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:
Office of Public Relations
public.relations@vide.vi

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES TERRITORY-WIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL OPENING STATUS FOR 2026–2027 SCHOOL YEAR

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) formally announces the opening status of public schools Territory-wide for the start of the 2026–2027 School Year on Monday, August 10, 2026. Public schools in both the St. Croix District and St. Thomas–St. John District will open and operate on their normal schedules, with one exception affecting a specific group of students at the Lockhart School on St. Thomas.

Only students in grades K–3 at Lockhart School will have a delayed start to the school year. Parents and guardians will be notified when an opening date has been established for K-3.

ST. CROIX DISTRICT: All public schools in the St. Croix District will open on August 10, 2026, and operate on their normal schedules.

There are no public schools in the St. Croix District that are unable to open for students on the first day of school. The district looks forward to welcoming students, faculty, and staff for the beginning of a productive and successful 2026–2027 School Year.

ST. THOMAS–ST. JOHN DISTRICT: All public schools in the St. Thomas–St. John District will open on Monday, August 10, 2026, and operate on their normal schedules.

The **only exception is students in grades K–3 at Lockhart School**, whose start date has been delayed due to contractor work that must be completed before those classrooms can welcome students. Parents and guardians of Lockhart K–3 students should keep their children home until an official opening date is announced. The Department will communicate directly with families and provide a public update once the return date for these students has been confirmed.

It is important to emphasize that **Lockhart students in grades 4–8 will report to school as scheduled on August 10, 2026.** Lockhart School is not closed. The delayed opening applies **exclusively to students in grades K–3**.

ONGOING SCHOOL FACILITIES WORK

The Department recognizes that school readiness is an ongoing process and that facilities work remains at several campuses across the Territory. The Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance (BSCM) continues to address facility-related matters, including air-conditioning repairs and replacements, air-quality concerns, roof leaks, and repairs to modular classrooms.

As part of these ongoing efforts, the Department has successfully secured a contractor to address the gymnasium roof at the St. Croix Educational Complex High School. The anticipated repair work is expected to take approximately one week. This project is part of the Department's broader commitment to ensuring that school facilities are safe, functional, and conducive to quality teaching and learning.

"Opening our schools is about more than unlocking doors it is about creating environments where our students and educators can learn, grow, and thrive," said Commissioner of Education Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington. "We recognize that work remains, and we will not minimize the challenges before us. We are addressing them directly while prioritizing the health, safety, and well-being of our students and employees and continuing the important work of improving our school facilities."

Facilities improvement efforts will continue throughout the coming months. BSCM, in collaboration with district leadership, school administrators, contractors, and other partners, will remain focused on resolving outstanding matters and advancing necessary repairs and improvements across the Territory.

The Department extends its sincere appreciation to the educators, employees, volunteers, parents, contractors, community stakeholders, and partners who contributed their time, resources, and support to the extensive preparations undertaken to welcome students back to school.

"Preparing our schools for students is a shared responsibility, and we are grateful to everyone who stepped forward and helped us prepare for the new school year," Commissioner Wells-Hedrington added. "Our work does not end when our school doors open. We will continue working diligently, transparently, and collaboratively to address outstanding needs and ensure that our schools provide environments where students can succeed."

SCHOOL OPENING STATUS AT A GLANCE:

ST. CROIX DISTRICT - All public schools will OPEN and operate on their normal schedules on Monday, August 10, 2026.

ST. THOMAS–ST. JOHN DISTRICT - All public schools will OPEN and operate on their normal schedules on Monday, August 10, 2026.

LOCKHART SCHOOL GRADES 4–8: Students will **REPORT TO SCHOOL AS SCHEDULED** on **Monday, August 10, 2026**.

LOCKHART SCHOOL GRADES K–3 ONLY: Students should REMAIN HOME. A confirmed opening date will be announced and communicated directly to parents and guardians.

The public is strongly encouraged to rely on the official communication platforms of the Virgin Islands Department of Education for accurate, factual, and timely information regarding school operations, facilities, schedule changes, and other important updates. Stakeholders are encouraged to verify information through official VIDE channels before sharing information concerning public school operations.