

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION



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VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING SAFE SCHOOL CAMPUSES

The Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE) recognizes the territory's public schools have experienced disrupted instruction caused by irresponsible acts of school violence, to include bullying and cyberbullying, that have been widely shared on social media. The members of the Board stand in support of the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), the families, teachers and students who demand safer and healthier school campuses territory wide.

Kyza Callwood, PhD., Chairman of the 20th Board of Education, says "these repeated incidents of school violence are disrupting school operations, causing further loss of instruction, creating safety concerns on our campuses, and too often continue beyond the immediate school campuses. Our students, faculty and staff are entitled to safe environments that promote innovation, creativity, and learning. The Board of Education is committed to taking all measures needed to support positive learning environments and safer school campuses."

Specifically, the Board's Policies, Rules and Regulations committee is in the process of updating the existing school discipline policy as part of a comprehensive overhaul of VIBE policies. This update aligns the policy with best practices that focus on prevention, restorative practices, consequences, behavior modification, and an increased emphasis on social-emotional learning. The Board will soon vote to release the updated school discipline policy for public input and feedback.

The Board is also calling on the Department to aggressively implement social-emotional learning strategies that are designed to help students to problem solve, manage, and process their emotions. Dr. Callwood also encourages greater community engagement with the territory's public schools in ways that can help to increase levels of safety, develop greater self-esteem as well as conflict resolution skills in our students, and address issues that contribute to incidents of violence on our campuses.

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.

The Board is calling on parents, guardians, grandparents, and family members to revive and join school PTAs and to establish better communication with their children to recognize and address potential areas of concern that can lead to physical altercations. “There is no room for finger pointing when it comes to addressing school violence,” Callwood stated. “Our common goal must be to reduce school violence and continuously improve school environments so that students can safely learn and reach their highest potential.”

The Board takes this opportunity to thank students, VIDE teachers, administrators, school counselors, school monitors, school resource officers, and all staff who work hard every day to promote positive school environments where students and staff can feel safe mentally and physically during these challenging times. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

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