

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Schools Public And Private Territory-Wide To Participate In Nationwide Walk-Out

VIC News / **Published On March 14, 2018 11:46 AM /**

Staff **March 14, 2018**



The Virgin Islands Department of Education said on Tuesday that it fully supports its students across the territory who plan to participate in the National School Walkout on today.

Students at our various schools -- both public and private -- will join their peers around the nation and walkout out of their classes at 10:00 a.m. for 17 minutes to protest gun violence and to honor the lives those students killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14.

"We commend our students' desire to exercise their First Amendment right to protest as they stand in solidarity with the survivors of the Valentine's Day massacre. The Department views this as an opportunity to teach valuable life lessons about government, citizenship, gun control and school safety," D.O.E. said.

D.O.E. Commissioner Sharon Ann McCollum lauded the efforts of student organizers and recognizes the impact of local participation.

"We hope participation in the National Student Walkout will promote meaningful conversations and actions on the part of our Education community," she said. "Furthermore, we encourage the Territory to reflect and participate in this important statement regarding the safety of all."

In a highlight for the territory, ABC's Good Morning America has confirmed that out of the 2,500 school participating, the Virgin Islands Montessori School and Peter Gruber International Academy (VIMSIA) will be one of five schools streaming a live feed in Mountain and Central time zones. B-roll has been prepared for the Eastern time zone. VIMSIA will be broadcasting a live feed beginning at 9:40 a.m. and ending at 10:40 a.m.

Governor Kenneth Mapp said he supported students who elect to peacefully exercise their First Amendment rights on this important issue.

"Sadly, gun violence has become a reality our young people, in particular, must face as victims and witnesses to tragic school shootings, whether in their neighborhoods or on their campuses," Mr. Mapp said. "It's important that we cultivate civic responsibility amongst our youth and an obligation to the common good is an important part of civic engagement. Students across the United States are standing up on Wednesday for what they believe in and I stand with the students in the Virgin Islands who choose to do the same."

D.O.E. said it will provide supervision of public schools to ensure the safety of the students during this demonstration.