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VIDE and Consigli/Benton Hosts Groundbreaking Ceremony Marking the Beginning of Construction of the New St. Croix Central High School

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), in partnership with Consigli/Benton Joint Venture (Consigli/Benton), the Government of the Virgin Islands, and the Office of Disaster Recovery (ODR) officially launched the New St. Croix Central High School (SCCHS) project during a ceremonial event held on Tuesday, April 21st, at the school's campus.

Government officials, education leaders, project partners, students, and community members joined together to celebrate a pivotal moment in the Territory's public education. The gathering highlighted the shared dedication to creating safe, innovative, and student-focused learning spaces for all.

"Today, we declare this as a season of rebuilding and replanting. The new St. Croix Central High School will stand as a beacon of opportunity. The school brings more than classrooms. It will serve as a hub for learning, creativity and connection, and be a place where every student knows they belong and are prepared to thrive in the global society," said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

Eric Cusin, Vice President of J. Benton Construction, LLC, shared what being entrusted with the $319M design-build project means to his team: "Because this school means so much to our team, we understand the responsibility that comes with rebuilding it. We are committed to performing the work with the quality, care, and respect this school community deserves."

The New St. Croix Central High School is among the first projects identified in VIDE's Educational Facilities Master Plan. The 165,000 square foot campus will support inquiry-based learning focused on the arts, with a variety of space types and flexible infrastructure. The academic learning suites are supplemented by dedicated space for Theater, Music, Visual Arts and Dance, Labs/Maker spaces, a Gymnasium and ROTC building. The New St. Croix Central High School will support up to 1,000 students.

"Today marks a new beginning for Carib students, alumni, and the future of Central High School," remarked ODR Director Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien. "The project will commence with the demolition of the old gymnasium, clearing the path for construction of the new CHS on the south side of the school's campus. Once construction of the new school is complete, the old buildings will be demolished. The ODR extends its gratitude to our local and federal partners for their dedication to advancing this project and the recovery across the territory."

Slated for completion in December 2029, this new construction initiative reflects VIDE's ongoing commitment to providing equitable, high-quality learning environments designed to support student success, encourage

innovation, and ensure long-term sustainability. The remaining field work and demolition of the old SCCHS will be completed by May 2030.

Governor Bryan expressed gratitude for this period of unprecedented growth and renewal. “Today is a good day for St. Croix and a good day for the Virgin Islands, because it is another clear sign of what is possible when we stay focused on the work of transformation before us. I am deeply grateful for this moment, for the opportunity we have in this generation to remake and modernize our Territory, and for the many people across government, education, construction, and recovery who are doing the hard work every day to move that transformation forward.”

“In 2009, after a serious infrastructure failure at one of our schools, an assessment found that it would take $1.5 billion just to modernize and improve the Territory’s school infrastructure. Today, with the support of our federal partners in the recovery process, we have secured $4 billion for that broader work, and in just the last 30 days we have broken ground on the modernization and reconstruction of three schools in the Virgin Islands. That is real progress. The new St. Croix Central High School represents more than a construction project. It represents a promise to our students, our families, and our future that the Virgin Islands is rising to meet this moment and building schools that match the talent, promise, and potential of our young people,” said Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

In 1967, the St. Croix Central High School opened as a successor to the Christiansted High School. It is centrally located to serve students from across the island. For generations, SCCHS has offered a comprehensive education, providing students in grades 9-12 with diverse academic, career, and technical opportunities. This reconstruction marks a new chapter in its legacy—one that will empower students and strengthen the community for years to come.

To learn more about the New St. Croix Central High School and the Department of Education’s plan to build new schools in the Virgin Islands, visit www.newschoolsvide.com.

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