



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Public Relations

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MANDATORY CELL PHONE BAN IMPLEMENTED AT LOCKHART K-8 SCHOOL TO SAFEGUARD STUDENT SAFETY AND MINIMIZE SCHOOL INTERRUPTIONS

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) St. Thomas–St. John District, in collaboration with the leadership of Lockhart K-8 School, has enacted a mandatory ban on student cell phones effective immediately. This measure has become necessary following a series of ongoing and prolonged bomb threats that have caused near-daily disruption to teaching and learning, heightened anxiety among students and staff, and required extensive response efforts from supporting agencies, including the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD).

Over recent weeks, Lockhart K-8 School has endured multiple false alerts that have halted instructional time, impacted student well-being, and diverted critical resources needed for campus safety. Reports and firsthand observations indicate that cell phones have played a significant role in escalating misinformation, circulating unverified threats, and contributing to schoolwide panic.

New Policy Effective Immediately

To protect instructional time and campus safety, Lockhart K-8 School will now enforce the following:

- Students are strictly prohibited from bringing cell phones onto campus.
- Any student found with a cell phone will have the device confiscated, and a mandatory parental conference will be scheduled before the phone is returned.
- Monitors will conduct searches daily, with heightened focus on grades 5 through 8, to ensure compliance.

This policy aligns with VIDE's commitment to prioritizing student safety, mental health, and uninterrupted access to quality instruction.

Emergency Mandatory PTA Meeting

Parents and guardians are required to attend an emergency PTA meeting Thursday, November 20th at 5:30 p.m. to receive updates on school safety protocols and to discuss the implementation of the cell phone ban.

Additional details, including the meeting date, time, and location, will be shared through school notices and the district's communication channels.

Message from District Leadership

The safety and emotional well-being of our students remain our highest priority,” said district officials. These repeated threats have taken a heavy toll on our students, teachers, and support teams. This new policy is a decisive step toward restoring calm and structure, supporting the mental health of our children, and ensuring that every student has a safe and stable place to learn.

The VIDE St. Thomas–St. John District thanks parents, guardians, and the greater community for their continued cooperation as efforts are made to protect the learning environment and hold those responsible for these threats accountable.

For questions regarding the new policy or the emergency PTA meeting, parents and guardians may contact the Lockhart K-8 School administration office.

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