



Curriculum News and Views

Division of Curriculum Assessment and Technology

St. Croix District

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HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

“Hispanic Americans: Making a Difference in Our Communities and Our Nation” was the theme for Hispanic Heritage Month 2004 (September 15-October 15). Activities in schools throughout the District generated a lot of excitement with beautiful displays, educational programs and demonstrations. The foreign language department of the St. Croix Educational Complex, led by Chairperson Norma Manibo and assisted by Njina Lockhart and Maria Nieves, conducted a spelling bee on the last day. Winners were Johan Coto (1st place), Tatiana Pember-ton (2nd place), and Akeel St. Jean (3rd place).

SCIENCE, THIRD IN LINE

While the Department is focusing its efforts to improve Language Arts and Mathematics in all schools, what does this mean for the science program? Well, look forward to an improved student of science, one who can read and comprehend the written materials and at the same time handle the mathematical concepts, computations, and understanding that are so very necessary to be successful in the area of science.

The No Child Left behind Act has provisions for science to become a focus in School Year 2005-2006. In the meantime, our District is actively engaging our students in teaching that is aligned to the National Standards, the Virgin Islands Standards, as well as the District’s Curriculum Guide. In an attempt to help monitor the materials presented in the classroom, the District science examinations will continue as a summative evaluation component for all secondary students of science, with the addition of the intermediate grades (4-6) in May of 2005.

Rosa White,
Science Coordinator

NATIONAL FRENCH WEEK

November 5-11, 2004, marked the fifth annual commemoration of National French Week, “La Semaine du Francais,” sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF). Teachers and students of the French Language at the St. Croix Educational Complex and St. Croix Central High School joined schools and communities across the nation in highlighting the many contributions of the French and French-speaking world to literature, art, music, dance, civilization, science, technology, fashion, cuisine, and sports.

Anadia Andrews,
Foreign Language Coordinator

MATHEMATICS 2004-2005: A PREDICTIVELY PRODUCTIVE YEAR

Public, private, and parochial schools in the District have received MATHCOUNTS 2005 PACKETS. As we work toward a successful program, we encourage students from grades six through eight to participate. MATH COUNTS is a national program that promotes challenging mathematics problems in order to build effective strategies that will develop students into effective problem solvers.

The District is committed to improve mathematics education: Several workshops have already been scheduled. Mathematics resource teachers and chairpersons will be meeting monthly from 3:00 p.m. To 4:00 p.m. to discuss pertinent math pedagogical and performance issues as we prepare to focus on improving mathematics in the District.

Juanita Boneque,
Mathematics Coordinator

PRIMARY PROMISES KEPT

Our annual Primary Teachers Conference held at the Cormorant Beach Hotel on October 27 & 28, 2004, focused on “Promoting Student Achievement through Early Intervention in the Primary Years.” Teachers were trained in the administration of the Houghton Mifflin Intervention Program and the Road to Code Kindergarten Program.

Additionally, on Thursday, November 4, 2004, primary students (grades k-3rd) participated in the “Teens on the Green” Junior Golfers Parade and program held downtown Christiansted. Our students served as ambassadors for St. Croix, extending a warm welcome by displaying tokens made by the students at their school, such as windmills, moco jumbies, hibiscus flowers, among others.

Beatrice Tyler,
Primary Coordinator

School To Work /Careers Program

The STW/C Program plans to focus on assisting schools with proposals and with identification of funding sources and or partners to provide funding for specific activities in schools.

VICA at both high schools will be getting a lot of attention this school year. New leadership among faculty, staff, and students plus reorganization to guarantee greater student participation and accountability will definitely smooth the path to competition in Kansas City, Missouri, in 2005. Students will hone their skills not only for the competition but also for fund-raising. Keep Posted!

David A. Molloy,
STW/C Coordinator

Bilingual and ESL Education Program

In the BE/ESL Program, the school year began with a one-day professional development workshop for teachers and counselors in the administration of the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) Test. All schools complied by submitting the Language Minority Student Identification Form (LMSIF) on which 1,374 students have been identified. To ensure the proper services to all English Language Learners (ELL's), the BE/ESL State Office developed a framework for all consolidated schools to define their bilingual education programs.

From September 15 to October 15, all schools, consolidated and non-consolidated, celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with different activities that highlighted the contributions of Hispanics in the U.S., and the Virgin Islands.

Yvonne C. Rivera, BE/ESL Coordinator

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY 2004

On Friday, November 12, 2004, hundreds of DOE employees participated in our Professional Day workshops at the St. Croix Educational Complex. CAT Coordinators planned and implemented this mammoth event—under the leadership of Dr. Lauren Larsen, Deputy Commissioner of Curriculum and Instruction. Presenters from the business community and other government agencies, in addition to administrators and teachers of the DOE, provided comprehensive information highlighting the needs of the DOE family and the responsibility of each member.

The big lesson learned from our PDD is that we can never underestimate DOE employees' eagerness not only to be informed of the Department's policies and procedures affecting our jobs, but also to remain conscious of the ramifications of our behavior in our student-centered school community.

Literacy: Our #1 Priority

With the approval and implementation of school, district and territorial improvement plans, all schools are focused on improving reading. Summer Institutes for K-6 teachers that focused on scientifically-based reading research strategies, the five components of reading, classroom management and the DIBELS, an early reading screening assessment. Simultaneously, secondary teachers were exposed to the Project CRISS strategies to help students read more critically.

K-3 teachers and Special Education teachers received an overview of Reading First, the reading portion of NCLB that concentrates on ensuring that all children are fluent readers by third grade.

English departments received Prentice Hall English Literature texts for all 7th to 12th grade teachers; Junior High teachers received the READ XL to address the needs of struggling readers. At AFT Quest, secondary teachers attended presentations on the software that accompanies the English text and each participant received a CD of resources for his or her classes. Schools that recently adopted the READ 180 program Also received retooling on the use of that program.

The VI Reading First Grant Application has been approved. This grant will be used to support our efforts to improve reading instruction in grades K-3 by providing professional development, instructional materials, and assessments.

Charlene Matthew
English Language Arts Coordinator

Tech-News

The District Office of Technology has embarked on a project to develop a very user-friendly district web page. It is our intention to make it your favorite supermarket where you can shop for free and get all of your instructional resources. We have attempted to put numerous lesson plans, activity sheets, black-line masters, exams, test taking skills, studying skills, note taking skills etc. There is also an extensive collection on Virgin Islands history, facts and links. On this site you will also find the national standards, territorial standards, and the St. Croix District four-core curriculum guides. We have recently placed the territory REVISED STANDARDS IN MATH & READING edition dated 11/04. We encourage you to browse <http://www.stx.k12.vi> at your leisure. We also would like to hear from you with suggestion on how we can improve this site. This web page is intended for the use of parents, student and teachers of St. Croix. This site was created to address the educational needs of those that are in school, home-schooled, adult Ed, and out of school. It's an educational resource with a Crucian flare and a virtual library. What we have found is that a lot of people not related to education from within and out of the territory are using it as a resource tool. Other added treats are all the technical resources. There are on-line tutorials in Word, PowerPoint, and web browsers, Dreamweaver etc. There are also help links for computer troubleshooting and problem solving. So please log-on and take a tour and see what you find. You can drop us a line at rschuster@stx.k12.vi. Enjoy and have yourselves a very merry and blessed holiday season.

Robert Schuster,
District Technology Coordinator

