

The Virgin Islands  
Department of Education Presents  
**2022-2023 ST. CROIX DISTRICT  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR CANDIDATE**

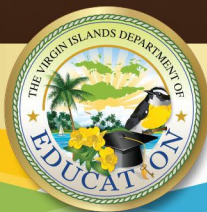


**ASTRAL BATTISTE**

Kindergarten  
Pearl B. Larsen PreK-8 School

— **For full bio, visit [www.vide.vi](http://www.vide.vi)** —

— *"Transforming Today's Learners Into Tomorrow's Leaders"* —



# Astral Battiste

## Biography

Ms. Astral Shervonne Battiste is in her sixteenth year of molding and inspiring the Virgin Islands' youngest learners at the Pearl B, Larsen School. Her teaching career officially began in 2003 when she began working as a teacher's aide at the St. Mary's Catholic School. She was then promoted within months to a Pre-K and after-school care teacher. Having an undeniable love for teaching, it was evident she had chosen the right career.

Ms. Battiste first realized the strong connection she had with children as a volunteer at the Answer Child Day Care while she attended St. Croix Central High School. She decided at that point, her destiny was to become an elementary school teacher. Upon graduation from St. Croix Central High School in 2001, and with this goal in mind, she immediately began her college education at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI). While studying at UVI, Ms. Battiste continued working for the 4H Summer Camp, which she had been doing from her early teenage years. She would create lessons, plan field trips, and create the most exciting activities for the campers. In 2006, she graduated from the University of the Virgin Islands receiving a Bachelors in Elementary Education with a concentration in Social Sciences. This same year, her journey at the Pearl B. Larsen School began.

Throughout her Pearl B. Larsen journey, Ms. Battiste spearheads the Week of the Young Child Committee, is a member of the Black History, A Taste of Pearl B and VI History Month Committees. She has been a Coach for VI History Quiz Bowls and a member of the Science Fair Committee. She has devoted some of her time to being on the School Improvement Team and is also the creator of the annual Kindergarten Christmas Showcase. Ms. Battiste is the Vice-Chair of the Pearl B. Larsen PEP Squad Committee in which she organizes and executes school programs such as Hispanic Heritage Month Showcase, School Christmas Programs and many other school events. She has proudly served in previous years and is presently the Kindergarten grade level chair. Additionally, Ms. Battiste has taught after-school classes and in her earlier years, Saturday Academy. She has been Daisy Girl Scout Troupe Leader and works presently for the Operation Inspire Afterschool program where she gets to enrich student learning while exposing children to project-based learning. Ms. Battiste has had the opportunity to attend Model School Conferences in Florida and Washington throughout her teaching career.

In 2010, Ms. Battiste had the honor of being the Pearl B. Larsen School Teacher of the Year and also the Office Max Teacher of the Year. In 2013, she obtained her Master of Arts in Education with a concentration in Reading Instruction. This is also the year her greatest gift and continuous inspiration was born, her daughter A'Nai Leilani Richards.

Ms. Battiste realizes the importance for rigor and relevance in our schools, but always adds a touch of love and nurturing. She is humbled to be the 2022-2023 Pearl B. Larsen School Teacher of the Year and has repeatedly said she would not trade her career for the world. Each morning, seeing the bright inquisitive smiles of the young children has made her develop an even deeper understanding and passion for education. Pearl B. Larsen School has molded her into being the dynamic teacher she is today. She is known for her most creative and inspiring door

and classroom decorations and each year parents are eagerly waiting to have their children placed in her Kindergarten class. She loves watching the excitement on her students faces as they are in awe when they learn and discover something new. Watching them explore concepts and learn different subjects as they begin to learn about the world has inspired her to keep fostering growth into these little humans.

Born on St. Croix, this passionate and dedicated teacher is the daughter of proud parents of Alric and Cynthia Battiste. She grew up in a loving, close-knit family with her two sisters and two brothers. There are no words she can use to say thank you to her parents for raising her to be the outstanding person she is today. From a young age her parents instilled strong morals, values, and always encouraged her to reach for the stars in whatever task she undertook. Her name itself, "Astral," derives from the celestial word "astrology" having to do with the stars and the moon. These same values she instills in her daughter and students today. She is proud of all her siblings, who are exemplary members of the St. Croix community in their respective fields as attorney and realtor, psychologist, business owner, and member of the United States Army and National Guard. Ms. Battiste's favorite quote is "It takes a big heart to shape little minds!" One constant remains true about Ms. Battiste: Kindergarten has her heart!