

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mars Hill Head Start Set To Reopen Today, But Violet Not Pleased With Cause Of Closure

Health / **Published On February 16, 2016 10:48 AM /**

Staff **February 16, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- The Head Start located in Mars Hill, Frederiksted will reopen today after the facility was closed most of last week due to what Senator Kurt Violet, through a recently issued press release, said was a myriad of issues.

According to the release, as of last Thursday, there were leaks in classrooms, water seeping into light fixtures, A/C failures and electrical problems. Additionally, there was no phone service at the facility and the dishwasher and kettle in the kitchen were inoperable. And the facility, according to Mr. Violet, has been open for less than one year; compounding the senator's exasperation.

The Head Start Program was designed to provide early childhood education and health and nutrition services for low-income children and their families. The facility's space, light, ventilation, and other physical arrangements must be consistent with the health, safety and developmental needs of children, the release went on. Because of the closure, parents had been forced to find other means of childcare or had to take leave from work to accommodate their children. Mr. Violet said these outcomes are unacceptable as some parents simply cannot afford to take time off.

The senator also called on the contractor to fix all the facility's problems without further cost to the government, a stance that suggests his dissatisfaction with the service that was provided.

"The building and all aspects of construction must be thoroughly inspected and the necessary repairs be completed immediately. Furthermore, the repairs need to be completed by the contractor with no additional cost to the government," Mr. Violet, a first-term Democrat, said. He urged the Department of Human Services to provide their plan of action in bringing a resolution to this matter expeditiously.

"The health and safety of our children and the employees is my number one concern," he concluded.