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D.O.H. Tests Over 2,000 Students Ahead of Return to In-Person Learning; 39 Test Positive For Covid-19

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Dept. of Education Covid-19 testing for public school testing at the Old Cinema in St. Thomas on Sat. Jan. 22, 2022. By. THE V.I. DEPT. OF EDUCATION

The V.I. Dept. of Education announced late Saturday that the V.I. Department of Health tested 2,360 public school students on the first day of student mass testing on Jan. 22, with 39 students in the D.O.E.'s two school districts testing positive for Covid-19.

“These test results are important and provide us a baseline to know the health of our student population returning to our campuses beginning January 24,” said Education Commissioner Racquel Berry-Benjamin, according to D.O.E. “We are extremely pleased with today’s turnout and thank parents for their support. We are grateful that our positive cases are manageable and

wish the affected students a speedy recovery.”

According to the release, drive-through and walk-up testing were conducted at five sites across the territory, and students received a sweet treat while they waited to be tested. On St. Thomas, 258 students were tested at the Joseph A. Gomez Field and 900 at the Old Cinema One Parking Lot; on St. Croix, 507 students were tested at the Charles Harwood Parking Lot and 445 were tested at the St. Croix Educational Complex High School Parking Lot; on St. John, 250 students were tested at the Port Authority Gravel Lot.

Department of Education volunteers were stationed at each testing site as part of the Department’s Team Up for Testing Weekend activity, D.O.E. said. Employee volunteers will be positioned at the sites for the duration of the testing period, as well as at bus stops to assist students and parents when schools reopen next week.

The commissioner thanked the "dedicated employees" of the department who volunteered. "Special thanks to the Department of Health and its private partners and the Virgin Islands Police Department for making this first day of testing a success. We look forward to continuing this important effort through next Thursday," she added.