



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Department of Education Schools Reopen August 8

ST. CROIX, USVI – Virgin Islands Department of Education Acting Commissioner Victor Somme III looks forward to welcoming students and staff to the 2022-2023 school year on Aug. 8.

Prior to the start of each school year, officials from the Virgin Islands Fire Service and the Virgin Islands Department of Health are invited to conduct rigorous environmental, and life and fire safety inspections of public-school campuses. Somme said the results of these annual reviews help determine maintenance priorities for the year.

“We are careful to conduct these annual inspections so we can identify and address priority areas as part of our year-round maintenance plan,” he said.

Some items from the most recent inspections have been completed, and architectural and engineering consultants have developed packages to address high-priority areas of concern. The Department’s Facilities Division continues to work closely with schools toward completion of all projects.

Annual environmental, and life and safety inspections for the 2022-2023 school year will begin in mid-July. In June, for the first time, the Department conducted extensive safety and security inspections of schools with professionals from the Virgin Islands Fire Service, Virgin Islands Rescue, Virgin Islands Police Department, and EMS to identify potential campus vulnerabilities in the event of an active threat.

“While many of our buildings are aged and have outlived their lifecycle, this does not prohibit us from opening schools on time and providing safe and welcoming environments for students to learn,” Somme said. “Maintenance is ongoing, and we continue to work closely with the Office of Disaster Recovery, our federal partners, and industry consultants to build new schools or modernize existing buildings. I look forward to welcoming students and staff, and opening schools safely in August.”

To learn more about the Department of Education’s New Schools Project, visit www.newschoolsvid.com.

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