

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. Of Education Says There's School Today; Marvin Blyden Comes Out In Support Of Teachers

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ST. THOMAS -- Department of Education Commissioner Sharon McCollum early Wednesday said all the territory's schools would be open today, although the release did not confirm whether teachers in the St. Thomas-St. John district who staged a protest on Tuesday would report to work.

"I would like to say to the parents and guardians of our children in both districts that our schools are open today," Ms. McCollum said. "We are fully prepared to serve our children, both breakfast and lunch will be served, and are fully operational."

Meanwhile, Senator Marvin Blyden issued a press release today praising the teachers' job action. Mr. Blyden said he spoke with several educators as they voiced their concerns on Tuesday while protesting in front of the Legislature building in Charlotte Amalie. He said the teachers cited deplorable working conditions, the need to buy classroom supplies with their personal monies, low wages, and the audacity of being asked to forego retro pay in lieu of wage increases.

"I totally feel the position of the teachers that stood in front of the Legislature, and I respect the fact that they took a stance so that their voices could be heard," said the freshman senator.

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