



Curriculum News and Views

Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Technology

St. Croix District

U. S. Virgin Islands Department of Education

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Science Fair Rocks the District

Many of our schools have been conducting science fairs at the building level. This month is the opportunity for each school to submit entries for the annual District Science Fair.

The theme for this year is **“Alternative Energy Sources.”**

Initial Judging will take place on May 21st.

The Fair is open to the public on Friday, May 23rd and Saturday, May 24th.

We want to extend our sincere appreciation to all the teachers of science who provided support and guidance to our students throughout the school year and especially as they prepared to participate in the district-wide fair.

Rosa White X 259

EARLY CHILDHOOD

As we approach the end of what has proven to be another busy and successful school year, we should reflect on our accomplishments. A great deal of progress has occurred this year:

- ◆ The Kindergarten Teachers’ Handbook was piloted.
- ◆ Reinstated the “Early Prevention of School Failure Assessment Program.”
- ◆ Conducted pre and post workshops for Early Prevention of School Failure Assessment Program.
- ◆ Twenty-five primary teachers traveled to New York City, New York in November to attend the “National Association of Education for the Young Child” Conference during November.
- ◆ “Promoting Learning through Play, in the Early Elementary Years” a primary conference was held on January 21 and 22 on St. Croix.
- ◆ Revising the Kindergarten Report Card
- ◆ The Week of the Young Child was celebrated with the kite and fun day as the closing activity on April 12.
- ◆ The Best Beginnings 2003 5th Annual Early Childhood Conference was held at the University of the Virgin Islands on May 19 and 20th and
- ◆ The “Transition to Kindergarten” workshop for Headstart parents.

As we work together I know we can accomplish more. We will return with a positive outlook as we focus on the following activities during school year 2003-2004:

- ◆ Houghton Mifflin Reading Program.
- ◆ Implementation of the final draft of the Kindergartens’ Handbook.
- ◆ Conduct learning centers workshop
- ◆ Continue with the district’s initiative on assessment.
- ◆ 2nd Annual Primary Conference.
- ◆ Continue with our activities for the Week of the Young Child.
- ◆ Best Beginnings 2004 Conference.
- ◆ Completion of the Kindergarten Report Card
- ◆ Week of the Young Child celebrations.
- ◆ Planning meetings for the National Association of Education for the Young Child Conference for November 2004 in Anaheim, California.
- ◆ “Transition to Kindergarten” workshop for Headstart parents.

I wish to thank all of you for your efforts and contributions during the past school year. I hope you have a **SAFE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER.**

Beatrice Tyler X229

Reading Campaign 2002-03

As we continue to encourage reading in our community, the Division of Curriculum, Assessment & Technology conducted the St. Croix Reading Campaign’s Reading Conference. The purpose of the conference was to provide parents, teachers and the public with reading strategies and practices to assist their children in learning to read well. Highlights of the conference included the pre-conference reception at Government House, the workshop sessions, the literacy fair, the reading clinic and a dynamic keynote address by Patricia Handley-Johnson, Houghton Mifflin, International Representative.

A heartfelt thanks to all participants and supporters of the Language Arts programs for school year 2002-2003. Best wishes for a safe and relaxing summer.

Charlene A. Matthew

Director’s Corner

The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills was recently administered to 2nd, 5th and 7th grade students and the Iowa Test of Educational Development was given to 10th grade students in the St. Croix District. Tests results will be distributed to the education community and will be used as information to help the Department to plan for the needs of our students.

The Division continues to serve the District by providing training related to the implementation of the School Administration Student Information (SASI) System to stakeholders including registrars, guidance counselors, nurses, administrators, and support staff.

Work continues on curriculum objectives and on the accompanying assessment components. Further, every effort has been made to provide resources to support the supplementary K-6 Reading Program. In addition, the Reading Campaign that was initiated this year will continue during the coming school year. Everyone agrees that in order to improve student achievement we must work on improving reading skills among our students.

“Academic Achievement ...Everyone’s Responsibility.”

Lauren Larsen, Ph.D.



Bilingual Education/ESL

During the month of April, all consolidated schools were engaged in the administration of the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) Battery of Tests to identified LEP students. We appreciate the efforts of all school administrators and BE/ESL teachers. Also, during this school year, the BE/ESL state and district collaborated in the following areas:

1. The development of the English as a Second Language (ESL) standards
2. Ensuring and assisting schools in complying with needed data collection for the end of the school year
3. Revision of the Manual for Identification, Assessment and Placement of LEP students and
4. Professional development in sheltered English instruction and accelerated English.

These areas of focus will ensure compliance with local and federal regulations.

Yvonne C. Rivera X 291

Booklets Available for Distribution

The following booklets are available for distribution to parent groups, students, teachers and the community at large:

- "Learn About Beating Test Anxiety"
- "Let's Improve Our Test-Taking Skills"
- "Helping Your Child With Writing"
- "Help Your Child Become a Better Reader"
- "TV And Your Child"
- "Successful Studying"

Call for copies as needed.

Let's organize the St. Croix Council of Teachers of Mathematics. All interested please contact the Math Coordinator next school year.

Language Arts

Virgin Islanders make waves in Virginia

Ten educators from the St. Croix District visited the Augusta County School District in Virginia to get a closer look at the "Reading Their Way" program. Last year, Claude O. Markoe, Principal Gary Molloy was searching for a way to improve reading scores. He explored the Extended Block Schedule and "Reading Their Way" approach to improve Kindergarten -3rd grade reading.

Augusta County Curriculum Supervisor Dorothy Donat, who designed the approach, first visited Claude O. Markoe School in May 2002 to orient teachers and staff to the basics of the program. Since the implementation of this program Molloy's school is showing drastic improvement. Dr. Donat made a follow-up visit earlier this month to assess the program and to introduce more advance lessons to teachers.

As part of on-going professional development, during the Carnival recess, Mr. Molloy with his Assistant Principal, Rachel Barnett, and seven other educators from Claude O. Markoe School visited the Stuarts Drafts Elementary School, the Wilson Elementary School and the Riverheads Elementary School. The Virgin Islands educators made themselves invisible to take in every aspect of the lessons presented by the Augusta teachers. Yves Abraham, a former junior high teacher who became a first grade reading teacher stated, "We just started using extension classes, so it is interesting to see what teachers who are a little more experienced are doing."

Mr. Gary Molloy and his staff hope that the knowledge gained on this trip will transfer to classrooms back at Claude O. Markoe Elementary School.

Charlene Matthew X246

TECHNOLOGY

We are happy to say that more & more teachers are using the Internet to find resources to make their instruction more interesting for their students. We have also seen an increase in student use of the Internet. The use of computers has allowed some teachers to do projects with their students that were never before possible. It is our intention to continue placing computers in schools and continue to provide the necessary training for teachers. We encourage all to use the available technology to take our students beyond the four walls of their classroom. Give your lessons a global flair. Have a restful summer.

Robert Schuster X310

Mathematics

As we rapidly approach the end of school year 2002-2003, let's keep in mind that we must explore new and innovative strategies that are essential to improving the teaching and learning of mathematics. We are required to include higher order thinking skills in order to develop effective problem solvers among our students. The Curriculum Guides distributed to the schools throughout the district contain a variety of objectives that our students need to know and be able to do to succeed from grade to grade. We are charged with preparing our students for the future and it is our duty to continue to find ways of educating them.

Keep in mind that our major task is to achieve the goal that all students master challenging mathematics that includes the foundations of algebra and geometry by the end of eighth grade. Keep mathematics alive and have an enjoyable summer vacation.

Juanita Boneque X254

NSIP News

The NASA Student Involvement Program competitions for 2003-04 have been established:

My Planet, Earth (K-1, 2-4)

Science & Technology Journalism
(K-1, 2-4,5-8,9-12)

Aerospace Technology Engineering Challenges (5-8)

Watching Earth Change,
(5-8, 9-12)

Design a Mission to Mars ...and Beyond (5-8, 9-12)

Space Flight Opportunities
(9-12)
visit

<http://education.nasa.gov/nsip>
to get more information.

Gloria E. Gawrych X252

Social Studies

Social studies in our schools is on the move. It is on the cutting edge because of its utilization of technology. Even though social studies educational software is not as developed as it could be many publishing houses are working hard to produce the needed materials. These efforts were launched by The National Council of the Social Studies. Here in our district we can assist by becoming members of NCSS.

Maurice Thomas X277