

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. Education Officially Announce Elena Christian And Evelyn Williams School Closures

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Following a report on *VI Consortium* concerning the closure of some schools on St. Croix, the Virgin Islands Department of Education (DOE) announced via press release tonight the temporary closures of two schools: Elena Christian Jr. High School (ECJH) and Evelyn M. Williams Elementary School.

[According to The Consortium's report](#), which contains information provided by a 31st Legislature senator, Evelyn Williams would be shuttered permanently and consolidated with Claude O. Markoe and Eulalie Rivera Elementary Schools. However, while DOE's press release confirms the merger of Evelyn Williams with Claude O. Markoe and Eulalie Rivera, it says the school will only be closed for 1 year as it undergoes repairs.

As revealed in *The Consortium's* report, ECJH students will move to Charles H. Emmanuel Elementary School, which will also consolidate with Alfredo Andrews Elementary School.

According to the release, the decision to temporarily shutter the schools was made as a joint effort between Governor Kenneth Mapp and DOE Commissioner Sharon McCollum, after an assessment of both schools by a corps of engineers.

"Both of these schools have very critical and ongoing structural and environmental issues that we must address. We want to keep children and educators safe. We cannot have another instance like at Gomez school where a teacher was injured by falling debris. So this is more preventative than reactive," said McCollum.

According to St. Croix District Superintendent, Colleen Williams, the information has been shared with key stakeholders. She said DOE staffers have met with the PTA of all schools involved, as well as the faculty and staff."

Williams added: "After the decision was made we also met with representatives of the unions, including the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Educational Administrators Association (EAA)."

The school closures follow earlier problems at Alexander Henderson Elementary School, where students were forced to attend various other educational institutions because of purported mold issues. DOE later announced that [no mold was found](#), and said that the fiberglass that irritated students was completely removed.

Feature Image: Elena Christian Jr. High School students, teachers and principal look on as ECJH Rocketry Club banner is unveiled.