

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Woodson And Arthur Richards Will Reopen On January 22 Following Discovery Of Moderate And Elevated Mold In Classrooms

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ST. CROIX -- John H. Woodson and Arthur A. Richards junior high schools will resume classes on Tuesday, January 22 following the results of air samples collected at their shared Woodson campus indicating moderate and elevated levels of mold spores in limited areas of the campus, the Department of Education announced late Wednesday.

Following the collection of 55 air samples by Adcon Environmental that were sent off island for testing last week, four locations on the campus were found to have elevated levels of mold and nine classrooms showed moderate levels. Independent environmental

hygienist company, Safety Solutions Consultants, Inc., conducted a thorough physical moisture survey of the Woodson campus on January 16, according to the release.

Cleaning and extensive remediation efforts will take place on the campus before students and staff return. A final inspection will be conducted following the remediation.

Acting Dept. of Education Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington said the test results give the schools a clear path forward.

“Now that we know for sure what and where the issues are on the Woodson campus, we are doing everything we can to correct those issues,” she said. “The safety and health of our students, faculty and staff are our priority. This team will continue to perform on-going risk assessments at the schools and the Department’s other facilities.”

District officials have scheduled informational meetings for staff of the two schools on Thursday, January 17 at the Ricardo Richards Elementary School Library. John H. Woodson staff will meet at 1 p.m. and Arthur A. Richards staff will meet at 2 p.m. Woodson and Arthur Richards students are asked to continue working through the educational packets they received, D.O.E. said.

Students and staff of Woodson and Arthur Richards were dismissed early on January 9 following complaints of an odor and skin irritations experienced in some areas of the campus.