



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Office of Public Relations

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**VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ISSUES STATEMENT ON
UNACCEPTABLE VIOLENCE ON ST. CROIX SCHOOL BUS**

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) expresses grave concern regarding an unfortunate and unacceptable incident of violence that occurred today, involving four male students from the St. Croix Central High School. This afternoon, while traveling on Bus #27 from the high school to the Strawberry and East End areas, the students violently assaulted the bus driver, endangering not only the driver's life but also the safety of other students on the bus.

The driver was viciously beaten in the back of his head and face, and the students shattered the glass on the bus door during the assault. The VIDE condemns this behavior in the strongest possible terms and wants to make it absolutely clear that it has a zero-tolerance policy for violence of any kind. Such actions that endanger lives, whether of school staff or students, are entirely unacceptable.

As a result of today's incident, Bus #27 will be suspended from operation pending the outcome of an ongoing investigation. The bus sustained significant damage, and the VIDE is working closely with Abramson Enterprises Inc., the contracted bus vendor, to assess the situation.

The VIDE urges parents to speak with their children about proper behavior and respect when using school transportation. Unfortunately, verbal obscenities and aggressive conduct have become more frequent, and today's violent assault on the bus driver was completely intolerable.

Under the Board of Education and VIDE's policies, the students responsible for this act will be held accountable. These actions represent serious Level IV Infractions, including assault and battery, which will result in both police charges and disciplinary measures such as suspension or expulsion.

The VIDE is actively collaborating with the Virgin Islands Police Department as the investigation continues. The assaulted bus driver, who was escorted to the police station by a VIDE School Safety Manager, required medical attention and has since been transported to the hospital for further care. The VIDE will maintain contact with Abramson Enterprises regarding his status and well-being.

School bus transportation is a privilege, and it is the expectation of the VIDE that students abide by the rules and exhibit proper behavior when using these services. Recent incidents involving inappropriate student behavior on buses, including today's incident, highlight a growing concern for safety that the Department is addressing.

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