



# THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Office of Public Relations

1834 Kongens Gade, Charlotte Amalie \* St. Thomas \* U.S. Virgin Islands 00802-6746  
Telephone: 340.774.0100 Ext. 8136 (STT/STJ) 340.773.1095 Ext. 7064 (STX)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 8, 2023**

**0701-23**

#### **For More Information Contact:**

Shayla S. Solomon  
Director, Public Relations & Communications  
340-642-7132  
[shayla.solomon@vide.vi](mailto:shayla.solomon@vide.vi)  
[www.vide.vi](http://www.vide.vi) ~ [www.facebook.com/usvi.vide](https://www.facebook.com/usvi.vide)

### **COMMISSIONER WELLS-HEDRINGTON APPEALS TO COMMUNITY FOLLOWING RECENT ACTS OF CRIME IMPACTING SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington of the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) is appealing to the public regarding a string of recent acts of vandalism and theft that have impacted ongoing projects of the VIDE. "Over the past few days there have been several incidents of crime reported that can only be described as senseless, brazen, and unfortunate. I am asking for the support of the community in identifying persons involved in these acts who have demonstrated such a disregard for ongoing efforts to prepare schools for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year," said Commissioner Wells-Hedrington.

Air conditioning units stored at the Department of Education's procurement warehouse on St. Thomas were destroyed for the copper coil cores within the units. At the Charlotte Amalie High School demolition site on St. Thomas, windows and other construction equipment stored on site were stolen. Funding and procurement of these items were an integral part of the Department of Education's efforts to equip schools with needed resources for school preparations. On St. Croix, vandals stole 107 solar panels stored at the Educational Complex High School. The solar panels were procured as an energy-efficient project of the Virgin Islands Energy Office.

These equipment and resources designated for schools in the St. Thomas/St. John District and St. Croix District have been damaged and stolen with just a month away from the start of the new school year. "These acts gravely impact the students of the territory by taking away needed resources for classrooms and campuses. We must think of the students, our children, who are our future, before engaging in such behavior," said Commissioner Wells-Hedrington.

As the Department of Education actively prepares for the upcoming school year, the support of the community is needed as investigations are underway to arrest the perpetrators involved. "The return of these needed items for our schools is a priority. These resources are to improve our infrastructure to create comfortable and conducive environments for learning. The public is asked to keep a watchful eye out for any suspicious activity in and around school campuses and to call 911 to report any information related to these crimes," said Commissioner Wells-Hedrington.

###