

Education Agenda

for the Caribbean Netherlands

St. Eustatius

Towards a higher quality
of our education

2023-2024 School Year to 2026-2027 School Year



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Introduction

School is such an important place for every pupil. It is the place where we learn to read and write, where we interact with classmates and where we expand our horizons. As a teacher, you get to see the potential that your pupils have, and help them to achieve that potential. This is the beauty of teaching: helping every pupil in your class to prepare for the future. Day in, day out, every teacher helps their pupils to learn all kinds of things: from the first words you write, to learning a new calculation formula or a new language. Teachers watch their pupils grow. That is the power of education.

And that power is universal. You will find it at every primary school, secondary school and in secondary vocational education. Whether that school is in Oranjestad, Kralendijk, or St. Johns, in The Hague or Rotterdam. Clearly, school principals and members of school boards also have an important role to play. Because they ensure that you, as a teacher, can do your job properly and that there is a place in our education system for every pupil and student. And of course, they also make sure that the school's finances are in order and that school buildings are maintained properly. Together, we contribute to our education system. This also applies to the Public Entity on St. Eustatius, which ensures compliance with mandatory school attendance, and joins forces with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to tackle educational housing, expansions and school renovations.

Despite all the hard work, there is still room for improvement. And that applies both to the European Netherlands and the Caribbean Netherlands. I see teachers who are having to juggle too many responsibilities because of staff shortages and who, as a result, simply have too much to do. This is putting the quality of our education under pressure. I would like to change this. And we have already started working on making that change happen. By tackling the teacher shortage, for instance, or ensuring that schools in the Caribbean Netherlands are also getting support to help them improve the basic skills of pupils. We are working to improve equality of opportunities in education by organizing extra after-school activities for all children. This School and Environment program, which is an initiative of schools, the Public Entity, local parties and my Ministry, enables all pupils to broaden their horizons.



*“School is such an important
place for every pupil.
That starts at an early age.”*

Customization is needed to advance our education. Every place is different and may require a different approach. This means looking at what really works together, and not simply applying ‘copy-paste’ solutions from the European Netherlands to the islands. We should listen to each other and learn from each other. And so I will continue to listen to and learn from everybody involved in education on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire. Because they are the people who see first-hand what works in education, and what does not, every single day. I appreciate all their efforts and input.

Further improving education is a challenge we must take up together – across primary, secondary and senior vocational education, from the Expertise Centers for Education Care (EOZ) to the Council of Education and Labor Market Council for the Caribbean Netherlands, from the Public Entity to my Ministry. This agenda will advance the quality of education on St. Eustatius still further. With clear goals and tools to advance education, for example by bolstering the educational leadership of the schools.

This was the original goal of the Education Agenda that was first drawn up for the Caribbean Netherlands in 2011. The ultimate goal is good education for every pupil. Whether you live on St. Eustatius, Saba, Bonaire or in the European Netherlands. To be well prepared for your future, and have all options open to you when it comes to your further education. And now – over ten years later – that is still our joint goal and the aim of this new Education Agenda. These are the themes that they want to see prioritized in the years to come, so that our education system can continue to improve.

In many cases, this will require extra work on the part of schools, Expertise Centers for Education Care, the Public Entity and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. There are some themes that various parties are working on but which have not been included in this Education Agenda. Good examples include Citizen Service and the agreements made at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's Four-Country Consultative Meeting on boosting the academic success of students from the Caribbean, following the recommendation of the Steering Group for the Strategic Education Alliance (SEA) partnership. Another example is the agenda for culture, which every Public Entity will draw up together with my Ministry. This will include areas that are adjacent to education, such as cultural education and the ongoing development of libraries.

To achieve the goals set out in this 2023/2024-2026/2027 Education Agenda we must encourage each other, find out what pupils and teachers need and look at what works best in the classroom. Because that's what we're all about. Let's take our education to the next level.

Mariëlle Paul

Minister for Primary and Secondary Education

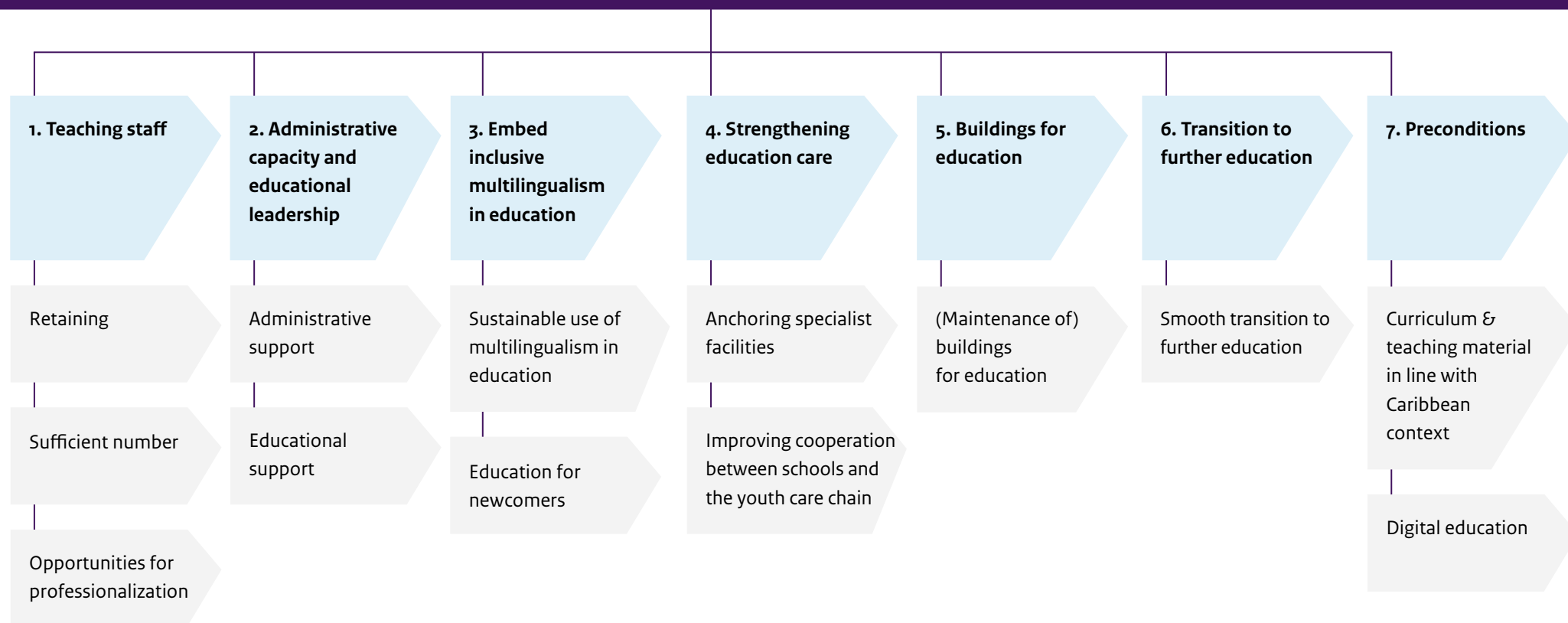




Priorities Education Agenda Sint Eustatius



Overview of priorities and ambitions Education Agenda Sint Eustatius



Priorities

1) Teaching staff

When it comes to the quality of education on St. Eustatius, teachers are the key. They are directly responsible for pupils' enjoyment and success in the classroom. We know that they face challenges and one objective of this Education Agenda is to support every partner wherever we can. Teaching staff need a pleasant working environment and opportunities for professional development. In addition, various schools are facing a teacher shortage, which is leading to additional stress. This agenda includes steps in these areas. We will focus on recruiting more teachers. We can only do this with the help of existing teaching staff and others on St. Eustatius.

Our ambitions:

- Retain teaching staff
- Ensure sufficient teaching staff
- Professionalization

2) Administrative capacity and educational leadership

School boards on St. Eustatius do a great deal of valuable work. But unlike school boards in the European Netherlands, they often have to do that work without a network of support staff and experts to help them face complex problems or challenges that require specialist knowledge. We want to make this support for school boards, school principals, management teams and teachers possible through all the partners in this Education Agenda. By ensuring that school boards, school principals, management teams and teachers are operating at the top of their game, we can make great strides in developing and improving the education that we provide. Effective school boards, school principals, management teams and teachers can contribute to better cooperation between schools, creating a safe climate at schools and attracting qualified teachers. They can also lay the groundwork for innovative education, in which pupils are encouraged to develop their talents as fully as possible. With strong school boards, school principals, management teams and teachers we can take education on St. Eustatius to a higher level and ensure that our children have the best possible opportunities for their future.

Our ambitions:

- Strengthen educational leadership and availability of long-term administrative support

3) Multilingualism

An essential factor in the linguistic development of our pupils is good didactic practice in language education. Specifically, this means taking account of the multilingual background of many students in the Caribbean Netherlands. Pupils on St. Eustatius grow up on an English-speaking island, but students also encounter other languages in school, such as Dutch, which is a foreign language to them. There are also pupils who come from different language backgrounds, and have to learn both English and Dutch. The goal is to support schools in dealing with teaching (and learning) the various languages children speak themselves or are taught in schools. Teachers who are aware of the linguistic and cultural background of their students and adjust their lessons accordingly, can help develop the right classroom strategies and ensure that all students feel understood and are learning as effectively as possible. Good teaching strategies also contribute to a positive learning experience for pupils, better cooperation between pupils and greater involvement in the learning process. This will require specialist knowledge from all teaching staff in the Caribbean Netherlands, in addition to the knowledge and expertise that they already possess. Acquiring that specialist expertise will not happen overnight and will require long-term training and coaching by professionals who have both knowledge of what works scientifically and of educational practice. In addition, teaching staff will need to be given the opportunity to study this specialization, alongside the responsibilities they already have in education. Strong didactic skills of teachers in language education that align with the multilingual backgrounds of many students and the various languages, including the subject of Dutch as a strong foreign language, are vital to the language development of students.

We have also seen an increase in the number of newcomers in education in recent years. These are children who come from abroad and join the education system on St. Eustatius at a later age. Often, they do not speak the language in which teaching takes place, and so schools on St. Eustatius need additional expertise to teach these pupils those languages so that they can make the most of their education. The government must ensure that schools have the space to do this.



Our ambitions:

- Sustainable multilingualism in education
- Education for newcomers

4) Strengthening education care

Education care is important. Because, if you are a child who needs a little extra help to do well in school, then this help needs to be available. Many parties are working on this, not just those in education, but also parents at home, and those in healthcare. We will continue to bolster education care and the inclusive nature of the education. In recent years, a specialist facility has been set up to guide pupils who require more support than is available at school. We will continue providing these facilities. We want to see those facilities that benefit children who need a little extra help remain in place, and we wish to continue learning with and from each other about what works and what does not (or not as well). This is why the specialist facilities will be evaluated in the coming years. Together with the Ministries of Social Affairs, and Health, Welfare and Sport, we will continue putting our shoulders to the wheel. Together, we will create an environment for the children in which they can receive the education, support and care they need. The Expertise Centers of Education Care, the schools, the parents and the pupils are also working hard to contribute to this.

With the introduction of the special facilities on St. Eustatius, there were more pupils who could benefit from receiving the needed educational support. To ensure that this support will remain available for pupils in the future, the special facilities must be made structural. In addition, at the moment, there still could be children who are teachable but who are not yet receiving education. These are youngsters who, due to extreme behavior for example, cannot receive education, while they would be able to learn given the right environment. It is important to get those children in the picture and see what can be done to give them the education they need and deserve.



Our ambitions:

- Embedding specialist facilities
- Improving cooperation between schools and youth care chain

5) Buildings for education

Good school buildings are part of an accessible, good-quality education system. Teachers and pupils have the right to a learning environment that is clean, safe and functional. A healthy indoor climate and pleasant environment contribute to better learning outcomes and lower rates of absenteeism.

Ongoing maintenance is necessary to keep school buildings and installations in good working order. Maintenance is the responsibility of school boards and requires an up-to-date maintenance plan, a system of organization and adequate funding. In order to handle maintenance sensibly, clarity about policy on school buildings is also important. The school board needs to know when to expect renovation work or an extension. It is therefore important that the government also meets its responsibilities with respect to school buildings.

Our ambitions:

- Good, well-maintained school buildings

6) Transition to further education

The transition of students from St. Eustatius to suitable forms of further education is crucial for their future development as well as that of the region. Ensuring that this transition is a smooth one means helping students to choose a study program that meets their needs and expectations and which they will enjoy and complete with success. This gives them the opportunity to develop, contribute to economic growth and, in turn, create employment opportunities for others. Obtaining a diploma in further education is essential to the continuing development and self-confidence of the child. Investing in the transition to further education is therefore a priority.

Our ambitions:

- A smooth transition to further education



7) Preconditions

School boards on St. Eustatius are responsible for the quality of the education provided in their schools. And it is the education professionals in those schools who are best-placed to fulfill that responsibility. However, the government must also ensure that the right preconditions are in place for them to do this. In other words, schools need access to the right tools to shape the education that they provide. While in the European Netherlands market forces often provide the necessary tools for this, this is not always the case on St. Eustatius due to its smaller scale. In cases where markets fail to provide solutions, national government will step in to provide the necessary tools. This includes making the right teaching materials available (methods and testing).

Our ambitions:

- Educational materials which are appropriate to the Caribbean context
- Digital education

Implementation and progress

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the primary and secondary school boards, the Expertise Center Education Care, and the Public Entity will all play an important role in the implementation of this Education Agenda. They have all made a contribution to it and are responsible for several of the milestones identified. They will work together as partners on implementing the Education Agenda.

The details of the Education Agenda will be finalized by an education platform, in which all the partners from St. Eustatius are represented. Three times a year, the education platform will focus its attention on the implementation of the Education Agenda. Sometimes the platform will be chaired by the secretariat of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and in other cases by the Public Entity. The chair will review the milestones and ask the results manager what progress has been made towards that milestone. Once a year, the education platform will meet all partners to discuss whether progress towards the milestones that should have been made that year has actually been made and what additional action is needed to reach those milestones. A decision may also be made to postpone the work required to reach a milestone. The purpose of the meetings is to get together and see where we stand, and see if we have achieved the agreed milestones.

Responsibility for each milestone

The person responsible for achieving progress with respect to a particular milestone takes personal responsibility for progress towards that milestone. This may be done by setting up a separate implementation group on the relevant theme or by coordinating the activities with the parties involved on a one-on-one basis. The individual who is responsible for the results will choose a form that suits the implementing party and the nature of the milestone. That individual may consult the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Public Entity regarding this. All parties will take personal responsibility for their milestones.

Keeping track of the progress by the partners of the Education Agenda and by an independent agency

In addition to keeping track of the progress by the partners of the Education Agenda via the education platforms, as outlined above, progress towards certain milestones will be monitored by an independent agency. This will be the case for milestones with a strong research component or where it is important for all partners that an independent body makes a statement about the milestone. The appendix shows in which cases this will apply for each priority and each milestone. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science finances this research agency, which has the task of minimizing the administrative burden of monitoring for the partners.

Completion of the Education Agenda

In the last year of the Education Agenda, the partners will jointly discuss what is required to complete the implementation of the Education Agenda successfully and how they will jointly shape the education priorities on the island following the completion of this Education Agenda.

1) Teaching staff

1.1 Retaining teaching staff

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) Induction program for teaching staff from outside the island

Set up an induction program for new teachers to give them more information about the island and the school where they will be working, including the socio-economic circumstances, specific issues which teachers may encounter and the culture and customs on the island. The schools will share the induction program they have already created with other schools.

2) Introduction/induction day at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for teaching staff from the European Netherlands

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will provide a venue to organize a meeting for teachers who are interested in working at schools on the island of St. Eustatius. The schools and Public Entity can give the teachers information (online) about working at schools on the island.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	The primary and secondary school boards on St. Eustatius jointly develop an induction program for teaching staff who are from outside St. Eustatius in case they would like to make use of this. The school boards can make use of the example of the induction program of Bonaire for this in case they want to.	Induction program for teaching staff	Public Entity St. Eustatius	Primary and secondary school boards	2023-24
2	In accordance with the wishes of schools on St. Eustatius, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science facilitates an annual introduction/ induction day at the Ministry for teaching staff from the European Netherlands who intend to work in schools on St. Eustatius if schools would like to make use of this offer.	Introduction/induction day at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for teaching staff from the European Netherlands	Primary and secondary school boards and Public Entity St. Eustatius	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2024-25

1.2 Sufficient qualified teaching staff

In recent years, the partners for the Education Agenda have been focusing on increasing the number of teaching staff on St. Eustatius. In this context, we will briefly discuss two recently launched projects that are relevant to the further development of the Education Agenda:

On 4 November 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the University of St. Martin (USM) and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Teacher Training for Saba and St. Eustatius. The three signatories

thereby confirmed their partnership for offering the Bachelor of Education (BAE) on Saba and St. Eustatius. The Bachelor's program prepares students to teach at primary school level. The program is provided by the USM in partnership with the UVI and is internationally recognized. The USM has been contracted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to provide the program for teaching assistants on Saba and St. Eustatius. This is a response to the need for locally trained primary teachers on the islands.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) Use of teaching assistants in schools to strengthen supervision in the classroom

Establish a clear picture of people on the island who could begin work as teaching assistants at schools straight away and those who could be trained as teaching assistants.

2) Tackle shortage of teachers.

When tackling the teacher shortage in the European Netherlands, consideration will also be given to the extent to which St. Eustatius can be included in this approach and whether alternatives are needed.

a. Supervision for new teachers

Look into whether and how supervision can be provided for new teachers (and their families) who are/will be working on the island.

b. Recruitment of new teachers

Make use of grants for jobseekers in order to attract teachers from the Netherlands (or the Caribbean region) for St. Eustatius.

Milestones		Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	More staff available in the classroom through the use of teaching assistants. Schools look at whether teaching assistants are available on St. Eustatius or whether they can be trained.	Use of teaching assistants in schools to strengthen supervision in the classroom	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and EOZ	School boards	2023-24
2	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has a study carried out to assess the teacher shortage on St. Eustatius and arranges monitoring (identify bottlenecks and formulate solutions).	Insight into teacher shortage	School boards and EOZ	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
3	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science begins working on a tailored approach to tackling the teacher shortage on St. Eustatius. Steps taken in the European Netherlands are assessed to determine whether St. Eustatius can be included or whether alternatives are needed ('comply or explain' principle).	Tackle shortage of teachers	School boards and EOZ	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
4	The Public Entity investigates the possibility of whether and how it can provide supervision for new teachers (and their families) who will be working on the island and whether, if possible, they can support teachers with study costs or finding accommodation.	Tackle shortage of teachers	School boards and EOZ	Public Entity St. Eustatius	2024-25
5	The Public Entity St. Eustatius uses the FRED Fair (Flinx Recruitment Expo Dutch Caribbean), an annual recruitment event where jobseekers in the European Netherlands and employers in the Caribbean Netherlands can meet, with the primary goal of promoting the emigration/re-emigration of students and professionals in the European Netherlands to the Caribbean Netherlands. This can include the recruitment of teachers.	Tackle shortage of teachers	School boards and EOZ	Public Entity St. Eustatius	2024-25

1.3 Opportunities for professionalization for teaching staff

In preparation for the Education Agenda, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has developed legislation that will provide professional development opportunities for teaching staff. As of 2024, statutory requirements will apply with regard to strategic

staffing policy for the Caribbean Netherlands. These specify that, for instance, staffing policy must be geared to external developments and educational goals and that the sustainable employability and professional development of staff must be addressed.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?					
1) Training program to become school principal Review of training courses/programs that train experienced teachers to become school principal.			3) Opportunities for continuing education and training Establish action plan for providing continuing education and training in the region or the European Netherlands.		
2) Review available supply at training institutes in the Caribbean region and in the European Netherlands to respond to professionalization needs in continuing education and training Review the opportunities for professionalization that are available at training institutes in the Caribbean region and in the European Netherlands, and what is required in the field of continuing education and training.			4) Professionalization of teaching staff Establish strategic staffing policy including the professionalization of teaching staff.		
Milestones		Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science reviews which courses/ programs are available for training experienced teachers to become school principals. ¹	Training program to become school principal	School boards and teachers	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24

1 [New primary school principals from outside education | Grant | Subsidy Executive Agency for Institutions \(dus-i.nl\)](#)

2	The primary and secondary school boards on St. Eustatius review what is required from continuing education and training in terms of professionalization opportunities and explore which existing training institutes in the Caribbean region and in the European Netherlands could meet those needs.	Picture of the opportunities available for professionalization needs in continuing education and training at training institutes in the Caribbean region and in the European Netherlands	Teaching staff	School boards	2023-24
3	Based on schools' professionalization needs in areas that are currently unmet by existing training institutes in the Caribbean region and the European Netherlands, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science looks at whether these can be catered to in the region or in the European Netherlands.	Opportunities for professionalization through continuing education and training	School boards	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2024-25
4	School boards have a Strategic Human Resource Management policy that indicates how they will implement this in a planned manner (monitoring, evaluation) for all (teaching) staff. This means for example using the PDCA cycle in a planned manner. This legislation will also become mandatory for schools in the European Netherlands.	Professionalization of teaching staff	Teaching staff	School boards	2024-25

“When it comes to the quality of education on St. Eustatius, teachers are the key.”

2) Administrative capacity and educational leadership

For several years, the partners for the Education Agenda have been working together to strengthen the administrative capacity and educational leadership in schools on St. Eustatius. During a working visit at the end of 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science asked all partners which conditions are important when it comes

to strengthening administrative capacity and educational leadership in the Caribbean Netherlands. The responses to that question form the basis for the further development of this theme.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) Strengthen educational leadership

Teaching staff can call on the support of coaching advisors and sparring partners for specialist questions to improve the teaching-learning process. In time, coaching will also be available for school directors and school boards with regard to strengthening educational leadership.

2) Availability of long-term administrative support

The support for school boards, school principals and teaching staff is organized such that it is permanently available to the schools (e.g. through train-the-trainer principles), enabling school boards and teaching staff to strengthen their administrative capacity and educational leadership on a sustained, long-term basis.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	The use of coaching advisors and sparring partners for teaching staff, and in time for school principals and school boards, in order to improve the primary process.	Strengthen educational leadership	Primary, secondary school boards and school principals	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
2	Creation of broad, sustained and accessible support, provided by a central support center or a mobile team.	Strengthen educational leadership	Primary, secondary school boards and school principals	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2024-25

3) Multilingualism

3.1 Sustainable multilingualism in education

Ever since the First Education Agenda², the work of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and of schools with respect to language has been an important theme. For example, in the First Education Agenda it was agreed that the school boards on each island would make agreements on language policy and continuous learning pathways to ensure that pupils achieved the required language level (in English and Dutch). It was also agreed that the Ministry would provide standardized tests for the pupil monitoring system, which is geared to the local context. In the Second Education Agenda³, it was agreed that all schools would develop a school language policy in their school plan and implement this policy. It was also agreed that teachers would teach all educational activities in a way that promotes the language proficiency of pupils and that schools would provide specific supervision for pupils with language skills that are either above or below average, corresponding to the individual learning needs of those pupils. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science agreed that they would support the language improvement programs already initiated and, where necessary, amend legislation or regulations to enable schools to implement their language teaching.

The outcome of the First Education Agenda was that there was no means of bringing together the stakeholders to reach a common understanding. Additionally, the fact that several languages are important on the islands also needs to be taken into account. In the Windward Islands, this concerns English and Dutch. In addition, Dutch is less widely spoken among younger people, who may hardly come into contact with it at all in their daily lives. This is a complicating factor when it comes to being taught the subject of Dutch as a foreign language, which is a compulsory part of the curriculum of both primary and secondary education.

The outcome of the Second Education Agenda was that steps have been taken, but the goal had not yet been achieved. Almost all institutions indicated that they have invested a great deal of time and energy in their language policy with variable results. There is still a lack of a shared vision around language policy.

“An essential factor in the linguistic development of our pupils is good didactic practice in language education. Specifically, this means taking account of the multilingual background of many students on St. Eustatius.”

² The first education agenda | Leaflet | Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (rijksdienstcn.com)

³ The second Education Agenda | Leaflet | Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (rijksdienstcn.com)

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) An organization (to acquire expertise from outside) that can support schools in dealing with multilingualism in a sustainable manner

The school boards, the Public Entity and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will jointly choose an organization to deal with multilingualism in the schools in a sustainable manner.

2) The Public Entity has adopted their island language policy and implementation plan

Periodic consultation with the Public Entity to monitor and possibly speed up progress on island language policy plan.

3) The school boards / schools have a school language policy plan based on dealing with multilingualism

Verify that all schools have a school language policy plan based on 'dealing with multilingualism'. The organization that will support schools to deal with multilingualism can help the schools adjust their school language policy plan and monitor coherence with the island language policy plan.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science draws up a concept tender for an external organization to support the implementation of a didactics for multilingualism in education.	Read the assignment description	The Ministry of Education Culture and Science, the Public Entity St. Eustatius, external agency, schools and EOZ	Education, Culture and Science	2024-25
2	Public Entity St. Eustatius establishes an island language policy plan.	The Public Entity adopts island language policy and implementation plan	Public Entity St. Eustatius	Public Entity St. Eustatius	2024-25
3	Island language policy plan is adopted by Public Entity St. Eustatius.	The Public Entity adopts island language policy and implementation plan	Public Entity St. Eustatius	Public Entity St. Eustatius	2024-25

4	The schools adapt their school language policy plans to the principle of 'multilingualism.	Support from external agency	School boards, external agency and EOZ	Primary and secondary school boards	2025-26
5	The teachers are trained to deal with multilingualism and Dutch as a strong language among pupils.	Support from external agency	School boards, school principals, external agency and EOZ	Primary and secondary school boards	2025-26
6	The schools are able to implement their school language policy plan based on dealing with multilingualism.	Support from external agency	School boards in primary and secondary education, external agency and EOZ	Primary and secondary school boards	2026-27

“We focus on strengthening multilingualism, which is a strength of the teaching staff and students on St. Eustatius.”

3.2 Education for newcomers

In anticipation of the Education Agenda, the partners for the Education Agenda have already taken steps to arrange education for newcomers on St. Eustatius.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has begun an analysis of whether additional funding for newcomers can be applied at schools in the Caribbean Netherlands. The simplified system of funding applied in the Caribbean Netherlands means that additional funding cannot be used. That is why the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is investigating whether it is necessary to provide additional financial resources to provide education for newcomers to the Caribbean Netherlands and, if so, what the most appropriate financial instrument for this would be.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) *Additional funding for education for newcomers.*

The Ministry of Education Culture and Science is investigating the need for and possibility of additional funding for education for newcomers in primary and secondary education on St. Eustatius.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	Ministry of Education Culture and Science investigates the need for and possibility of additional funding for education for newcomers in primary and secondary education on St. Eustatius. Based on the results, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will take the necessary measures.	Additional funding for education for newcomers	Primary and secondary school boards	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24

4) Strengthening education care

With the introduction of the special facilities on St. Eustatius, there were more students who could benefit from receiving the necessary educational support. To ensure that these will remain available for students in the future, the special facilities must be made structural. In addition, at the moment there could still be children who are teachable but who are not yet receiving education.

These are, for example, youngsters who are unable to receive education due to extreme behavior, when they might be able to learn given the right environment. It is important to get those children in the picture and see what can be done to give them the education they need and deserve.

4.1 Embedding specialist facilities

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) *The special facilities meet a need on the islands.*

Therefore they should be made structurally. In order to achieve this goal the funding must also be made structural. In order to determine the amount of funding needed for the structural embedding an evaluation must take place.

	Milestones	Contributes to	People involved	Result-responsible	Start of school year
1	Evaluation of specialist facilities	Insight in the needed funding for the specialist facilities	EOZ, schools	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
2	Formulate follow-up steps based on the results of the evaluations	Facility that meets the need of the island	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, EOZ, Public Entity St. Eustatius, schools	EOZ's, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24

4.2 Improving cooperation between schools and youth care chain

What exactly is needed and how can this be arranged?					
<div><div>1) <i>There might be pupils in a care institution that can be fully or partially learnable.</i></div><div>An exploration of the number of children in this group is needed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport as well as exploration of the possibilities to let those children visit a school or</div><div>receive education in another manner. These are youngsters who, due to extreme behavior for example, cannot receive education, when they might be able to, in the right environment.</div></div>					
Milestones		Contributes to	People involved	Result-responsible	Start of school year
1	Exploration of educational opportunities by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.	Insight in the number of children in this group and their educational and (health)care needs	EOZ, schools	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
2	Formulate follow-up steps based on the results of the exploration.	Facility that meets the need of the island	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in collaboration with local partners, schools, EOZ	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24

“Extra support for children who need it.”

5) Buildings for education

In recent years, all parties involved have made efforts to sustainably strengthen buildings for education. The division of roles of schools, Public Entity and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science with regard to educational housing is clearly regulated by law. The school boards are responsible for the small and large

maintenance of the schools and the Public Entity and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science are currently jointly responsible for providing buildings for education, including expansions and renovations.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) Good long-term maintenance for schools

Clarity regarding the financial consequences of proper maintenance and whether sufficient funding is available. Drawing up the annual budget.

2) Clear policy on buildings

Formulation of a clear assessment framework for new investments (buildings for education policy).

3) Expansion of gymnasiums and multifunctional spaces

Clarity regarding who is responsible for renovation work, major and minor maintenance of school buildings.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	In consultation with the school boards, the Public Entity draws up multi-annual maintenance plans for all schools in 2023.	Maintenance of school buildings	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Public Entity St. Eustatius and school boards	Public Entity St. Eustatius and school boards together	2023-24
2	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and Public Entity St. Eustatius examine the options for expanding gymnasiums and multifunctional spaces.	Expansion of gymnasiums and multifunctional spaces	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and Public Entity St. Eustatius	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and Public Entity St. Eustatius	2023-24
3	The Public Entity formulates long-term school housing policy and regulations regarding school buildings.	Clear policy on school buildings	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Public Entity St. Eustatius	2024-25

6) Transition to further education

In anticipation of the Education Agenda, the partners have already been working on promoting a smooth transition from secondary education to further education.

First of all, since 2011, the Ministry has been offering free guidance and support to students from the Caribbean Netherlands who continue their education in the European Netherlands. This includes support prior to departure, upon arrival in the European Netherlands and during the first year of study. Free guidance and support are also available for students who choose to continue their further education on one of the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles.

In addition, in the Ministerial Four-Country Consultative Meeting of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (M4LO), the education ministers of the Kingdom have made agreements regarding increasing the academic success of Caribbean students. The Strategic Education Alliance Steering Group (SEA) has been asked by the four education ministers of the Kingdom to optimize the transition to further education for

Caribbean students (of the six islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom), and the Steering Group has put forward proposals to this end. At the M4LO meeting in April 2023, the ministers of the four countries agreed to begin work on implementing three priorities: 1) a labor market survey of the Caribbean islands in relation to education; 2) a Kingdom mobility program to promote exchange; 3) a Caribbean Academic Foundation Year (CAFY), developed by the universities of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten to improve the transition to further education. In that context, they will also address the connection with the Caribbean Netherlands in this area.

To also further improve the effectiveness of the transition to further education, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will explore which opportunities could be specifically available to the pupils of St. Eustatius. The goal is to help this process run more smoothly. For this exploration, we will align with the SEA activities, and will focus specifically on the perspectives of the pupils of St. Eustatius and what else they feel they need for a smoother transition to higher education in the Netherlands.

“We support students to choose suitable forms of further education, to better prepare for their further education and to successfully complete their studies.”

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1. Pupils need information about further education and support as they make choices about their future

Schools provide support for their pupils so that they can make the best choices when it comes to further education. This is done in the context of career guidance, by informing pupils about further education in good time and helping them to choose the most appropriate further education. They also do this by giving pupils good study skills.

2) Increasing academic success in secondary education

Implementation of the three priorities agreed by the education ministers to increase the academic success of Caribbean students based on the proposals of the Strategic Education Alliance Steering Group (SEA): 1) conduct a labor market survey in the Caribbean Netherlands to understand the developments and forecasts in various fields and vacancy rates in the Caribbean region, the size and composition of the labor market, labor mobility and the connection of education to the labor market; 2) a scholarship program to facilitate mobility within the Kingdom on a structural basis; and 3) the development of a coordinated and diversified CAFY program for the Caribbean Netherlands by the universities in Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten, which is affordable and accessible to all students in the Caribbean region, to help them prepare better for the next phase of their studies.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	Inform pupils in good time regarding further education: what choices they have, what further education entails and what is needed to improve pupils' skills. This will help them to choose the right type of education for them. Schools provide pupils with the skills they will need in further education.	Informing pupils about what further education is available and ensuring that they choose the education that is right for them	School board and institutions that provide further education	School board	Ongoing
2	Increase the academic success of students from the Caribbean Netherlands by implementing the three priorities agreed upon by the four education ministers in the M4LO: 1) labor market research in relation to education, 2) Kingdom Mobility Program and 3) Caribbean Academic Foundation Year.	Better preparation for and links with further education, in order to help improve academic success	School board, institutions that provide further education and SEA Steering Group	School board	2023-24

3	At the request of St. Eustatius, an exploration will be performed into the opportunities for an annual study trip to the European Netherlands. This exploration will not just focus on St. Eustatius, but Bonaire and Saba will also be included.	Better preparation for and links to further education, in order to help improve academic success	School boards, school principals	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, School for secondary education	2023-24
4	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will commission a study into an update for the Student Finance Act BES islands in the context of comply or complain.	Update legislation	School for secondary education, Public Entity St. Eustatius	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24, 2024-25

7) Preconditions

7.1 Curriculum and educational materials must be appropriate to the Caribbean context

In recent years, the partners for the Education Agenda have taken various steps to work on a curriculum and educational materials that are appropriate to the Caribbean education context, as well as relevant for the further implementation of the Education Agenda.

In the 2021-2022 school year, the learning pathways for Dutch and English (and numeracy) were evaluated by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) together with schools on Saba and St. Eustatius. These learning pathways were completed by the end of 2022. They will enable schools to provide better tailored education for pupils with different learning needs. In parallel with the evaluation of learning pathways on Saba and St. Eustatius, the primary school on St. Eustatius has also received support from Curriculum Coaches for the use of learning pathways.

Secondly, at the end of 2022, using resources made available by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for the schools on Saba and St. Eustatius, the Taalunie/Bureau NVT has developed additional teaching materials for Dutch language teaching (John and Jooniee, Sam and Saar).

At the end of 2020, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science also awarded Bureau ICE and the Rolf Group a contract to develop standardized tests in Dutch, and English for use in primary and core phase secondary education on St. Eustatius. The Rolf Group will arrange the implementation of these tests at all primary and secondary schools in the Caribbean Netherlands. This project will be completed in 2025.

Additionally, in February 2022, the Senate passed legislation on primary school tests. This ensures that the same quality frameworks used for testing in primary education in the European Netherlands will apply in the Caribbean Netherlands, and ensures that schools use robust, high-quality tests to monitor the progress of their students.

Finally, at the beginning of 2023, at the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and schools on Saba and St. Eustatius, the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) assessed whether a translation and contextualization of the standardized progress tests in numeracy-mathematics used in the European Netherlands are consistent with learning pathways in numeracy on Saba and St. Eustatius. This was found to be not entirely the case. In 2023, discussions between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and schools on Saba and St. Eustatius will continue regarding which requirements need to be met for standardized progress tests in numeracy in the English language.

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) *Standardized English-language progress tests for numeracy and mathematics*

Investigate whether Dutch-language progress tests in numeracy and mathematics are consistent with education on Saba and St. Eustatius, and if not, what options there are for adapting these. Subsequently, contextualize and translate into English and implement.

2) *Standardized progress tests in English and Dutch*

Develop standardized progress tests in English and Dutch and implement these appropriately.

3) *Materials for education in citizenship*

Cooperation between schools on developing curriculum materials for education in citizenship.

4) *Take account of the wishes of the education sector when adapting key objectives*

Additional investigation focusing on the Caribbean Netherlands when revising the core objectives.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will contribute financially to providing English-language progress tests for numeracy and mathematics.	Standardized English-language progress tests for numeracy and mathematics	Primary and secondary school boards	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
2	Revision of the core objectives for primary and secondary schools on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire based on the principle of ‘comply or explain’.	Take account of the wishes of the education sector when adapting key objectives	Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO), Primary and secondary schools boards	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
3	Develop educational material that is in line with the core objectives for citizenship and focuses specifically on the context of the various islands. Make use of the regional teaching methods available for education in citizenship to do this.	Materials for education in citizenship	Primary and secondary school boards	Primary and secondary school boards	2023-24

4	Standardized progress tests available in English and Dutch for primary and core phase secondary education on St. Eustatius.	Standardized progress tests in English and Dutch	Primary and secondary school boards and Bureau ICE	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2024-25 (end date)
5	Introduce standardized progress tests for English and Dutch at primary and secondary schools. This will benefit the development of all pupils. The schools show how they use these tests in their school plans.	Standardized progress tests in English and Dutch	Primary and secondary school boards, Bureau ICE and The Rolf Group	Primary and secondary school boards	2024-25
6	Teaching materials (including digital) are available which reflect the curriculum for education and correspond to the experiences of children in the Caribbean region.	Knowledge of available digital teaching material	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, School boards and ICT expert	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2025-26

“Schools need access to the right tools to shape the education that they provide.”

7.2 Sustainable quality of education: vision for digital literacy and internet infrastructure (Digital education)

What exactly is required and how can this be arranged?

1) Knowledge of ICT available on St. Eustatius

In partnership with the school boards, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is appointing an ICT expert group to support the school boards in drawing up ICT policy, setting up an ICT infrastructure and developing a definition for digital literacy. Schools can draw on the knowledge and expertise on ICT that is available on the island through an ICT expert or Expert Group. They can then use this knowledge for their own education.

2) Vision for digitization and schools ICT policy

Schools will include their vision for a smart ICT policy in their school plans.

3) Knowledge sharing between schools on ICT

School boards will design an ICT platform where they can share knowledge on ICT and learn from each other. School boards will organize regular meetings on a structural basis, which function as a learning network. The ICT expert will act as a facilitator for these meetings.

	Milestones	Contributes to	Persons involved	Responsibility for results	Start of school year
1	In partnership with the school boards on St. Eustatius, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science appoints an ICT expert group to support the school boards in drawing up ICT policy, setting up ICT infrastructure and shaping a definition of digital literacy.	ICT knowledge available on St. Eustatius	School boards and Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	School boards and Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2023-24
2	Schools on St. Eustatius have the resources and knowledge to use ICT resources in education where this is useful. They use their ICT infrastructure, ICT expert or expert group for this.	ICT knowledge available on St. Eustatius	School boards and ICT expert	School boards	2024-25
3	All schools on St. Eustatius formulate their own smart ICT policy and include this in their school plans.	Vision for digitization and schools ICT policy	School boards and ICT expert	School boards	2024-25

4a	School boards on St. Eustatius design and set up an ICT platform where they can share knowledge on ICT and learn from each other. The ICT expert or expert group can support the school boards in this design and set-up.	Knowledge sharing on ICT between schools through ICT platform	School boards	School boards	2024-25
4b	School boards organize structural meetings that function as a learning network. The ICT expert or expert group acts as a facilitator for these meetings.	Knowledge sharing on ICT between schools through ICT platform	School boards	School boards	2024-25
5	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science conducts research into the efficiency and adequacy of the lump sum of primary and secondary schools in the Caribbean Netherlands. Based on the results of the research, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will take the necessary measurements.	Sufficient resources	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and school boards	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2024-25

“Preconditions such as educational material and digitization are necessary for good quality of education.”

Appendix

- 1 Overview of tracking the progress of milestones



1) Overview of monitoring for milestones

1. Teaching staff

1.1 Retention of teaching staff:

1.2 Sufficient teaching staff:

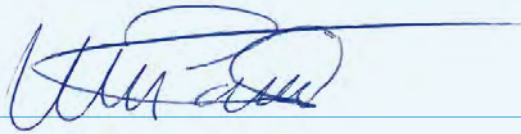
tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
split tracking the progress

More staff available in the classroom through the use of teaching assistants. Schools look at whether teaching assistants are available on their own island or whether they can be trained.	Independent
The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has a study carried out to assess the teacher shortage on St. Eustatius and arranges monitoring (identify bottlenecks and formulate solutions).	Independent
The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science begins working on a tailored approach to tackling the teacher shortage on St. Eustatius. Steps taken in the European Netherlands are assessed to determine whether St. Eustatius can be included or whether alternatives are needed ('comply or explain' principle).	Independent
The Public Entity St. Eustatius investigates the possibility of whether and how it can provide supervision for new teachers (and their families) who will be working on the island and whether, if possible, they can support teachers with study costs or accommodation.	Independent
The Public Entity St. Eustatius uses the FRED Fair (Flinx Recruitment Expo Dutch Caribbean), an annual recruitment event where jobseekers in the European Netherlands and employers in the Caribbean Netherlands can meet, with the primary goal of promoting the emigration/re-emigration of students and professionals in the European Netherlands to the Caribbean Netherlands. This can include the recruitment of teachers.	Partners Education Agenda

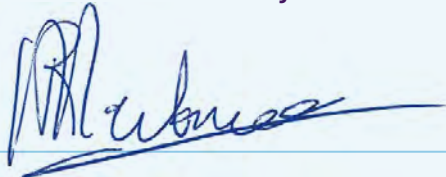
1.3 professionalization opportunities for teaching staff:	independent tracking the progress
2. Administrative capacity and educational leadership:	
	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
3. Multilingualism	
3.1 Sustainable multilingualism in education:	independent tracking the progress
3.2 Education for newcomers:	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
4. Strengthening education care	
4.1 Embedding specialist facilities:	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
4.2 Improving cooperation between schools and youth care chain:	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
5. Buildings for education	
5.1 Maintenance of schools buildings:	independent tracking the progress
6. Transition to further education	
6.1 Smooth transition to further education:	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
7. Preconditions	
7.1 Curriculum and educational materials are appropriate to the Caribbean context:	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda
7.2 Sustainable quality of education: vision for digital literacy and internet infrastructure (Digital education):	tracking the progress by partners Education Agenda

Signature Education Agenda St. Eustatius

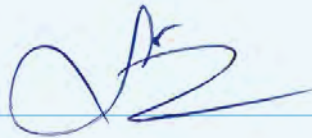
The parties below are committed to the agreements made in this education agenda. They confirm their joint intention to take the next step towards further improving education on St. Eustatius. This document is signed on 30 January 2024 on St. Eustatius.



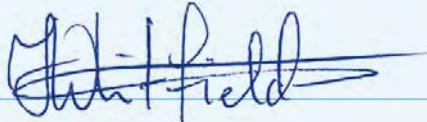
The minister for Primary and Secondary Education



**On behalf of the Executive Council of the Public Entity
St. Eustatius**



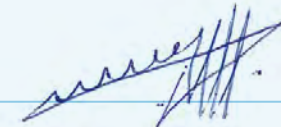
**On behalf of the Bethel Methodist Foundation for
Education (Bethel Methodist School)**



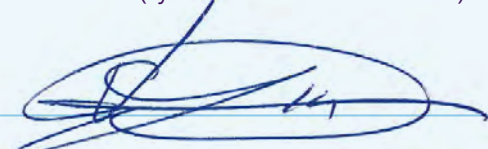
**On behalf of the Foundation Catholic Education
St. Eustatius (Golden Rock Catholic School)**



**On behalf of the Public Education Governor
de Graaff School**



**On behalf of the Foundation of SDA Education
St. Eustatius (Lynch Plantation SDA School)**



**On behalf of the Stichting tot Bevordering Voortgezet
Onderwijs op St. Eustatius (Gwendoline van Putten School)**



**On behalf of the board of the Expertise Centre Education
Care St. Eustatius (ECE)**

Parties



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Stichting tot Bevordering Voortgezet Onderwijs op
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