

PRESS RELEASE

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Ministry Of Education Officials Discuss School Violence

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Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, Honourable Sharie de Castro says her ministry is working around the clock to strengthen its systems and programs and will be reviewing the Education Act to address violence in schools.

Honourable Castro was at the time discussing current issues being faced in high schools throughout the Territory and the potential solutions that can be explored in a Public Eye programme titled: Navigating the Challenges: A Community Approach to Eradicating School Violence, Drug and Sexual Abuse."

Minister de Castro said, "In order to be the minister, I am first a legislator, I am a member of the House of Assembly and one of the areas that I want to hone in on is the fact that we are in the process of looking at our legislation. Not just legislation at the ministry, as stated in the Speech From the Throne, we will be reviewing the Education Act."

Honourable de Castro added, "We have done a number of consultations, and we are currently going through the process of the review, and we must strengthen the act to provide the requisite support and mechanisms for education to take place in the Territory."

The Minister for Education said her ministry is exercising various avenues and levels of disciplinary measures on a case by case basis to avoid excluding students from getting the education that they need by providing support inside and outside of school hours.

Chief Education Officer Mrs. Orlandette Crabbe said there are protocols and procedures in place to combat the challenges being faced in high schools in the Territory and urged parents and the community to lend their support because the ministry cannot solve these issues alone.

Mrs. Crabbe said, "The Ministry of Education wants for every child in the Virgin Islands to reach their God-given potential, our approach to managing this crisis situation that we are in is what we call a wrap-around approach; to provide all the resources that students may need, and their families to help mitigate their behaviors."

The Chief Education Officer added, “We will continue to work towards ensuring that every student on campuses receive education in a safe learning environment. Whatever measures we have to put in place to make sure that our children and teachers are safe, we are committed to continuing to do just that.”

Meanwhile, Inspector Rudolph Bobb stated that the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force is doing its part to mitigate against misbehaviour and misconduct on school campuses. He said there is now an increased presence of the police in schools, and random searching of students to assist in de-escalating heightened situations.

Inspector Bobb said, “We are here to assist, you can reach out to us at the family and juvenile unit where we can come together as parents and students, speak on what is happening. We can give you advice because we do not want our students to end up having serious charges taken before the courts because when they get criminal convictions, it will follow them for the rest of their lives.”

The full video of the Public Eye programme can be viewed on the Government’s Facebook page at [BVIGovernment](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS

Photo 1, 2, 3: Photos of Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports Honourable Sharie de Castro, Chief Education Officer Mrs. Orlandette Crabbe, Inspector Rudolph Bobb of the RVIPF, and Acting Director of Communications Mrs. Karia Christopher.

(Photo credit: GIS: F. Skerriitt)

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