

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DOE: Elena Christian To Move Into Charles H. Emanuel Building For 2015-2016 School Year

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ST. CROIX -- The Virgin Islands Department of Education reaffirmed on Monday via press release that Elena Christian Junior High School students, faculty and staff will move into the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School building during the 2015-16 school year, as previously announced. The Charles H. Emanuel School building will not be closed for repairs during the 2015-16 school year.

An official statement from the Education Department on June 1 announced that only two St. Croix District schools—Elena Christian Jr. High and Evelyn M. Williams Elementary—will be closed during the 2015-16 school year to repair longstanding structural and environmental issues.

The Education Department, along with school staff, has worked out a detailed plan to accommodate and merge students and staff during the 2015-2016 school year as follows:

- Students, faculty, and staff from Elena Christian Jr. High School will move into the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School building
- Students, faculty and staff from Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School will move from their school and merge with the Alfredo Andrews Elementary School
- Students, faculty and staff from Evelyn M. Williams Elementary School will leave their school and split between joining Claude O. Markoe Elementary School and Eulalie Rivera Elementary School

These plans have been shared with key stakeholders according to St. Croix District Superintendent Colleen Williams. “We have met with the PTA of all schools involved, as well as the faculty and staff,” Williams said, adding, “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).”

Education Commissioner Sharon McCollum, Ph.D., said communication and collaboration are key to success in these situations. Referring to the short-termed closure of Alexander Henderson school due to repairs earlier this year, and the temporary location of those students, McCollum said, “Overall, that process worked well and taught us a lot. When we engage all stakeholders affected, and work together, we can have a smooth transition for our students, educators and administrators. I have confidence we will have similar results in this instance.”

There are no school closures in the St. Thomas-St. John School District for the 2015-16 school year.