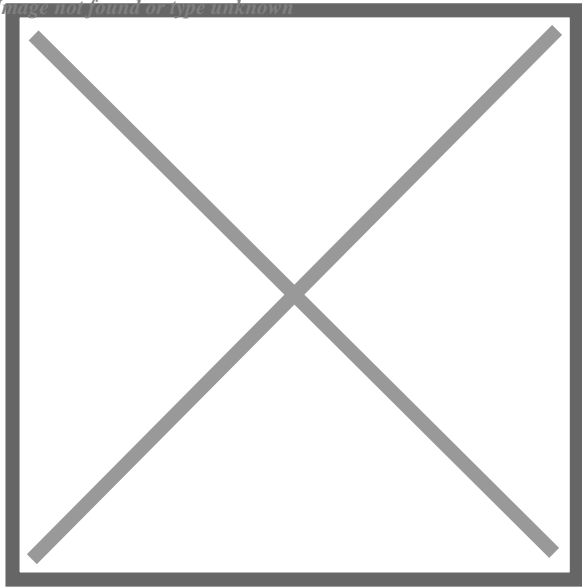


Getting students back to the classroom where they belong

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The school year in Cuba got back underway, although under special circumstances, as several regions of the country were severely damaged by the passage of two hurricanes and two earthquakes

By Roberto Morejon

The school year in Cuba got back underway, although under special circumstances, as several regions of the country were severely damaged by the passage of two hurricanes and two earthquakes.

Hurricane Oscar crossed the eastern province of Guantanamo on October 20, and its counterpart, Rafael, crossed the western part of the Caribbean archipelago on November 6.

Oscar hit Guantanamo, where population centers, government facilities and schools were damaged.

The people of Guantánamo had to work hard to recover from the severe flooding caused by the heavy rains, whose water currents penetrated houses and other buildings.

In Guantánamo, they gradually began to repair roads and schools in order to resume classes, although some of these last districts are still in the process of being completed, so it was necessary to adapt the buildings for the attendance of students to classes.

With the passage of the powerful hurricane Rafael in the western part of the archipelago and especially in the province of Artemisa, thousands of trees, electric poles, roofs and walls of houses fell to the ground.

The meteorological phenomenon hit hard in Artemisa almost 300 schools, which forced to start the constructive reconstruction.

This is happening in the midst of a tense situation due to other disturbances in the province caused by the powerful hurricane.

However, in the largest island of the Antilles, health and education services are given priority, so the focus is on assessing the disruptions and allocating resources to meet the needs of the schools.

In Artemisa, it has not been possible to resume classes this week as alternatives are being sought for the schools with greater damage.

In the midst of the maelstrom of workers mobilized in and around Artemisa. The commitment stands out because the children and teenagers can once again count on at least minimal conditions to go to their classrooms.

The school year, in which the main schools are open and teachers are available, is an achievement for education in Cuba, given the great material difficulties caused mainly by the US blockade.

More than 1,600,000 students fill the schools, which do not always meet the highest architectural standards, but have been conditioned to provide safe places for students and teachers. Soon enough, Artemisa will have these facilities again.

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