



# THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CLASSES DISMISSED AT ARTHUR RICHARDS JR. HIGH, ALEXANDER HENDERSON ELEMENTARY AND JUANITA GARDINE ELEMENTARY DUE TO VANDALISM OVER MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**

ST. CROIX, USVI — The Department of Education, St. Croix District Office of the Insular Superintendent, has announced early dismissal at the Arthur A. Richards Jr. High/Alexander Henderson Elementary shared modular campus and Juanita Gardine Elementary School due to vandalism that occurred at the campuses over the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

School buses have been called to the campuses to transport students to their regular drop-off locations. Parents may also pick their children up from the schools.

According to Carlos McGregor, St. Croix District superintendent, the WAPA line supplying water to the Arthur A. Richards Jr. High/Alexander Henderson Elementary shared campus was destroyed, cutting off the campus's water supply.

WAPA engineers were called in to assess the damage and have determined that repairs would take several hours.

At Juanita Gardine, 16 classrooms, as well as the school's cafeteria and kitchen were burglarized and ransacked. Police forensic units are investigating the scene.

Education Commissioner-designee Racquel Berry-Benjamin expressed her disappointment with the news of the vandalism.

"Stealing from and vandalizing our local schools is something we should all be concerned with as a community," she said.

“This robs our children of important opportunities they should have, with the costs and time that go into replacing materials and equipment.”

McGregor echoed Berry-Benjamin’s sentiments, saying it is disappointing this has happened.

Both schools are expected to resume regular hours of operation on Wednesday, May 29.

On Sunday, May 26, police and fire officials responded to a blaze in the cafetorium at the vacant Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School building in St. Croix. No injuries were reported in that case.

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