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VIDE and Consigli/Benton Hosts Project Launch Ceremony Signaling the Start of the Modernization of the Bertha C. Boschulte PreK-8 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 Bertha C. Boschulte PreK-8 School Modernization Project during a ceremonial event held on Thursday, March 26 at the school's campus.

The ceremony brought together government officials, education leaders, project partners, students, and community members to celebrate a transformative milestone for public education in the Territory. The ceremony also highlighted a shared commitment to advancing modern, resilient, and student-centered learning environments across the Territory.

"This project represents more than new buildings, it represents opportunity, innovation, and a commitment to developing the whole child. The impact of this project is significant in that it will benefit future generations of students who can receive instruction in learning environments developed for student success," said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

The Bertha C. Boschulte PreK-8 modernization is among the first projects identified in VIDE's Educational Facilities Master Plan. The transformation of the existing 14-building campus will introduce innovative design elements such as enhanced outdoor passages and learning spaces, and collaborative maker areas to support project-based and inquiry-driven learning.

James Benton, Principal-in-Charge of Consigli/Benton, shared what being entrusted with the $120.6M modernization project means to his team: "Our team takes great pride in being part of projects that matter, and this one is especially meaningful because it directly impacts the lives of young people in our community. This is our home, and we understand the responsibility that comes with building spaces where future leaders are shaped."

The upgraded campus will be designed to be net-zero energy-ready, featuring modernized infrastructure, improved building systems, and expanded use of key facilities, including the auditorium, library, cafeteria, and gymnasium, for both school and community engagement.

With a projected completion date of December 2028, the modernization project underscores VIDE's continued investment in creating equitable, high-quality educational spaces that foster student achievement, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

"ODR recognizes the urgency of completing these critical projects by 2035 and is actively working toward that goal. Prioritizing the commencement of construction and the successful completion of school projects is essential

to providing the educational environment our students deserve. It is imperative that we rebuild infrastructure from which our children and their children can benefit. This occasion reminds us why and for whom these projects are intended," remarked ODR Director Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien. "Thank you to our partners FEMA, VIDE, Consigli/Benton, SMMA and Design District Architects, and all other stakeholders for their commitment to seeing this project to completion."

During his comments, Governor Bryan emphasised the critical importance of capacity building across the territory as the Virgin Islands enters a period of unprecedented growth and recovery. With major projects advancing and new opportunities emerging, the Governor emphasized that success would depend on a strong, ready, and willing workforce.

"Today marks more than the start of a construction project. It marks another promise made real for the people of the Virgin Islands. At a time of tremendous growth and transformation across our Territory, we have to make sure our people are prepared to rise with it. When we modernize a school like Bertha C. Boschulte, we are saying our children deserve spaces that support learning, inspire excellence, and prepare them for the future. This is how we build a stronger Virgin Islands. That is what this project represents, and that is why this moment matters." said Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

The Bertha C. Boschulte PreK-8 School is named in honor of a distinguished educator and public servant and continues to stand as a symbol of educational excellence in the Virgin Islands. This modernization 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 Bertha C. Boschulte PreK-8 School and the Department of Education's plan to build new schools in the Virgin Islands, visit www.newschoolsvide.com.

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