

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION

01/27/2022-REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

01/19/2022-REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 34-0174

Thirty-Fourth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

December 14, 2021

A Resolution commending The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands on the occasion of the commemoration of its 50th Year Anniversary (1971-2021) and acknowledging the many accomplishments of the administrators, teachers, and students

PROPOSED BY: Senators Steven D. Payne, Sr., Carla J. Joseph, Alma Francis Heyliger and Milton E. Potter

1 **WHEREAS**, in the fall of 1971 there was established in Estate Red Hook, St. Thomas,
2 the Nazareth Bay Secondary School, with Mr. Nevil Thomas serving as its first principal, and
3 Ms. Genevieve Lima as its first assistant principal, opening with approximately 800 hundred
4 students representing “the country,” inclusive of several communities on the far eastern end of
5 the island, as well as from the island of St. John; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the Nazareth Bay Secondary School, influenced by its large student body
7 and limited buildings, opened its instructional curriculum with a split session format, hosting
8 junior high students in the morning, and senior high school students in the afternoon; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the Nazareth Bay Secondary School opened with a world-class Music
10 Department and shortly after commencing, established a school band that quickly became
11 known for its unprecedented musical talent throughout the territory; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the Devil Ray was adopted as the official emblem/mascot of the Nazareth
2 Bay Secondary School at its inception in 1971; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in the fall of 1972, William I. Frett, a former English teacher under
4 Principal Nevil Thomas' administration was promoted to replace him and became the second
5 principal of Nazareth Bay Secondary School; and

6 **WHEREAS**, in 1972, the first graduation of the Nazareth Bay Secondary School was
7 also held outdoors due to a lack of a gymnasium; and

8 **WHEREAS**, on January 13, 1975, the Legislature of the Virgin Islands approved Act
9 No. 3656, honoring the outstanding and distinguished legacy of educator Ivanna Eudora Kean
10 by renaming Nazareth Bay Secondary School "The Ivanna Eudora Kean School," to
11 commemorate the 52 years of dedicated service of Miss Kean to the people of the Virgin Islands
12 in the field of education; and

13 **WHEREAS**, in the fall of 1977, The Ivanna Eudora Kean School transitioned to become
14 a senior high school with the construction of Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School; and

15 **WHEREAS**, the close proximity of the National Armory to The Ivanna Eudora Kean
16 School fostered a collaboration such that in the late 1970s, the National Guard built six
17 classrooms on the eastern end of the property of the school; and

18 **WHEREAS**, from 1983 to 2003 Mrs. Jo Sandra Jones-James chaired the incomparable
19 Music Department of The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, which sowed invaluable seeds
20 into the community by offering \$1000 music scholarships each year to outstanding music
21 students graduating from the school and majoring in music at college; and

22 **WHEREAS**, in June of 1986, the Music Department sponsored a studio-recorded
23 concert album called "The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School Concert Choir and Choraliers";
24 and

1 **WHEREAS**, the LP featured Ivanna Eudora Kean student Ms. Lorna Freeman, and sales
2 from the record generated enough revenue to purchase a baby grand piano for the Music
3 Department which still exists there to this day; and

4 **WHEREAS**, in 1988 the Legislature of the Virgin Islands by Act No. 5331, appropriated
5 \$600,000 to the Department of Education for the construction of nine new classrooms at The
6 Ivanna Eudora Kean High School and emergency repairs and maintenance of existing
7 buildings; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Sara W. Connell, who began as a home economics teacher at Ivanna
9 Eudora Kean in 1972, was promoted to become an assistant principal in 1987, and ultimately
10 principal in 1988 before retiring in 1995; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Levi Farrell, greatly influenced by Professor Austin Venzen and
12 Assistant Principal Dr. Leroy Trotman, created the Marching Band, and served with distinction
13 as director of the Jazz, Concert and Marching Bands at The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School
14 from September of 1991 to August of 2002; and

15 **WHEREAS**, the Marching Band became a staple in the annual Veterans Day and
16 Memorial Day Parades in St. Thomas, so much so that select students from the Marching Band
17 became part of the Virgin Islands Marching Band, which was invited to Washington, DC to
18 march in the first inaugural parade for President William Jefferson Clinton on Monday January
19 20, 1993; and

20 **WHEREAS**, The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School gained its initial accreditation from
21 the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 1994, lost its accredited status in
22 2002, but gained its accreditation on May 18, 2005; and

23 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Sinclair Wilkinson became the fourth principal of The Ivanna Eudora
24 Kean High School, serving from 1995 through 2001; and

25 **WHEREAS**, on December 16, 1998, Governor Roy Lester Schneider attended an
26 assembly at The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, and during the program pronounced

1 December 16, 1998, as Ivanna Eudora Kean High School Music Day, giving plaques to both
2 Principal Sinclair Wilkinson on behalf of the school and individually to each of the faculty of
3 the Music Department for excellence in music instruction; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Governor Roy Lester Schneider so endeared himself to the Music
5 Department of The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, when he secured a \$10,000 grant for the
6 purchase of world-class marching uniforms for the Marching Band in 1998, and featured the
7 Jazz Band as the unofficial gubernatorial band to play at inaugural festivities and swearing-in
8 of cabinet members ceremonies at Estate Catherineberg from 1994 through 1998; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the Marching Band first displayed its new uniforms as the Band
10 participated in the swearing in ceremony for Governor Charles Turnbull on January 4, 1999;

11 **WHEREAS**, Mrs. Lydia Simmons-Lettsome served as Interim Principal of The Ivanna
12 Eudora Kean High School, from 2002 through 2003; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Sharon Ann McCollum served as Principal of The Ivanna Eudora Kean
14 High School, from 2003 through 2015; and

15 **WHEREAS**, on May 7, 2004, the Legislature of the Virgin Islands passed Act No. 6674,
16 honoring Digna Marie Wheatley for her outstanding achievements, leadership, and community
17 service, as she successfully marshalled the students at The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School
18 to embody the spirit of civics by advocating for the Legislature to secure the funding to finish
19 building the gymnasium of The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, and the legislation named
20 the completed structure the Digna Marie Wheatley Gymnasium; and

21 **WHEREAS**, from 2009 to 2017, a science teacher named Kirk Edward Lewis
22 established and managed the very first aquaponic center at a high school in the territory at The
23 Ivanna Eudora Kean High School. The center, being the combination of aquaculture and
24 hydroponics, provided many students with a wealth of knowledge in business agriculture and
25 agricultural science; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Sally F. Petty served as Interim Principal of The Ivanna Eudora Kean
2 High School, in 2015; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Stefan V. Jurgen served as Principal of The Ivanna Eudora Kean High
4 School, from 2015 through 2019; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Sally F. Petty served as Principal of The Ivanna Eudora Kean High
6 School in 2019, but was reassigned to military duty later that year; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Alicia Leerdam has served as Interim Principal of The Ivanna Eudora
8 Kean High School, from 2019 through present; and

9 **WHEREAS**, for 50 years, The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School has branded itself as
10 more than merely an academic institution. It has become known as a learning environment
11 where instructors have showcased distinguished talents in the art of teaching to educate
12 students on how to excel in thinking critically and becoming productive citizens, and where
13 students have educated instructors on the nature of resiliency overcoming adversity in the face
14 of insurmountable odds; and

15 **WHEREAS**, for 50 years, The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School has endured many
16 challenges and remained steadfast through such difficulties, as damage to campus buildings
17 from hurricanes in 1989, 1995, and 2017; and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which forced
18 the sudden shift to distance learning and the very first virtual ceremonies for the Classes of
19 2020 and 2021; and

20 **WHEREAS**, for 50 years, The Ivanna Eudora Kean High School has established a legacy
21 of excellence in the preparation of students to lead in various careers and has produced stellar
22 professionals, including senators, judges, politicians, athletes, world-class musicians,
23 scientists, doctors, historians, entrepreneurs, educators, and other notable Virgin Islanders
24 excelling globally; *Now, Therefore,*

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