

Government of the United States Virgin Islands

Office of the Commissioner

Department of Education

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Dear Virgin Islands Teacher,

As part of the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) Five-Year Strategic Plan, the Department has been improving the U.S. Virgin Islands education system at all levels by implementing the three State Priorities: Improved Academic Achievement, Teacher and Leader Effectiveness and Positive Organizational Culture. Initiatives addressed through the Education System Improvement Process (*eSIP*) include the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the Virgin Islands Curriculum Frameworks and related assessments. This ongoing work demonstrates the VIDE's commitment toward our stated goal of graduating students prepared for college and/or careers.

As a teacher, you play the central role in the success of our collective efforts to prepare our students for success in their post-secondary endeavors. You are closest to the students each and every day. This fact highlights the importance of your growth and development as the key to improving student outcomes. Thus, the next step in our reform process is the revision of the teacher and leader evaluation system. While the VIDE has had teacher evaluation forms in place, changes needed to be made to update the system and ensure that it is fair, comprehensive, and objective; with an emphasis on professional growth for our teachers.

The Virgin Islands Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (VITaLE) Task Force was formed to develop the evaluation system. The Task Force was comprised of the insular superintendents, district directors and coordinators, site-based administrators, elementary and secondary teachers, a counselor, representatives from the VIDE Commissioner's office, state directors, Virgin Islands Board of Education (VIBE), Educational Administrators' Association (EAA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI). The Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center (FLICC) along with experts from the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders facilitated the Task Force. After studying the research and best practices from across the country over six months, the Task Force made recommendations for a system of evaluation that supports the ongoing development of effective educators. The system is anchored by the adoption of the U.S. Virgin Islands Teacher Effectiveness Standards.

The process of revising the evaluation system is beginning with teachers and principals and will be expanded to all VIDE employees in the future. As you read this Teacher Guidebook, please notice the emphasis placed on the growth and development of our teaching force.

This represents the commitment of the VIDE to reinforce and acknowledge your professionalism in serving our most precious resource – our children.

Thank you for your dedication to your profession

Sincerely,

Sharon Ann McCollum, Ph.D.
Commissioner Designee