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VIDE Report: St. Croix Leads in Student Growth as STT-STJ Dominates in Academic Proficiency; Both Districts Weak in Math

CAHS's 5.2% and STX Central High's 0.8% math proficiency rates highlight severe challenges in mathematics territorywide, even as St. Croix led in student growth and attendance while St. Thomas–St. John excelled in academic proficiency and test performance

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The V.I. Department of Education's 2024-2025 Annual School Report Cards reveal notable contrasts in student performance between the St. Croix and St. Thomas–St. John districts, with each showing areas of strength and challenge under the newly launched Virgin Islands Students and Teachers Accountability System (VISTAS).

Across the territory, growth indicators—which account for 50% of a school’s overall score—proved decisive in determining ratings. Schools in St. Croix generally performed well in student growth and showed moderate attendance outcomes, while St. Thomas–St. John displayed stronger achievement scores in several elementary schools, especially Joseph Sibilly Elementary, which emerged as the territory’s top performer with a total of 88.44 points.

District Performance Overview

On St. Croix, the average composite score across elementary and secondary schools ranged between 62 and 74 points, led by Ricardo Richards Elementary (74.36) and St. Croix Educational Complex High School (65.69). These schools demonstrated consistent academic progress and comparatively lower chronic absenteeism, though territorywide data show mixed attendance outcomes across both districts.

At the other end of the spectrum, Alfredo Andrews Elementary scored 62.79 points, while Claude O. Markoe Elementary earned 62.96 points, both driven by notable student growth despite modest proficiency rates in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math.

The St. Thomas–St. John district presented greater variability. Joseph Sibilly Elementary’s 88.44 points set the benchmark for academic excellence, while Lockhart Elementary (58.40) and Jane E. Tuitt Elementary (54.31) recorded some of the territory’s lowest overall ratings.

Elementary Schools: Patterns of Achievement and Growth

At the elementary level, St. Croix schools outpaced their St. Thomas counterparts in growth metrics but lagged slightly in proficiency. Ricardo Richards Elementary led with an ELA proficiency rate of 47.3% and Math at 27.8%, paired with a moderate chronic absenteeism rate of 13.2%, which was lower than many schools across the territory.

Joseph Sibilly Elementary, by contrast, achieved both the highest ELA (50.5%) and Math (51.6%) proficiency rates in the Virgin Islands, a rare dual-subject success that significantly boosted its overall score.

Meanwhile, Joseph Gomez Elementary scored 61.99 points, with ELA and Math proficiency rates of 22.3% and 7.9% respectively — modest figures offset by one of the territory’s lowest chronic absenteeism rates at just 4.8%, showing strong student engagement despite academic challenges.

Schools such as Claude O. Markoe Elementary (62.96 points) and Lew Muckle Elementary (65.25) demonstrated moderate growth results, with just over 45% of students maintaining or improving their academic standing year-over-year.

Secondary Schools: Performance Divergence Across Districts

High school performance revealed similar contrasts. On St. Croix, St. Croix Educational Complex High School led the territory’s secondary institutions with 65.69 total points, posting a graduation rate of 86.5% and an ELA proficiency of 36.6%. However, Math proficiency stood at just 11.4%, underscoring a territory-wide challenge in mathematics achievement.

St. Croix Central High School followed with 61.28 points, recording an 85% graduation rate and strong Career and Technical Education participation at 93.7%. However, Math proficiency was notably low at just 0.8%, highlighting a critical area of concern despite otherwise solid graduation and vocational outcomes.

In the St. Thomas–St. John district, Charlotte Amalie High School earned 59.21 points with an overall graduation rate of 77.4% and a Math proficiency rate of 5.2%. Ivanna Eudora Kean High School outperformed its district peer with 62.74 points, a graduation rate of 85.5%, and a Math proficiency rate of 5.5%, alongside stronger attendance indicators.

Middle and K-8 Schools: Growth Dominance in St. Croix

St. Croix’s John H. Woodson Junior High School earned 64.87 points, with approximately 42% of students showing improvement in Math and 41.8% in ELA — reflecting moderate academic growth. Eulalie Rivera (64.72 points) and Juanita Gardine (67.96 points) also posted steady gains, though overall proficiency rates in both schools remained below 25%, underscoring the territory’s ongoing challenge in elevating academic achievement despite improved attendance and growth indicators.

By comparison, the St. Thomas–St. John K-8 schools showed uneven outcomes. Lockhart Elementary (58.40) and Julius E. Sprauve (62.13) reported similar totals, though Sprauve demonstrated stronger growth, with over 55% of students maintaining or improving in ELA.

Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Trends

Attendance data proved a key differentiator between districts. St. Croix schools averaged chronic absenteeism rates between 8% and 25%, with some—such as Eulalie Rivera (24.8%) and Juanita Gardine (26.3%)—showing significantly elevated absenteeism. Still, St. Croix’s rates were generally comparable to, or slightly better than, those of several large schools on St. Thomas, including Lockhart Elementary (11.4%) and Charlotte Amalie High School (8.9%).

Territory-wide, most schools scored between 80 and 95 points in attendance and school quality measures.

Language Proficiency and English Learners

The new VISTAS framework incorporates metrics for English Language Learners (ELL), introduced this year in several St. Thomas–St. John schools. Joseph Gomez, Ulla F. Muller, and Julius E. Sprauve reported ELL proficiency rates ranging between 25% and 41%, showing progress for a demographic that often faces steep learning transitions.

Introducing the VISTAS Framework

In a statement accompanying the release, the V.I. Department of Education said:

“The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), in collaboration with the Center for Assessment, has finalized the framework for the Virgin Islands Students

and Teachers Accountability System (VISTAS). In a continued commitment to transparency and student success, this innovative system equips districts and schools with relevant, data-driven insights to support targeted school improvement initiatives.

“Through VISTAS, schools can engage in meaningful discussions centered on goals, strategies, and measurable outcomes, particularly those designed to improve performance in the Territory’s lowest-performing schools.”

The department added that the Annual School Report Cards serve as a core element of the accountability framework, “providing stakeholders—parents, educators, and policymakers—with accessible information to better understand school performance and support improvement efforts.”

VIDE emphasized that each report card includes a five-level classification system, composite accountability index values, and indicator weights designed to ensure a standardized approach to measuring achievement and growth across all public schools.

Territory-wide Outlook

The 2024-2025 accountability cycle marks the first comprehensive implementation of the VISTAS system, laying the groundwork for long-term monitoring of academic progress in the territory’s public schools. While schools such as Joseph Sibilly and Ricardo Richards exemplify the potential of sustained achievement, others—including Lockhart and Jane E. Tuitt—highlight the ongoing need for targeted interventions in literacy and math.