

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Henderson Elementary Reopens, No Mold Found In Building, DOE Says

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ST. CROIX -- The Virgin Islands Department of Education (DOE) on Tuesday evening made known through a press release that the Alexander Henderson Elementary School is once again open for business, welcoming 433 students and 70 staff members back to the building that parents say caused their children to fall ill.

But, according DOE, [contrary to some parents' complaints](#), no mold was found in the school building, and the fiberglass that caused the irritation has been completely removed.

“We worked hard to make the reopening of Alexander Henderson school a reality. Our children are returning to a sanitized and environmentally sound facility,” said Commissioner designee Dr. Sharon McCollum. “We would like to thank parents, teachers and administrators for their understanding. This project has proven that when we all work together for the good of our children we can accomplish great things.”

According to Addison Christian, general manager of St. Croix-based Adcon Environmental Services that performed the cleaning, about 60-65,000 sq. ft. of weathered fiberglass insulation was removed from above the ceiling tiles that stretched the entire length of the school.

In addition to the removal of the fiberglass, which was a standard material used in the past to insulate indoor environments, Christian said a complete clean down of the school was performed.

“We decontaminated the school of all the fiberglass above the ceiling tile, along with all dust and dirt, and other potential allergens that may have been above the ceiling,” he said.

In late February, [a meeting was organized](#) by St. Croix Superintendent of Schools Colleen Williams and held at the St. Croix Educational Complex, where it was announced that Henderson students would be sent to schools around St. Croix while a contractor worked to fix the problems at the school. She said the local contractor would complete the job in 15 days.

“We’ve already told the contractor, there’s no ifs, ands or buts. Get it done and get it done right, within the time frame,” Williams said. However the project lasted well over a month.

Despite the delay, Williams is pleased that Henderson students are finally back at their school.

“The first day back at Henderson was a very exciting one for students. For the most part, the environment is cleaner and healthier for both students, staff and faculty members,” she said.

Feature Image: Alexander Henderson Elementary School

Image Credit: Virgin Islands Department of Education