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Police Investigation Underway After Male is Brutalized by Other Students at Central High; Possible Expulsion for Students Involved

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The fight at the St. Croix Central High School on Thursday, Aug. 24, 2023 could have easily led to serious injury or even death. By. SCREENSHOT

ST. CROIX — A shocking incident unfolded at St. Croix Central High School on Thursday, where a student was brutally assaulted by multiple schoolmates. The violent episode was caught on video and has since circulated widely throughout the community, prompting an immediate response from the V.I. Department of Education and other authorities.

According to eyewitness reports and video footage, at least five male students were involved in the brutal assault, during which the target was punched, kicked, and at several points, pinned to

the floor. The severity of the situation led to the summoning of an ambulance, although the guardian of the student in question opted for private transport for medical attention.

According to a statement issued by Education officials, the incident is under active investigation by both the V.I. Police Department and the Department of Education. The altercation has been classified as a Level 4 Infraction, which is considered a serious violation that significantly impacts the well-being of students and the school at large.

"All students identified as participants in the altercation have been suspended in accordance with the Board of Education's Student Discipline Policy," said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington. She emphasized that the incident was "deeply troubling and completely unacceptable" and stated that the department is continuously evaluating and enhancing their response procedures and personnel deployment for such incidents.

This is not an isolated event. "In a matter of days, the St. Croix District has faced two serious incidents that have disrupted the Claude O. Markoe Elementary School and the St. Croix Central High School campuses," commented St. Croix Insular Superintendent, Dr. Ericilda Ottley-Herman. She reiterated the department's zero-tolerance policy for acts of violence and situations that may jeopardize student safety.

Mrs. Wells-Hedrington also called for a collective effort to address the root causes of school violence. "Various factors contribute to school violence, many of which originate off-campus and spill over into our schools. We seek the support of parents, guardians, and the community as we move forward," she said.

The Disaster Planning and School Safety Division is actively involved in training school monitors to manage such situations. "Our top priority is safeguarding the well-being of our students, faculty, and staff," emphasized Irvin R. Mason, Director of Disaster Planning and School Security.

The V.I. Dept. of Education said it remains committed to its prevention and intervention efforts and will continue to invest in measures to prioritize student safety across all school campuses.

This incident serves as a grim reminder of the work that needs to be done to ensure the safety and well-being of students.