To: Justa E. Encarnacion, RN, BSN, MBA/HCM
Commissioner, Virgin Islands Department of Health

From: Wanson S. Harris Jr., CIH, COHC

SUBJECT: Virgin Islands Department of Education School Inspection

The Division of Environmental Health conducted a joint inspection with other regulatory agencies to include the Virgin Islands Fire Service. The inspection conducted by the division was to determine the readiness for opening and operating in a safe environment. The Division of Environmental Health conduct these inspections to support the Virgin Islands Department of Education and act in a consultant role, as well as identifying and recommending mitigation measures for an environment conducive to learning and free from environmental health hazards.

Pearl B. Larsen: Classrooms are equipped with the necessary hand sanitizers and soap dispensers and implemented the six feet distance rules. L-Shaped plexi-glass teachers' desk are in place. The kitchen is in compliance and already in operation. RECOMMENDED

Juanita Gardine: During the inspection, the maintenance department was on hand to erect the plexiglasses on the desk for teachers. L-Shaped plexi-glass teachers' desk. The kitchen is in operational however, it needs major renovations. After noting the deficiencies with the Director of Maintenance, he stated that they are awaiting bids to start the renovations. RECOMMENDED

Lew Muckle: School administrators implemented measures and marked out areas that specify 6 feet distancing. L-Shaped plexi-glass teachers’ desk are in place. Some of the classrooms has molded books, boxes of papers and other items that has the potential to harbor rodents if not removed. The kitchen needs a deep cleaning and will recommend not to use kitchen until deep cleaning is completed. RECOMMENDED

Ricardo Richards: During the inspection of the school, inspectors observed that classrooms were equipped with plexi-glass on the desks of teacher. Classrooms have markings on the floor and walls to ensure six feet distancing is followed. RECOMMENDED
Alfredo Andrews: Classrooms are equipped with L-shaped plexi-glass mounted on teachers’ desk. Markings on the floor are visible to students to adhere to six feet distancing guidelines. RECOMMENDED

St. Croix Central High School: Classrooms are equipped with the necessary hand sanitizers and soap dispensers and implemented the six feet distance rules. L-Shaped plexi-glass are in place for teachers’ desk. The kitchen is in compliance and already in operation. RECOMMENDED

St. Croix Educational Complex: During the inspection, the inspectors observed classrooms without desk and chairs for students. L-Shaped plexi-glass are in place for teachers’ desk. School administrators stated that parents borrowed some of the desks for virtual learning for their children at home and will be returning them when school is about to begin. The maintenance staff stated that they have the Plexiglass on hand to erect when the desks are returned. Students desks and chairs will be placed in empty classrooms, using the guidance provided when returned by parents. RECOMMENDED

Eulalie Rivera: Classrooms are ready with plexi-glass are mounted on the desks for teachers. Markings to gain visibility of the six feet distancing are noted on the floor and walls. The Kitchen is inoperable due to damages sustained from 2017 Hurricanes. RECOMMENDED

Claude O. Markoe: Classrooms are ready with plexi-glass being mounted on the desks for teachers. Markings to gain visibility of the six feet distancing are noted on the floor and walls. The Kitchen is inoperable due to damages sustained from 2017 Hurricanes. RECOMMENDED

School Kitchens
Pearl B. Larsen, Juanita Gardine, Alfredo Andrews, St. Croix Educational Complex, and St. Croix Central High Schools kitchens are operable and is RECOMMENDED. Lew Muckle School will be ready when deep cleaning is completed.

*All of the schools have extra plexi-glass on hand for additional desks if needed. Although not required, over 2,000 tri-fold student desk barriers were procured and will be delivered to schools as they arrive. Tri-folds are an additional layer of protection, however wearing of masks and 6Ft distancing are the requirements.

All schools are equipped with handwashing stations, touchless hand sanitizers in each room, soap and paper towel dispensers in all required areas.

February 22, 2021

WANSON S. HARRIS
Director, Division of Environmental Health
February 10, 2021

Carlos McGregor, Insular Superintendent
Carla A. Bastian, Ed.D, Deputy Superintendent
2133 Hospital Street
Christiansted St. Croix, VI 00820

Good Morning

On February 5, 2021 The Virgin Islands Fire Service Fire Prevention Unit conducted an assessment of eight (8) of your campuses. The intent of the assessment was to certify the campuses for opening. The findings identified that the Hood System in two of district’s kitchens are not functional. VIDE has informed VIFS steps that are currently in place to rectify the issues and have provided justification to support the actions currently being taken. For example, exhaust fans have been placed in the Juanita Gardine K-8 kitchen as a temporary action until the procurement process is completed, and similar actions are being made throughout. The Fire Extinguishers at the eight (8) school sites are either recently certified, currently being serviced, and or awaiting their appointment date from the local vendors. A follow-up visit will be made to ensure the certification of Fire Extinguishers across the district.

During the assessment none of the classrooms presented any significant fire safety hazards. E.g. outlet covers and ceiling tiles which were immediately rectified.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education, St. Croix District is granted the opportunity to rectify the identified issues without interrupting the daily operation of the kitchens, and schools. Based on the inspections conducted, assessments completed on the eight schools visited the St. Croix District is granted clearance by VIFS to open/resume all operations.

Respectfully,

Klebert A. Titus
Fire Chief

CC: Daryl George, Director
    Antonio O. Stevens, Assistant Director
    Henry Joseph, Fire Marshal, St. Croix District