



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)

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For More Information Contact:

Shayla Solomon

Director, Public Relations & Communications

shayla.solomon@vide.vi

www.vide.vi ~ www.facebook.com/usvi.vide

Ricardo Richards Elementary School to Be Recognized as a Model School at 2025 National Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) is proud to announce that Ricardo Richards Elementary School in the St. Croix District has been named a Model School by the Center for Model Schools and will be recognized at the 2025 Model Schools Conference, taking place June 22–25 in Washington, D.C.

This national recognition is reserved for schools that are boldly transforming education, using innovative practices to elevate student achievement and foster excellence across their campuses. Ricardo Richards Elementary stands among an elite group of forward-thinking institutions nationwide, celebrated for its dedication to collaboration, ambitious instruction, data-driven decision-making, and a relentless commitment to student success.

“We are honored to be recognized as a Model School at MSC 2025. This opportunity reflects the heart of our work turning challenges into blueprints for student success and school-wide impact,” said Principal Natasha O’Halloran-Smith.

As part of the honor, the school will present, "Building a Blueprint for Success: Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap," to over 5,000 educators from across the country. Their presentation will highlight practical strategies and actionable steps that have driven measurable gains in student performance and equity.

“Ricardo Richards Elementary is a shining example of what is possible when visionary leadership, passionate educators, and a supportive school community come together to make a difference. This national spotlight is well-deserved, and we are proud to see them represent the Virgin Islands on such a transformative stage,” said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

The Model Schools Conference, hosted annually by the Center for Model Schools, is one of the nation’s most dynamic gatherings of educators, leaders, and changemakers who are reimagining schools for the future.

Congratulations to the entire Ricardo Richards Elementary School community on this monumental achievement. You have made the Virgin Islands proud!

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