

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Low Muckle Elementary Dismissed After Partial Collapse Of Building

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ST. CROIX -- A portion of Building J at the Low Muckle Elementary School collapsed Monday morning, forcing the Department of Education to initiate early dismissal. The building was one being utilized, but students had not arrived at the location for the day when the collapse occurred.

AFT Union President Rosa Soto-Thomas demanded that the old buildings currently housing students be abandoned, fearing that students or teachers could get hurt. While on the scene, Mrs. Soto-Thomas contacted a number of first responders, many of whom began descending on the scene after the 9:00 a.m. hour.

At about 1:25 p.m., the Dept. of Education announced that classes had been dismissed while emergency responders were examining the buildings, and that school would reopen Tuesday for instruction.

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the V.I.P.D., the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency, the Virgin Islands Fire Services and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) along with an engineering team from the Department of Public Works, were at the campus conducting walkthroughs and assessments of buildings with the same design as Building J.

D.O.E. said once the structural assessment report is complete, the district and school administrators will schedule meetings with faculty, staff, parents, and appropriate unions to share the findings.