



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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May 8, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2021 High School Graduation Update

ST. THOMAS, USVI – In an effort to reinforce and clarify plans for the 2021 high school graduations announced in the Virgin Islands Department of Education's May 5 Community Update, the following is true for all public high schools in the Territory:

- All graduation ceremonies will be conducted in a hybrid fashion—some ceremony elements will be prerecorded while others will take place in-person: **First Component:** Prerecorded messages from school officials and dignitaries; **Second Component:** In-person diploma presentations; **Third Component:** Prerecorded cap-and-gown presentation of graduates
- All graduation ceremonies will be executed in a mobile format, this will consist of either a drive-through ceremony or a walk-through ceremony
- All graduation ceremonies will feature graduates walking across a stage or designated area to receive their diploma, be greeted by dignitaries
- Parent/Guest will be allowed to take photos while graduate is crossing the stage
- **No graduation ceremony will accommodate seated, in-person audiences**
- All graduations will be live streamed on the Virgin Islands Department of Education's Facebook page

St. Croix Central High School – May 18, 2021 @ 10 a.m.

- A stage will be erected in the main parking lot

- Students will drive up, exit the vehicle, walk across stage to receive diploma, then return to vehicle and exit campus

St. Croix Educational Complex High School – May 19, 2021 @ 10 a.m.

- A stage will be erected on the school's soccer field
- Students will drive up, exit the vehicle, walk across stage to receive diploma, then return to vehicle and exit campus

Ivanna Eudora Kean High School – May 20, 2021 @ 1 p.m.

- Students will drive up to the elevated steps of the gymnasium, exit the vehicle and move toward the Walk Ray to receive their diploma, then return to vehicle and exit campus

Charlotte Amalie High School – May 21, 2021 @ 1 p.m.

- Students will line up outside, enter the Ruth E. Thomas Auditorium and walk across the stage to receive their diploma
- Students will exit the auditorium and campus after receiving diploma

As is customary, the logistics of each graduation ceremony will be shared with graduates and parents; graduations are not open to the general public.

As the Territory is still responding to the coronavirus pandemic, the Department of Education and its schools are committed to doing everything to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff. In the same way the Department has opted to conduct classes in a hybrid fashion—with some students attending in-person and others attending virtually—graduations are being conducted hybrid. In 2020, graduations were conducted virtually, as COVID-19 continued to rage and a vaccine was not yet available; this year, as increasing numbers of residents are being vaccinated, the VIDE has taken the approach to conduct the 2021 high school graduations in a hybrid format, with the guidance and support of the V.I. Department of Health.

Statement from Commissioner of Health Justa “Tita” Encarnacion: “The Department of Health is committed to working with the Department of Education to keep students and their families safe from COVID-19. The DOH approves the guidelines to be observed within both Districts and will have our COVID-19 team on site to assist. Graduations are important milestones, and we are all so proud to see our students accomplish their goals. We must remember that we are in the midst of a pandemic with 88 active COVID-19 cases in the territory. The health and safety of the public is my top priority.”

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