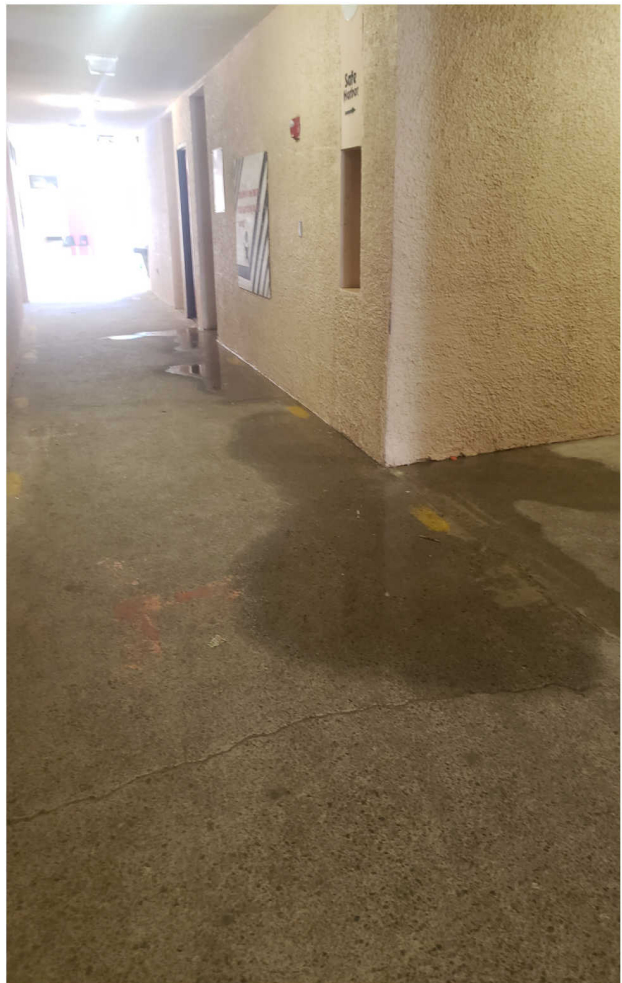


The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.O.E. Announces Shortened School Hours on St. Croix as Student Unrest, Job Actions Escalate

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A nonfunctional AC unit and wet floor at the John H. Woodson Jr. High School, By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

In light of the recent teacher job actions and student protests, the V.I. Department of Education on Saturday announced immediate schedule adjustments for several schools in the St. Croix District.

Effective Monday, September 25th, schools such as Juanita Gardine and Eulalie Rivera PreK-8 will operate from 7:30am to 12:30pm, John H. Woodson Jr. High School from 8:00am to 1:15pm, and St. Croix Central High School, St. Croix Educational Complex,

and the Career & Educational Technical Center from 7:40am to 1:05pm.

St. Croix Superintendent of Schools Ericilda Ottley-Herman emphasized the repercussions of the job action, highlighting the decrease in instructional hours and the consequential learning loss for students. "This job action has had a domino effect on our community, with parents making special arrangements and local businesses also feeling the impact," stated Ottley-Herman. As a remedy, the department plans to extend school hours and, in some instances, add extra school days to fulfill the necessary minimum instructional criteria once the current situation is resolved.

Further elaborating on the department's stance, D.O.E. Commissioner Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington said, "We understand the demands made by our educators are rooted in a genuine desire to improve not only their working conditions but also the quality of education provided to our students."

The commissioner also acknowledged the student protests and assured that the department is committed to engaging in open dialogue with them. D.O.E. said it will host a public presentation titled "Education 360: A Comprehensive Reform Blueprint" on Thursday, September 28. The presentation will touch on areas like federal funding, maintenance timelines, new schools updates, and academic recovery.