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Dept. of Education Subpoenaed to Appear Before Senate Dec. 11 Following No-Show on Tuesday

Education / **Published On December 02, 2020 04:46 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **December 02, 2020**

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Senator Donna Frett-Gregory By. VI LEGISLATURE

The Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development on Tuesday voted to subpoena the Dept. of Education to appear before the committee on Dec. 11 to answer pertinent questions relative to the resumption of in-person learning in the territory, among other important matters on which the department has yet to provide updates.

"Education has to come. They have to understand that we cannot continue to have a community that's in anxiety over what's happening to the kindergarten and 3rd grade children without an answer," said Committee Chair Donna Frett-Gregory, [who told the Consortium](#) Monday that she would encourage her colleagues to subpoena the department. Ms. Frett-Gregory had received

communication from D.O.E. Commissioner Racquel Berry-Benjamin, stating she would not be available to testify for all of December after being invited to the Senate for a Dec. 1 hearing. The subpoena motion was moved by Senator Stedmann Hodge, Jr.

Members of the committee spoke along the same lines relative to the importance of the department's presence at the Senate to update the community as 2021 draws closer. "We're in December, before you know it we're going to be in January, we need to know" the department's plans, Ms. Frett-Gregory added.

Senator Kurt Vialet, vice chair of the committee, said, "I'm looking forward to when the Dept. of Education comes before this body because they were allotted some \$20 million plus in Covid funds, and we need to know the readiness of our schools."

"Our responsibility is to continue to put our thumbs on the Dept. of Education. We cannot allow departments and agencies to decide that they can disrespect the first branch of government and say that you are not available for for the entire month of December. That's just not acceptable," Ms. Frett-Gregory said.