachers' desks have plexiglass separation stands.
- 12) The VIDE has secured plexiglass partitions for teachers that are scheduled to be available shortly.
- 13) A tri-fold plexiglass is stationed on each student's desk.
- 14) The district has verified the usage of school buses; however, no schedule information was available at reporting time.
- 15) VIDE officials have not secured bus schedules.

WHEREAS, the Board has received inspection reports from The Virgin Islands Fire Service, the Virgin Islands Department of Health, and Certificates of Construction from DPNR;

WHEREAS, environmental reports from DPNR, and OSHA remain outstanding;

WHEREAS, the Board held a special meeting on March 11, 2021 at which time the VIDE provided additional updates for repairs made to address concerns of the SPFC and responded to various questions posed by the Board;

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board grants conditional certification for the re-opening of the following schools with a hard review date of Thursday, March 25, 2021:

- 1) Joseph Sibilly Elementary School (K-6)
- 2) Ulla F. Muller Elementary School (K-6)
- 3) Lockhart Elementary School, (K-3)
- 4) Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School, (Pre-K-5)
- 5) Julius E. Sprauve School (K-8)
- 6) Jane E. Tuitt Primary School (K-5)
- 7) Joseph A. Gomez Elementary School (K-5)

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board requires the Department of Education to provide completion reports from the internal and external contractors with appropriate and legible signatures relative to the Joseph A. Gomez Elementary and the Jane E. Tuitt Elementary Schools and will reconsider the VIDE's renewed request for certification upon a showing of satisfactory proof that the following concerns for each school have been addressed:

Joseph Gomez Elementary School

- 1) Fix all bathroom ceilings with fiberglass exposed
- 2) Fill Paraprofessional staffing concerns to support teachers and administration
- 3) Update bathroom facilities by adding toilet paper and hand towel dispensers
- 4) Provide Lunch scheduling and staffing from district director
- 5) Trim grounds outside campus faculties/ and fields
- 6) Update bathroom fixtures, including toilets and sinks
- 7) Provide tent covering for areas where students wait before and after school
- 8) Remove storage areas within all in-person instruction classrooms
- 9) Provide a clear Modified Instruction Schedule
- 10) Address any/all leaks on school campus

Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School

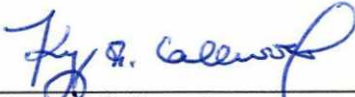
- 1) Remove excessive clutter and storage within all in-person instruction classrooms
- 2) Address roofing concerns of leakage and mold on ceiling tiles
- 3) Repair outside washing stations
- 4) Drop-Off/Pick-Up staging area/procedure for students and staff with tent covering
- 5) Provide Lunch scheduling and staffing from district director
- 6) Implement Department of Health recommendation for an isolation area

Ulla F. Muller Elementary School

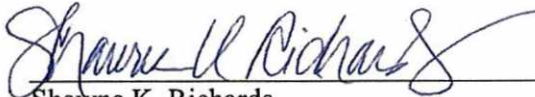
- (1) Fix all bathroom ceramic tiles and minor roof repairs in the bathrooms
- (2) Fix corridor roof of the Kindergarten wing
- (3) Review the setup of the Nurses station and relocate to an alternate location with bathroom

If the concerns are not addressed for each school, the certification with respect to any or both of the schools shall automatically be revoked upon notice to the VIBE.

Adopted this 11th day of March, 2021, by the Virgin Islands Board of Education.



Kyza A. Callwood,
Chairperson, Board of Education



Shawna K. Richards,
Secretary, Board of Education

Daisy R. Williams
Notary Public
March 19, 2021

DAISY R. WILLIAMS
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES APRIL 25, 2022
NP-129-18