



## THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Public Relations

1834 Kongens Gade, Charlotte Amalie \* St. Thomas \* U.S. Virgin Islands 00802-6746

Telephone: 340.774.0100 Ext. 8136 Fax: 340.774.1168

340.773.1095 Ext. 7064 Fax: 340.773.4624

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Keva D. Muller

Director of Public Relations

(340) 774-0100, Ext. 8136

Keva.muller@vide.vi

[www.vide.vi](http://www.vide.vi)

[www.facebook.com/usvi.vide](https://www.facebook.com/usvi.vide)

### **CHARLOTTE AMALIE HIGH SCHEDULED TO OPEN WITH CONTINGENCY PLAN AS BUILDING B IS CLOSED**

ST. THOMAS, USVI – Virgin Islands Department of Education Acting Commissioner, Dionne Wells-Hedrington, announced that the **eastern portion of Building B of the Charlotte Amalie High (CAHS) School, housing 15 classrooms, has been closed off due to structural defects.** The school is scheduled to open on Thursday, September 27, 2018 with a contingency plan to accommodate the loss of classrooms.

Wells-Hedrington detailed the contingency plan at a press conference hosted by Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, held on Monday, September 24. “The administration of Charlotte Amalie has arranged for teachers to share classrooms in the interim,” she said.

Due to damages sustained during Hurricanes Irma and Maria, coupled with deferred maintenance, an engineering team recommended that the Department cordon off and abandon all levels of the eastern section of Building B, including the perimeter on the southern side, where concrete is dropping from roof’s edge to the ground below.

Building B is made up of two adjoining buildings: the western two-story section, which is a newer addition, and the eastern 3-story section. Fifteen classrooms are lost as a result of the closure.

Teachers at Charlotte Amalie High School are assigned classrooms for the course of the school year. High schools in the Territory are on a four-class block schedule, however, teachers do not teach four classes a day. The contingency plan calls for teachers who are displaced from building B to utilize available rooms at times when those teachers with assigned classrooms have their “prep” periods.

Acting Commissioner Wells-Hedrington clarified that the new plan to share classrooms is not a double session schedule. Furthermore, all available courses will still be offered at the school and no student's schedule will change.

The Department is currently working on a Public Assistance request package with FEMA to purchase additional modular units to supplement the number of classrooms lost.

At the press conference, Governor Mapp also announced that air quality tests are ongoing in schools. Adcon Environmental Services and Environmental Concepts (ENCON) will perform air quality tests in public schools across the Territory and results will be published on the Department's website as they become available.

In addition to Charlotte Amalie High School in the St. Thomas – St. John District, the Lockhart Elementary, Joseph Gomez Elementary, Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary, and the Ivanna Eudora Kean High schools will also open for instruction on Thursday, September 27.

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