

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Quick Note: Gas Odor Interrupts Classes At Complex And Central; School Back In Session

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Various persons on Monday contacted The Consortium relative to an odor at the St. Croix Education Complex that forced students out of class. Among these people were Rosa Soto-Thomas, president of the St. Croix Federation of Teachers, who has been a vocal advocate for educators and students.

Mrs. Soto-Thomas expressed frustration with the incident, which she noted on the phone was not the first time it had occurred. During the conversation, she said students were outside because of the odor, while they should be learning.

On Tuesday, morning classes at the St. Croix Central High School, which also utilizes split sessions, were dismissed early because of a similar gas odor, according to a school employee and students.

The Department of Education has been utilizing a split session system since Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck the territory. The setup gives students roughly 4 hours of school, and educators and parents have been pressing D.O.E. to move faster on preparing modular classrooms and sprung structures so that students could retain a level of normalcy and an atmosphere more conducive to learning.

Students have been back in classes, as the odor has subsided. However, officials were in the process of determining the source of the unpleasant and unhealthy smell.