

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

BILL NO. 31-0314

Thirty-first Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 24, 2016

An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 7, adding section 96a providing for an identification system for high-performing, low-income students program, gifted programs , and an accountability system for the achievements and growth of all students in the U.S. Virgin Islands public school system

PROPOSED BY: Senator Kurt Vialet

1 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:*

2 **SECTION 1.** Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 7 is amended by adding section 96a to
3 read as follows:

4 “**§96a** (a) As used in the section “Excellence Gap” means the disparity in the percentage
5 of lower-income versus higher-income students who reach advanced levels of academic
6 performance.

7 (b) The Department shall:

8 (1) Establish strategies, plans and practices for implementation in all Virgin
9 Islands public schools to eradicate and prevent the Excellence Gap. The application of

1 these strategies and practices must ensure that all students can excel despite their income-
2 level or other circumstances;

3 (2) Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year the V. I. Department of
4 Education shall carry out a comprehensive program to identify high-ability low-income
5 students in all public schools;

6 (3) establish gifted programs in all public schools to promote educational
7 excellence for students who show outstanding academic achievements or exceptional
8 ability to learn or reason;

9 (4) make independent study, dual enrollment, distance learning, promotion to
10 higher grades, and advanced placement courses available in all public high schools; and

11 (5) establish an accountability system to track the number of identified high-
12 achieving students in the public school system and their performance as a separate group,
13 including low-income students.

14 (c) All public schools shall monitor the performance and growth of all students and
15 shall collect and submit data to the Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Education.
16 All public high schools shall track the number of advanced placement classes and student passage
17 rates.”

18 **BILL SUMMARY**

19 The bill establishes an identification system for high-performing, low-income students, a
20 gifted program and an accountability system for the performance and growth of all public school
21 students, especially the high-achieving and low-income students in the U.S. Virgin Islands.
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25 **BR15-1096/February 17, 2016/YLT**